



70th Anniversary of
Japan's ODA in Thailand

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70 Years of Japan – Thailand Cooperation 1954 - 2024

The road to friendship through Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) began in 1954 when Japan joined the Colombo Plan and 21 ambitious trainees from Thailand embarked on their journey to Japan. Since that time, Thailand has been benefited from Japan's ODA through various forms of support, including grant aid, yen loans, technical cooperation, the deployment of Japanese experts and volunteers, as well as training programs and other initiatives.

With rapid economic growth in the 1960s, Japan became one of the world's leading industrialized nations representing Asia. Accordingly, its role to support the progress of developing countries intensified. In 1974, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) established its office in Thailand to enhance Thailand's economic and social development while also initiating regional development that corresponded with the countries' needs at the time.

Japan's ODA in Thailand covers a wide-range of development sectors including infrastructure, health care, education, industry, food security, social security, environment, and capacity-building of many government agencies.

This photobook celebrates the 70 years of Japan-Thailand cooperation with the locations and people involved and explores a way forward for future Japan-Thailand partnership.

Dr. Akihiko Tanaka

President
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)



Japan's Unwavering Commitment to Development and Future 70 years of Japan's ODA

October 6, 2024, is a significant milestone for Japan, marking 70 years since its commencement of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 1954. Over these seven decades, Japan has extended its cooperation programs to 190 countries and regions, contributing to their economic and social development as well as peace and prosperity in the global community.

In synergy with the domestic initiatives of recipient countries, JICA's cooperation programs, such as those for infrastructure development and human resources development, have laid a solid foundation for their development. In Thailand, the Eastern Seaboard Development, facilitated by Japan's yen loans and technical cooperation in the 1980s attracted the automobile industry to Thailand, which in turn has fostered manufacturing and trade throughout the region. This represents a

significant milestone and serves as a prime example of the impactful collaborations between Japan and Thailand across various sectors. It has been the fundamental principle of JICA to respect ownership and self-help efforts of the partner country and to put strong emphasis on unwavering commitments with a long-term vision.

JICA's vision is "Leading the World with Trust". Our development cooperation has been focusing on human security, equal partnerships, and self-ownership by developing countries. We are committed to continued cooperation with developing countries and like-minded development partners. In a world of disruptions, it is important to maintain the values we consider essential, and that we respond to new challenges in a new way together, building on the trust that Japan has built over the years.

Mr. Kazuya Suzuki

Chief Representative
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Thailand Office



Creating Tomorrow Together 70 years of Japan's ODA in Thailand

Over the past 70 years, our partnership has engaged in a crucial role in enhancing Thailand's growth and quality of life by tackling both social and economic challenges. Together, we have undertaken a variety of impactful projects that have advanced key sectors, improved infrastructure, and supported community development. Building on this foundation, we are now actively extending the benefits of our collaboration beyond Thailand, sharing our development experiences and innovations with the region and beyond.

I had the opportunity to be working at JICA Thailand office, as a staff member from 2004 to 2007. I witnessed remarkable milestones, such as the opening of the MRT subway and Suvarnabhumi Airport. At that time, I was struck by the nation's dynamic energy and forward momentum. It's heartening to see that the same

spirit of vitality and enthusiasm endures, even 20 years later as I have returned. It is remarkable that since 2004, Thailand's GDP per capita has nearly tripled.

As we celebrate both the 70-year impact of our partnership and the 50th anniversary of the JICA Thailand Office, led by JICA's Global Agenda on Prosperity, People, Peace, and Planet, we are committed to advancing sustainable development and strengthening human security to ensure a resilient future for all. To create tomorrow together, we acknowledge the importance of deepening our collaboration with Thailand and expanding it with international development partners to achieve even greater impact in Thailand and the region. Only together can we create a future where no one is left behind.



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INTRODUCTION OF JICA's 20 COOPERATION STRATEGIES

JICA has set 20 cooperation strategies for global issues as "JICA Global Agenda" from the four perspectives of Prosperity, People, Peace, and Planet. Based on this "JICA Global Agenda," JICA collaborates with governments and individuals in partner countries to address global issues and to realize a free, peaceful, and prosperous world where people can look forward to bright future and pursue diverse possibilities

PROSPERITY

We support the development of high quality infrastructure, stable energy supply, development of industries, and improvement of farmers' livelihoods, which are the foundation and driving force of economic growth in developing countries. We assist to realize sustainable, strong, and prosperous societies.

- 1 Urban and Regional Development
- 2 Transportation
- 3 Energy & Mining
- 4 Private Sector Development
- 5 Agriculture and rural development (Sustainable Food Systems)

PEACE

We will realize a peaceful and just society that shares universal values such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, and that ensures stability and security. We will promote gender equality and utilize digital technology to solve problems.

- 11 Peacebuilding
- 12 Governance 15 Digital for Development
- 13 Public Finance and Financial System
- 14 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- 15 Digital for Development

PEOPLE

We support stable healthcare services, infectious disease control, improved nutrition, and quality education for all people. We will achieve a society where children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups are included and no one is left behind.

- 6 Health
- 7 Improving Nutrition
- 8 Education
- 9 Social Security / Disability and Development
- 10 Sport and Development

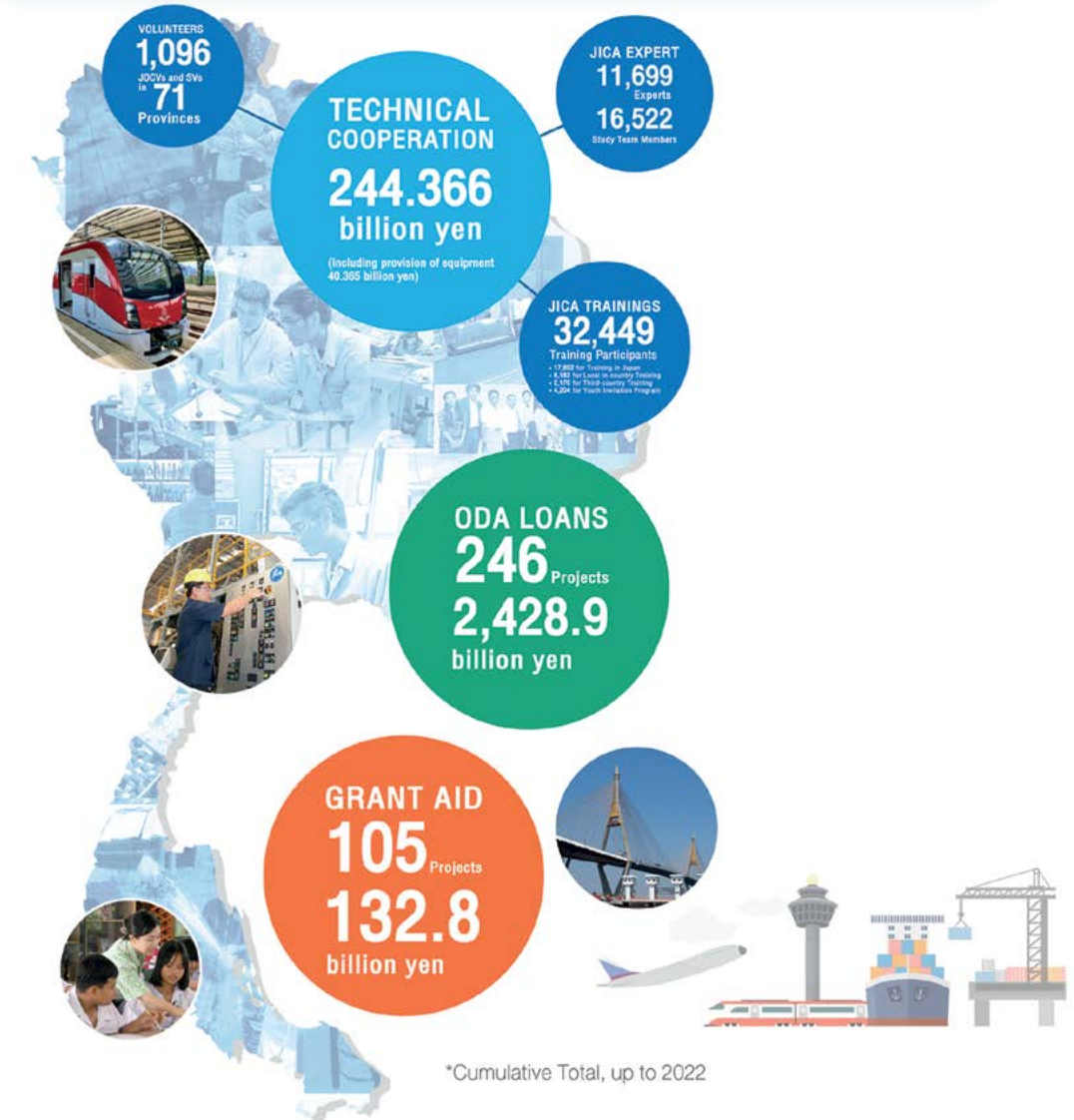
PLANET

We will respond to global issues such as climate change and environmental problems, which the international community must address together, and realize sustainable and resilient societies in developing countries where there are concerns about serious impacts.

- 16 Climate change
- 17 Natural Conservation
- 18 Environmental Management
- 19 Sustainable Water Resources and Water Supply
- 20 Disaster Risk Reduction through Predisaster Investment and Build Back Better

JICA at a Glance

Contributions to Thailand in Figures*



*Cumulative Total, up to 2022

Timeline of ODA Cooperation in Thailand

1954

Commencement of Technical Cooperation

Japan's ODA Loans in Thailand

1969

1970

Commencement of Grant Aid to Thailand

Establishment of JICA Thailand Office

1974

1981

1st batch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) to Thailand

Graduation of Thailand from Grant Aid with its status of becoming a Middle-Income Country

1993

1994

1st Phase of Japan-Thailand Partnership Programme (JTPP)

2nd Phase of Japan-Thailand Partnership Programme (JTPP)

2003

2016

Partnership Agreement signed with the Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Agency (NEDA)

Partnership Agreement signed with Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)

2017

2019

3rd Phase of Japan-Thailand Partnership Programme (JTPP)

70th Anniversary of Japan's ODA in Thailand

2024

Perspective of Cooperation Strategies **Prosperity**

CHAPTER





Credit: Shinichi Kuno

JICA supports the development of high quality infrastructure, stable energy supply, development of industries, and improvement of farmers' livelihoods, which are the foundation and driving force of economic growth to realize sustainable, strong, and prosperous societies.

Since the 1970s, JICA has supported Thailand's industrial development, making Thailand a major destination for foreign direct investment, along with the development of transportation infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, urban mass transit system, deep seaports, and international airports, to enhance economic activity and connectivity while alleviating problems caused by traffic congestion.



Credit: Shinichi Kuno

Construction of Maha Chesadabodindranusorn Bridge



Credit: Shinichi Kuno

Construction of MRT Purple Line



There are also series of agricultural and rural development projects supported by JICA in the areas of land reform, fisheries, livestock, and agricultural extension.

The assistance has covered various aspects from the strengthening of research and extension capacity to the development of organizational capacity and human resources.





The SRT Red Line Mass Transit System in Bangkok is a recent landmark achievement in Thailand-Japan collaboration, funded through an ODA loan to address the city's critical transportation and environmental issues. With a population of 10 million, Bangkok is Thailand's political and economic center. Rapid industrial growth and rising vehicle numbers have led to severe traffic congestion and air pollution, highlighting the need for more sustainable transport solutions. The Red Line Project features the 26-kilometer Dark Red Line (Thani Ratthaya), connecting Bang Sue Grand Station (Krung Thep Aphiwat Central Terminal) to Rangsit Station.

The Red Line is expected to significantly reduce traffic congestion, encourage a shift from road to rail travel, and lower carbon emissions.

Credit: State Railway of Thailand

Ms. Jindarat Viriyataveekul

Public Debt Advisor
Public Debt Management Office (PDMO)
Ministry of Finance

“Over the past decades, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has contributed to Thailand's socio-economic development through financial and technical assistance. This collaboration has encompassed 246 ODA loan projects along with technical support.

ODA loan projects include transportation projects, such as mass-transportation system in Bangkok aiming to enhance connectivity in Bangkok and neighboring areas. ODA loan also supports education and human resource development, including recent KOSEN Project which is considered crucial in developing practical and innovative engineers to support Thai industries.

I hope that the strong partnership between JICA and the PDMO will continue to strengthen the cooperation between Thailand and Japan, promoting both economic and social development.”



Interview clip is available at
JICA YouTube Channel
@JICAChannel02





The partnership between King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) and JICA has been instrumental in advancing Thailand's engineering education and research. Established in 1960 with JICA's support, the training center evolved into KMITL, one of Thailand's leading engineering institutions. Over the decades, JICA has continued to provide essential technical expertise, funding, and guidance, enabling KMITL to grow into a key player in international engineering education.

In response to Thailand's growing industrial demands, especially under the Thailand 4.0 policy, KOSEN-KMITL was founded in 2019 to develop a highly skilled engineering workforce.

This institute offers a specialized 5-year program for students as young as 15, focusing on Mechatronics, Computer, and Electrical Engineering. Japanese professors and experts contribute significantly, providing hands-on training that prepares students to become practical engineers. By fostering innovation, technological advancement, and sustainable development, the

partnership not only contributes to Thailand's prosperity, but also strengthens its ties with Japan, playing a vital role in driving industrial growth.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Komsan Maleesee

President
King Mongkut's Institute of
Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL)

“The partnership between King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) and JICA is a foundational element of tertiary engineering education and research in Thailand. Our collaboration began in 1960 when JICA helped establish the Nonthaburi Telecommunications Training Center. Recently, in accordance with an agreement between the Thai and Japanese governments, JICA and KMITL have introduced the KOSEN education. KOSEN-KMITL offers a five-year educational program for students starting at age 15, featuring three disciplines: mechatronic engineering, computer engineering, and electrical and electronics engineering. The operational framework of KOSEN-KMITL has been developed in collaboration with the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Japan, which has assisted in shaping the curriculum and quality of education, and enhancing the KOSEN educational approach.”



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Perspective of Cooperation Strategies **P**eople

CHAPTER



JICA supports stable healthcare services, infectious disease control, improved nutrition, and quality education for all people, to achieve a society where children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups are included. Since 1974, JICA has been cooperating closely with Thailand's public health sector for human resource development, primary health care, healthcare coverage, health infrastructure development, healthcare emergency health management, and research ability.



JICA focuses on developing a society for all people, including vulnerable groups, such as the disabled and the elderly, to realize a society, where they have security and safety. JICA has been continuously supporting the education sector in Thailand at all levels, since the early stage of ODA.

One of JICA's cooperation activities is supporting the enhancement of community-based care for elderly people through technical cooperation projects. 'The Project on the Development of a Community-Based Integrated Health Care and Social Welfare Services Model for Older Persons (CTOP) (2007-2011)' developed a community-based integrated service model for elderly people and promoted the integration of medical and social services. This was followed by 'The Project on Long-Term Care Service Development for the Frail Elderly and Other Vulnerable People (LTOP) (2013-2017)', which established integrated community-based services and created training programs for care workers and care coordinators. 'The Project on Seamless Health and Social Services Provision for Elderly Persons (S-TOP) (2017-2022)' focused on further developing integrated community-based services and creating models for seamless service provision for elderly people.

These comprehensive projects partnered with local governments and universities to strengthen health and social services at the community level and promote human resource development. JICA volunteers also contributed by sharing practical skills in areas such as physical and occupational therapy, long-term care, and health promotion, while collaborations with the private sector introduced innovative technologies and services for elderly care.



Ms. Keiko Mehra

Japanese Expert attached to Department of Medical Services, MOPH
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

"JICA has over 15 years of experience collaborating with the Thai Ministry of Public Health on aging-related issues through three key projects: CTOP, LTOP, and S-TOP. My role involves monitoring these projects to identify remaining challenges in improving the quality of elderly care in Thailand. Additionally, I aim to share Japan's expertise in aging care with Thailand and promote Thailand's experiences in addressing aging issues to other countries. While Japan has already transitioned into a super-aged society, Thailand is experiencing this shift much more rapidly. This presents unique challenges, as Japan had more time to prepare for its aging population."



Interview clip is available at
JICA YouTube Channel
@JICAChannel02





APCD Project

Since 2002, JICA has collaborated with the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) to promote a more inclusive society for people with disabilities in Thailand and across the Asia-Pacific region. APCD, based in Bangkok, was created with the joint efforts of JICA and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The center is a regional hub for promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities. APCD's impact extends beyond Thailand, working with more than 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Its efforts have been globally recognized, with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank identifying APCD as a model project for South-South Cooperation. By fostering regional collaboration and promoting disability rights, APCD, with JICA's support, continues to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



Mr. Piroon Laismit

Executive Director, Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)

“Established in 2001 through collaboration between the Thai government, represented by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and the Government of Japan, represented by JICA, the APCD aims to empower persons with disabilities and promote a barrier-free society in the Asia-Pacific region.

From the outset, we have received support from the Japanese government through grant aid and technical cooperation. The grant aid contribution includes the construction of the administrative building, and the training center for training individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, JICA has collaborated with us on three key technical cooperation activities: 1) training programs for persons with disabilities across the Asia and the Pacific region, aimed at enhancing their quality of life; 2) fostering cooperation and networking among partners in the region; and 3) managing information and knowledge related to disability issues.

Our training programs consistently generate valuable lessons learned and best practices that empower individuals with disabilities.”



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Perspective of Cooperation Strategies **P**eace

CHAPTER





JICA aims to realize a peaceful and just society that shares universal values such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, and that ensures stability and security. In Thailand, JICA supports the response of Thailand through regional network projects aimed at combating trafficking in persons in Mekong Region and other programs.



Strengthening Cyber Resilience

Established in 2018, the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) is supported by Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF 2.0) and JICA with the aim to develop a cybersecurity workforce to enhance the capacity of cybersecurity experts and specialists in the ASEAN Member States by providing trainings and other activities to participants from the ASEAN Member States.

Empowering Women in Rural Development

The Office of Extension and Training at Kamphaeng Saen, established in 1981 with grants from the Japanese Government, is located at Kasetsart University's Kamphaeng Saen Campus. With facilities for 300 participants, the Office of Extension and Training at Kamphaeng Saen has trained nearly 1 million individuals through 1,230 courses, impacting 43 countries. Notably, JICA has supported programs such as Enhancing Women's Role in Rural Development. The Office of Extension and Training at Kamphaeng Saen exemplifies how international collaboration can drive sustainable agricultural progress and rural development, contributing to global peace and stability.



Perspective of Cooperation Strategies **Planet**

Dr. Kanyarat Chiewvech

Director
The Office of Extension and Training
Kamphaeng Saen
Kasetsart University,
Kamphaeng Saen Campus

“Over 40 years ago, JICA began providing grants to build training facilities, media equipment, and other resources to support Thai farmers and indigenous communities in knowledge transfer and skill development. Subsequently, JICA assisted Kasetsart University (KU) in establishing The Office of Extension and Training Kamphaeng Saen, formerly known as the National Agricultural Extension and Training Center (NAETC), to empower agricultural officers with essential knowledge and experience. Today, JICA continues its commitment through the Third Country Training Program (TCTP), which focuses on developing curricula in areas such as sustainable development, the role of women in rural development, and the latest initiatives aimed at enhancing rice production in African countries.”



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Environment Research and Training Center (ERTC) supported by Japanese Grant Aid, circa 1991

JICA responds to environmental issues, such as natural environment conservation, water resource management and supply, disaster risk reduction, and air pollution. Since the 1970s, JICA has been working with Thailand to restore the ecosystem and environment, which had been deteriorating due to rapid economic growth, posing a threat to the quality of life.



Japan Disaster Relief Team during Thailand's 2011 Flood

With the increasing awareness of the global community to mitigate climate change, which has an enormous negative impacts in the socio-economy and people, currently JICA focuses on tackling global issues such as air pollution, marine debris, and climate change, while also providing technical and academic cooperation support for Thailand to achieve its goal of Net-Zero Emissions.



JICA has worked with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) to help the city transition to a more sustainable and resilient living environment. One of the master pieces is the Bangkok Master Plan on Climate Change, which outlines a comprehensive urban planning strategy for a low-carbon, climate resilient capital.

Connecting **Hearts** through **ODA**

Dr. Wijarn Simachaya

President
Thailand Environment Institute

“We have partnered with JICA on a number of projects aimed at enhancing personnel performance in environmental management. The lessons learned from environmental challenges at Map Ta Phut have contributed significantly to advancing sustainable environmental practices in Thailand.”

Looking ahead, we will continue to face environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, health issues, and various forms of pollution. To address these, ongoing support from the Japanese government in different capacities will be essential.”



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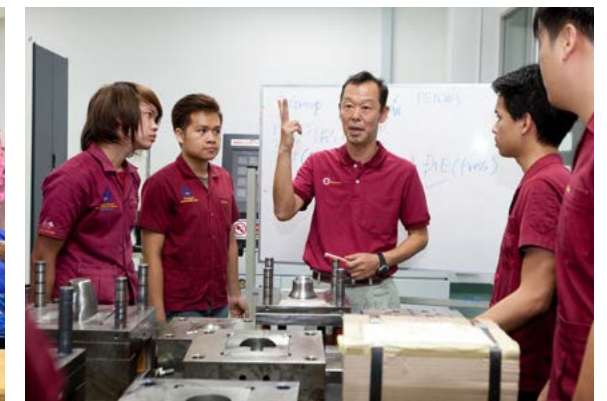




In 1954, Japan invited 21 Thai trainees to learn about agriculture, livestock industry, and fisheries. Since then, the training has been expanded to many sectors including, public health, industrial development, social security, environment, and others. By now, more than 30,000 persons have participated in training programs in Japan supported by JICA.



Since 1981, more than 1,100 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), have been dispatched all over Thailand at the grassroots level, to contribute to the development of Thailand as well as to gain valuable international experience. JOCVs focus on industrial human resource development, regional and rural development, and assisting socially vulnerable people, while building a strong bond between the two countries.



Mr. Nakorn Silpa-archa

Former President

JICA Alumni Association of Thailand (JAAT)

“ Human resource development is a critical issue, because people and workforces represent human capital. When they are well-trained and prepared, it leads to higher productivity.

Given that Japanese investment ranks among the highest in Thailand, it is essential to foster good understanding between Japanese employers and Thai employees, as well as to prepare the workforce with the skills that match the demands of Japanese employers. This alignment will also help attract further Japanese investments into Thailand.”



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Asst. Prof. Dr. Sutat Pattaravoratham

President

JICA Alumni Association of Thailand (JAAT)

“ On behalf of JAAT's members, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of JICA's 70th anniversary of ODA support to Thailand. JICA has contributed significantly to Thailand's development in various sectors, providing training in Japan to more than 30,000 government officials. Today, JAAT proudly has over 3,000 registered members.

JAAT and JICA have collaborated across several areas, allowing us to engage with our members and continuously share our activities.”



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Partnership for Regional and Global Issues

Mr. Toshiyuki Okui

Former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV)
NOGEZAKA-GLOCAL

“When I first came to Thailand as a JOCV, I thought I would transfer Japanese technology to Thailand. But in reality, what I learned in Thailand was much greater than what I delivered. I learned the importance of “learning from each other” from the experience of JOCV. By learning from each other, we aim for mutual development.

After JOCV, I worked in Thailand as a JOCV Coordinator and JICA Expert, and currently I am working for an NGO in the field of elderly care and education of migrant workers in Thailand and other countries. The concept of ‘learning from each other’ gained through the experience of JOCV remains as a core value of my activities.”



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Ms. Hiroko Itako

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV)

“I have been in Thailand for one year, focusing on promoting disability across the Asia-Pacific region. We employ two main approaches: first, mainstreaming the perspective of disability within the disaster risk reduction field; and second, empowering individuals with disabilities by raising awareness and encouraging knowledge-sharing. My role in this initiative is both rewarding and challenging.”



Interview clip is available at
JICA YouTube Channel
@JICAChannel02



With valuable resources and assets of ODA cooperation, JICA and Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), in cooperation with other Thai agencies, jointly support human resource development of other countries through the programs of the 'Third Country Training Program (TCTP)' to provide group training courses in Thailand, 'Triangular Cooperation' to strategically execute cooperation program to flexibly in accordance with the needs of the specific country, and 'Dispatch of Thai Experts'. In the course of collaboration, JICA shares its knowledge and experience on assistance and Thai sides provide cooperation resources and expertise which better match the circumstances of each beneficiary country.



JICA, in cooperation with Thai counterparts, has been taking initiatives to tackle with cross border and regional issues, such as infectious diseases, disaster response, and human trafficking, as well as to strengthen the global and regional network of institutional and human resources. In 2016, JICA, together with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and National Health Security Office (NHSO), launched the 'Partnership Project for Global Health and Universal Health Coverage' aiming to promote and support global health and universal health coverage in ASEAN countries and beyond.



Japan Disaster Relief Team during 2004 Tsunami in Thailand



Dr. Suwit Wibulpolprasert

Advisor to the Official of Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)

“Japan and Thailand collaborate to support other developing countries by sharing knowledge and providing technical assistance, particularly in achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and strengthening global health capacity. From our experience with Japan, I can confidently say that it has been one of the best partnerships.

While many Japanese colleagues are often perceived as rigid, they are flexible and open enough to listen, adapting gradually. One of the key lessons we’ve learned from working with Japan is that reaching agreements can take time. However, once the Japanese side commits to an agreement, they follow through effectively. Over time, this builds mutual trust, which accelerates progress. High trust leads to high speed and lower costs.

Thailand’s cooperation with Japan extends beyond just work—it’s built on trust, friendship, and continuous learning from each other.”



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Mr. Wattanawit Gajasen

Director-General
Thailand International
Cooperation Agency (TICA)

“Our collaboration with Japan began in 1981 through the Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the governments of Thailand and Japan. This agreement established a framework for Japan to provide technical assistance to Thailand.

In the past, Thailand was primarily a recipient of aid from donor governments, including Japan. Our cooperation with Japan has evolved in alignment with our national development plans. Japan has contributed significantly by providing experts for numerous projects, organizing country-focused training programs, and facilitating third-country training programs. We have placed strong emphasis on capacity building and human resource development, areas in which Japan has been a key partner in supporting Thailand’s growth.

We also learned a lot through the cooperation with Japan on the systematic way to discuss and design cooperation projects.”



Interview clip is available at
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Towards Future **P**artnership

While 70 years of Japanese ODA have passed, our work is far from complete. By combining our efforts, we can uncover innovative approaches to accelerate the effectiveness of our initiatives. This will also enhance our ability to address increasingly complex challenges and create lasting, meaningful outcomes. Now, as we celebrate 70 years of remarkable collaboration between Thailand and Japan, let us look to the future, towards new partnerships and opportunities.

Mr. Kazuya Suzuki

Chief Representative
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