

# JICA Global Agenda for No. 8 Education



Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) works toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

# 1. Objectives

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To enable quality education, thereby laying the foundation for a society where all people can fully develop their talents and abilities and live with dignity, and in turn promoting sustainable socio-economic development.

## 2. Current Situation, Analysis of Issues, and Reasons for Setting Objectives

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Education is a fundamental right that should be enjoyed equally by all people. It lays a solid foundation for each individual to fully develop their talents and abilities and live with dignity. Human resources with highly specialized knowledge and skills acquired through education are essential for sustainable social and economic development. In addition, respect for diverse cultures and values fostered through education constitutes the basis for an inclusive and peaceful society.

In light of this, Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aspires to "provide inclusive, equitable and quality education for all and promote opportunities for lifelong learning." SDG 4 encompasses a wide range of educational stages from pre-primary to higher education and pursues the ambitious and challenging goal of ever-greater quality assurance in education.

SDG 4 expands Education for All (EFA), an international consensus reached in 1990. Since then, thanks to the international community's efforts over the years, access to education has much improved, and enrolment rates have increased significantly. However, 263 million school-aged children and youth worldwide remain out of school (UIS, 2018a), and 610 million children and youth in school have not reached the minimum proficiency level in literacy and numeracy (UIS, 2017). The World Development Report (WDR) 2018 emphasized the importance of focusing on children's learning by describing the situation as a "learning crisis" where people enter adulthood without acquiring basic academic skills even though they have enrolled in school.

Although there have been improvements, persistent disparities due to poverty, gender, disability, ethnicity and language, and geographical difference make it a significant challenge to guarantee quality education for all children. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has led to school closures and worsening family economic conditions, leaving a tremendous impact on vulnerable groups. The World Bank estimates that school closures would increase the proportion of children who lack minimum literacy and numeracy by 25 percent, resulting

in a total loss of \$10 trillion from the future income of today's primary and secondary school children.

For sustainable socio-economic development, countries need to develop human resources with advanced expertise and skills to drive the development of each country in the areas of politics and law, economics, social development, and science, technology, and innovation. However, while enrollment in higher education in high-income countries averages over 75%, that of low-income countries hovers around 9%, indicating a significant gap among the countries.

In addition, universities in low-income countries are having difficulty in providing high-quality education and research. Even among leading universities in those countries, many are not sufficiently fulfilling their expected roles because they have not met the requirements to ensure quality, such as qualified faculty, facilities, equipment for education and research, academic networks with other universities, etc. As a result, there is a shortage of university-educated specialists such as government officials, researchers, and engineers (hereinafter referred to as "highly skilled human resources") and a brain drain of excellent human resources to other countries, making it a pressing issue for the governments to address.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted developing countries' higher education. As universities have been closed and students are not allowed to come to campus, many have turned to online classes as an alternative means of education. Still, continuing education and research while ensuring quality is a challenge. Further, students have lost the opportunity to study abroad for short or long periods. It has become more difficult to promote collaboration and cooperation among researchers and universities that involve physical travel.

On the other hand, as the global pandemic requires responses that utilize scientific knowledge and technologies from various fields, including engineering, agriculture, and medicine, there are growing expectations for universities to play a key role as a hub of knowledge. JICA-supported universities in various countries have started new research and development activities in response to the COVID-19 crisis, such as developing a web-based infection trend prediction system at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya.

The importance of education development in developing countries has long been recognized. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in 1990 set EFA as a policy goal shared across the international community. Its importance was reaffirmed with MDGs in 2000 and SDGs in 2015, and respective countries and development partners has worked closely to achieve the goals. Initially, expanding access to primary and secondary education was recognized as a priority policy agenda. However, with the steady increase in school enrolment, attention has shifted to children growing into adulthood without acquiring sufficient academic skills even after years of schooling. Now, SDG 4 explicitly calls for improving the quality of education to ensure children's learning.

The evidence available to date, according to WDR 2018, suggests three approaches to address the crisis. First, to improve children's readiness to learn (children in poverty tend

to have low academic achievement levels due to their inadequate developmental status, and school fees and opportunity costs are barriers to school attendance); secondly, to improve teaching practice based on the assumption that teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge and pedagogical understanding; and thirdly, to address effective school management (effective school governance does not immediately improve student learning, but it indirectly improves learning through effective use of resources) rather than the amount of investment.

On higher education, SDG Target 4.3 calls for "equitable access for all to quality technical and vocational education and higher education, including universities." In addition, to contribute to SDG 8 (economic growth and employment) and SDG 9 (infrastructure, industrialization, and innovation), it is necessary to develop highly skilled human resources and strengthen research capacity in various fields. The international community is actively engaging in these areas.

In response to these international trends, the Japanese government has also expressed its commitment in forms such as the Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN) in 2002 and the Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth in 2015. To expand access to education, Japan has contributed to improving education in developing countries by increasing the number of school facilities through grant aid and ODA loan, and actively expanding efforts to improve the quality of education. The importance of quality education has been further highlighted since the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016. In 2019, in its G20 Human Capital Investment Initiative for Sustainable Development, the leaders of G20 made a comprehensive commitment to continuous support for female education and training.

### 3. Significance of Japan and JICA's Engagement

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Education is a fundamental right that all people should enjoy equally to develop their talents and abilities and live with dignity. Education is also an essential element for the realization of a sustainable society and economic development. In addition, fostering respect for diverse cultures and values through education is the basis for an inclusive and peaceful society.

Education is one of the core areas in development cooperation by Japan, which emphasizes human development as the foundation of development. Providing assistance that takes advantage of Japan's strengths is of great significance not only because it contributes to the realization of human security but also because it builds a foundation for self-reliant, high-quality growth.

The strength of Japan's basic education lies in its quality and high enrollment rate.

Though various issues to be improved have been discussed, the results of international learning achievement tests such as PISA and TIMSS show that Japan has maintained one of the highest levels of academic achievement in the world. While there are many possible reasons for this, the 2017 OECD Education Policy Review points out the following characteristics as Japan's advantages: the highly skilled teachers; the provision of holistic education that aims for the balanced development of solid academic ability, rich personality and healthy body; parents and local communities who are supportive of school management. Furthermore, Japanese education characteristics include quality textbooks and teaching materials that fully consider the systematic nature of learning, science and mathematics classes that emphasize hands-on experiments, and Lesson Study, which is peer teacher training that supports teachers' professional development.

Concerning school enrollment, since the establishment of Terakoyas<sup>1</sup> in the Edo period (1603-1868) and the introduction of a compulsory education system in the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), the spread of schooling has been promoted in cooperation with local communities (philanthropists supporting the construction of schools, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA), community schools). The government also announced policies such as making education free and compulsory as early as the 1870s.

Building on these characteristics and strengths of Japanese Education, JICA has been supporting teacher training mainly in science and mathematics, textbook and teaching material development, educational improvement in collaboration with communities, and holistic education. These approaches overlap with the initiatives deemed effective in addressing educational issues, as evidence cited in the WDR 2018 indicates.

JICA's cooperation has been particularly advantageous in providing practical solutions and practices at the field level, which has earned the trust of recipient governments and development partners. JICA has developed a close cooperative relationship with them regarding scaling-up and feeding field knowledge back into policy. JICA continues to strategically develop cooperation for the educational development of developing countries, making the most of JICA's strengths while expanding cooperation in a policy-making process through development policy loans, etc.

In higher education, Japanese universities have a long history of developing quality human resources that have contributed to the socio-economic development of Japan during its modernization process, and post-war reconstruction and economic development phases. Although Japanese universities in the World University Rankings have been declining in recent years, many of them are continuously providing high standards of education and research activities. Therefore, Japan has an advantage in developing leaders by supporting government officials from developing countries to study at Japanese universities and strengthening higher education institutions in developing countries with Japanese universities as resources.

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<sup>1</sup> "Terakoya" is referred to as a community-based educational institution for the common people to learn reading, writing, and practical skills.

In particular, Japan is one of the best development models for developing countries. It was the first example of a non-Western country becoming a developed country. It has created a free, peaceful, and prosperous democracy by balancing tradition and modernity. Therefore Japan can share the experiences and lessons accumulated in the process of its modernization and development cooperation abroad.

In addition, as Japan has produced many Nobel laureates and is widely recognized as a country of science and technology, Japan's higher education in science, technology, and innovation is highly regarded in developing countries, so expectations for cooperation have been high. Japanese higher education in science and technology, with its emphasis on experiments and practical training, is expected to be an effective prescription for improving theory-centered education in developing countries and contribute to industrial development and employment promotion there through the development of highly skilled human resources.

## 4. Scenarios Contributing to Objectives of the Global Agenda, and Clusters

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### (1) Scenarios for contributing to the objective of the global agenda

Education is a long-term and sustained activity, usually spanning nine years of compulsory education alone, and is a project that takes a long time to develop the multifaceted abilities of each individual. Therefore, macro results do not necessarily appear in the short term. Moreover, as education consists of various factors such as educational policies and administration, budget, curriculum, teaching and learning materials, teacher training, school facilities and equipment, and involvement of local communities and parents, comprehensive approaches are necessary for its development and improvement.

However, it is difficult for JICA alone to cover all these areas. Then, while promoting our cooperation in areas where Japan has strengths as mentioned in Section 5 with a medium- to long-term perspective, we also promote close communication and collaboration with other development partners within the education development framework/scenario of the partner country to harmonize and maximize the impact of our cooperation throughout the sector.

In the area of higher education, as described below, we will contribute to the development of highly skilled human resources and the strengthening of higher education institutions in developing countries by strengthening leading universities, together with the JICA Development Studies Program and the JICA Chair.

Regarding basic education, JICA considers that Target 4.1 "All girls and boys

complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education for all" is the most prioritized issue in SDG 4. More specifically, JICA prioritizes addressing the "learning crisis," and advances the cooperation needed to ensure all children acquire literacy and numeracy skills. JICA supports children in acquiring solid knowledge and skills to solve higher-order thinking problems, and develop a positive attitude, motivation, and inquisitive minds to continue learning for a lifetime. Equally important is, as stated in Target 4.5, to provide educational opportunities to left-behind children such as girls, children with disabilities, and refugees, despite the global primary education enrollment rate being nearly 90%.

Specifically, we first set the "Cluster for learning improvement through the development of quality textbooks and learning materials." With a view to complete primary and secondary education, this cluster aims to address the learning crisis and achieve quality education for all, while utilizing the latest technologies such as DX, through the development of quality learning materials and the proactive professional development of teachers.

We in particular focus on science and mathematics in this area, where we have a wealth of experience and good resources, especially in mathematics, which is the foundation of all learning. For students to develop their talents and abilities in the future, they also need to acquire so-called "socio-emotional skills" (non-cognitive skills) such as self-affirmation (e.g., "I understand it" and "I can do it"), grit in tackling difficult problems, and cooperativeness and leadership cultivated through extracurricular school activities. Hence, we also address these skills in our cooperation for improving learning.

While the "Cluster for learning improvement through the development of quality textbooks and learning materials" is a school curriculum-based approach, JICA sets the "Cluster for education improvement through community-wide collaboration (widely known as "School for All")" to improve children's learning and environment comprehensively by encouraging cooperation between schools and communities

Furthermore, we set the "Cluster for improving education for leaving no one behind" to expand educational opportunities for the socially vulnerable who are left behind in the last 10% of the population (people with disabilities, girls, the poor, ethnic minorities, displaced people, etc.). This cluster aims to improve learning by vulnerable children, putting focus on both preventing children in schools from dropping out and providing quality education opportunities to out-of-school children mainly through better non-formal education (NFE).

Concerning higher education, we support recipient countries in developing highly skilled professionals who will drive socio-economic development and strengthen research capacity in politics and law, economics, social development, and science, technology, and innovation. Efforts here include (1) providing opportunities to study at Japanese universities (JICA Development Studies Program), (2) JICA Program for Japanese Studies (JICA Chair: support for the establishment of Japanese study courses at leading universities in respective countries), and (3) support for strengthening higher education institutions in developing countries.

While we set up the "Cluster for strengthening leading universities" here responding

to the above (3), we promote effective cooperation by combining them, considering the needs of the partner country and the resources of Japanese universities, since these three programs are mutually complementary, and some of them overlap.

The JICA Development Studies Program aims to develop human resources, who turn into future leaders in socio-economic development and policymaking in the respective country. The program contributes to developing pro-Japan leaders with a good knowledge of Japan by providing a systematic understanding of Japan's experience in modern development and its knowledge as a country that has provided ODA (Official Development Assistance) to developing countries for more than half a century, in addition to the study of each individual's field of specialization. This program is widely implemented for those in all sectors from all developing countries.

The JICA Program for Japanese Studies (JICA Chair) is a program to promote and expand this concept of the JICA Development Studies Program in developing countries. Through the deepening of Japanese studies in each country, it will involve not only the students of but also the intellectuals of the country and will expand the quality and quantity of pro-Japanese intellectuals with good knowledge of Japan.

On the other hand, the socio-economic development of each country requires a large number of highly skilled human resources in their respective fields, and it is difficult for JICA to meet all the needs for their development by supporting their study in Japan. Therefore, we set the "Cluster for strengthening leading universities." This cluster strengthens the education and research capabilities of leading (top) universities in the target countries and regions, building networks with Japanese universities and leading universities in other countries, and contribute to producing many highly skilled human resources every year and enabling knowledge co-creation through research. Meanwhile, we promote JICA Chairs at the leading universities as far as possible and collaborate with the JICA Development Studies Program.

So far, under the "Cluster for strengthening leading universities," we have been cooperating largely in the engineering field. This is because there is a significant shortage of engineers and other engineering-related human resources in developing countries, and there is a significant need for them. In the future, while continuing to work in science, technology, and innovation, we will also actively develop cooperation in the field of humanities and social sciences to promote and expand the concept of the JICA Development Studies Program and the JICA Chair.

Although technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is not clearly classified as a cluster, it remains one of the key sub-sectors that share the objectives of the Global Agenda for Education. TVET links education and industry through the acquisition of practical skills and techniques and is expected by governments and industry in developing countries to address youth employment issues.

On the other hand, in this rapidly changing world, it is becoming difficult for TVET systems to function, anticipating in advance the required skills in the labor market, and



developing human resources accordingly. Rather, it is crucial to nurture human resources that can flexibly respond to change. From this perspective, the priority is to build a society where many children can complete general secondary education. Furthermore, the development of human resources alone does not solve the employment problem if the demand for employment does not increase. Therefore, it is vital to plan and implement TVET in conjunction with industrial development strategies. In addition, it is becoming more challenging for us to meet the traditional specific technological needs with Japan's domestic resources.

Hence, we give priority to provide management support to flexibly responding to the changing times, based on the industrial development strategies of each country. We also promote collaboration with private companies to more appropriately reflect the needs of local industries. When the traditional support is needed, we primarily examine to extend regional cooperation such as third-country training utilizing institutional assets of past cooperation.

## **(2) Outline of the clusters**

Based on the above, the project will be developed following the directions of the clusters.

### **1) Cluster for improving learning through the development of textbooks and learning materials**

The goal of this cluster is for all children to acquire basic reading and math skills, considering the "learning crisis," in which about 80% of children do not achieve minimum a proficiency level in reading and mathematics. Our goal is not merely to help children acquire superficial knowledge and skills but support them to get solid knowledge and skills necessary to solve higher-order thinking problems. For this, the cluster focuses on cultivating a lifelong interest, motivation, and attitude toward learning in children's minds by accumulating a sense of self-affirmation such as "I can understand it now" and "I can do it now."

To deal with the "learning crisis," it is also necessary for teachers to conduct classes while carefully observing each child's learning achievement level. Therefore, while strengthening the capacity of teachers, which JICA has been focusing on, we also aim to improve children's learning through developing and disseminating systematic and high-quality learning materials.

Specifically, our approach will be to develop, through technical cooperation, quality textbooks and teaching materials, which are the most important tools for learning, and teachers' professional skills as learning supporters. JICA makes the most of the knowledge and expertise of Japanese textbook publishers, such as converting curricula into teaching materials and editing textbooks to suit learners' actual needs. We also actively try to collaborate with EdTech companies to promote the digitization of textbooks and learning materials, which is useful to supplement classroom learning, especially in the current COVID-

19 crisis.

Teachers play an essential role in enhancing the effectiveness of learning as learning supporters rather than instructors. Hence, we will support to create opportunities for continuous mutual learning among teachers and facilitate their professional development. By these efforts, we will improve children's basic learning skills while verifying the improvement of their academic abilities, interests, motivation, and attitudes through various evaluation methods such as impact evaluation.

We will promote this "Cluster for learning improvement through the development of quality textbook and learning materials" in any region. However, it is desirable to start with countries where we have a long history of cooperation in education and gradually expand the scope of cooperation to other countries. This is because textbook development, which involves curriculum revision, is a fundamental part of national education policies and a high level of expertise and experience is required both on the Japanese and partner sides. Therefore, this cluster will be implemented first in countries such as Central America (El Salvador) and Southeast Asia, which meet the above conditions.

To encourage this, we receive government officials and teachers from these countries as JICA trainees in Japan to develop highly specialized education administrators/instructors and establish a human network as a platform for mutual learning involving Japanese universities. Regarding countries in Africa and other regions with potential for future cooperation in this cluster, we gradually build up and strengthen relationships by using this network and platform.

We also consider taking comprehensive approaches whenever possible. For example, by synchronizing various modalities of our cooperation such as the dispatch of a policy advisor, the supply of Development Policy Loans (DPL), the construction of education facilities and the provision of teaching materials through grant aid, we link the policy and its implementation at an on-site level in order to produce a collective impact to the sector. Similarly, we also collaborate with other development partners to achieve a comprehensive impact on education development and reforms in the partner countries.

## **2) Cluster for educational improvement through community-wide collaboration**

Various factors affect children's learning. Given that the major factors that mitigate the learning crisis are preparing children for learning and achieving appropriate school management, we aim to improve education through collaboration with communities from the perspective of the comprehensive improvement of children's learning.

Despite significant improvements in school attendance in recent years, in some countries and regions the value of education is not fully understood, and schooling is far from being taken for granted. To develop children's potential through learning and build a prosperous society, parents and local communities need to understand the value of education and build trust with schools to support children's learning and growth. JICA has supported the development of such cooperative relationships between local communities

and schools to solve various educational issues through the projects known as "School for All" mainly in Francophone African countries since its first launch in Niger in 2003.

In this approach, a school management committee is established in every school through democratic elections by secret ballot to build a cooperative relationship between the community and the school. The community and school work together through this committee to identify, prioritize and solve their own educational problems (foundational model).

Based on this community-wide collaboration approach, School for All projects expand their activities to address various issues such as promoting school attendance and improving learning by providing remedial learning, establishing community kindergartens and providing school lunches (in the expanded model). Under the COVID-19 pandemic, community-wide collaboration also enables schools to function as a community safety net, for example, by implementing hygiene awareness activities and thereby contribute to deepening the trust in education.

JICA's strategy to date has been to create a practical model through technical cooperation and to scale up it in partnership with development partners such as the World Bank and GPE. At the same time, it has been building a network among target countries through mutual learning opportunities such as Knowledge Co-creation Programs based on training in Japan and region-wide seminars.

In preparation for TICAD8 and beyond, we aim to further mainstream the community-wide collaboration approach to education improvement by strengthening cooperation with development partners and dialogue with governments of both Francophone and Anglophone African countries.

We also pursue more effective cooperation through institutionalization, policy-making and the scaling up of school management committees with policy development loans and grants too. With an eye on the TICAD process, this cluster prioritizes Africa for the time being. Still, since the improvement of education through community-wide collaboration is a universal approach, we will consider expanding it to other regions in the future.

### **3) Cluster for improving education for leaving no one behind**

While primary school enrolment is nearly 90 percent globally, the most vulnerable 10 percent of the school-age population remains left behind. An estimated 263 million of the school-age population is still out of school (UNESCO UIS, 2018). Another 700 million children would not return to school due to school closures following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under these circumstances, we set the "Cluster for improving education for leaving no one behind" to provide quality education for all children and support the learning of vulnerable children, such as girls, children with disabilities, and refugees from countries affected by conflicts.

Of the 263 million out-of-school children worldwide, over 23 million are in one country, Pakistan, with the majority of them being girls. Addressing the out-of-school children issue in Pakistan is one of the crucial paths to achieving education where no one is left behind.

Therefore, we have selected Pakistan as a priority country in this cluster. We approach both formal education and non-formal education (NFE), focusing on reducing the number of out-of-school children, especially girls. In addition, we will strengthen gender mainstreaming through all the projects in education, which currently we have been addressing in certain projects only, such as those in PNG and other countries with low gender indices in girls' education.

For children with disabilities, lack of facilities and readiness to accept them at schools are major issues in improving their access to education. Accordingly, JICA has provided grant aid to construct classrooms and technical cooperation to promote inclusive education in Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and other countries.

Since the status and degree of disability vary from child to child, it is important to focus on each individual. In this sense, the individualization of learning through new digital technologies has a high affinity with the education of children with disabilities. From the perspective of promoting inclusive education, we will work with JICA's Global Agenda for Social Security to build a platform that includes stakeholders from the private sector, employing their educational materials. We also plan to provide educational support to refugees and host communities that host refugees, focusing on reducing dropout.

Grant aid plays a vital role in expanding access to quality education for all children. Grant aid in basic education has mainly focused on school construction to expand educational opportunities. In the future, we also work on school construction emphasizing specific purposes, such as school facilities designed for children with disabilities and girls. In addition, policy support through loan projects is desirable, as government commitment is crucial in assisting vulnerable groups.

Through these efforts, we continue to improve education that leaves no one behind. However, it is challenging to develop a one-size-fits-all approach because the low enrolment of the vulnerable stems from various factors. Except for Pakistan, our priority country, the focus is on small-scale initiatives tailored to individual project needs. This is an issue that is more or less common to all development partners, not just JICA. It is necessary to build networks with UNICEF, UNESCO, NGOs, and other key partners in this field, share good practices, and engage in collective advocacy to maximize the project's impact.

Enrolling the most vulnerable requires working closely with the local community. To promote access to quality education, developing quality textbooks and teaching materials is crucial. Therefore, it is important to coordinate with the "Cluster for community collaborative education improvement" and the "Cluster for improving learning through development of textbooks and teaching materials."

#### **4) Cluster for strengthening leading universities**

Regarding our cooperation for higher education, we will target leading universities in respective countries and regions to achieve efficient and effective cooperation with limited resources. We support strengthening their education, research, and management

capabilities, developing highly skilled human resources.

In addition, by building a network with other leading universities in the country and neighboring countries, and by promoting the acceptance of international students and research cooperation through this network, we aim to contribute to raising the level of the higher education sector as a whole and developing highly skilled human resources in the country and region.

Meanwhile, we will promote JICA Chairs as much as possible and deliver lectures on Japan's development experience at the target universities to develop leaders with a good knowledge of Japan.

Also, from the following perspectives, we are actively building a network between the target universities and Japanese universities, and among JICA-supported universities to promote collaboration and cooperation.

- We aim to establish an academic inter-university and inter-researcher network across the Indo-Pacific region, linking Japan, Asia, and Africa, to contribute to FOIP.
- In this network, multiple universities combine their resources to promote cooperation and collaboration in education and research, thereby efficiently and effectively strengthening the education and research capabilities of the leading universities that make up the network.
- We include leading universities from our past cooperation in the network to support universities in less developed countries by using the assets from the past cooperation as resources and maintaining an ongoing network with these universities.

In addition, to strengthen the education and research capabilities of the target universities, we actively support their faculty members in obtaining higher degrees through study at Japanese universities. This kind of cooperation contributes to strengthening the network with Japanese universities.

Building a network with core universities that attract excellent researchers and students is even beneficial for Japanese universities in terms of internationalization, such as accepting excellent international students, conducting international joint research with excellent faculty members, securing access to research fields internationally, and securing study abroad opportunities for Japanese university students. By mutually complementing support for study in Japan with support for strengthening higher education institutions in developing countries, we promote our recipient countries to produce highly skilled human resources.

Many Japanese universities involved in this cluster also participate in JICA Development Studies Program. We further deepen this partnership. We also strive to strengthen our partnerships with Japanese companies. By the end of the cooperation period, we aim to raise the cooperation of recipient universities with Japanese universities/industries to a level where they can maintain autonomous relationships. Moreover, even after the

cooperation is over, we will continue to maintain and develop the network between the target universities and Japan by proactively finding and selecting excellent young faculty members from the recipient universities and accepting them as international students in Japan for a long period.

As for support for universities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, we consider providing infrastructure for online education, supporting online internships and virtual job fairs, and providing scholarships to students in financial need. We also work with universities in developing countries to examine ways to promote inclusive education and effective DX in universities by promoting online lectures.

The second is to support academic exchange by organizing international online conferences and international academic seminars. Third, we provide research funding and advice from Japanese researchers for research activities that contribute to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the target universities in respective countries to enhance their research capacity and the capacity of each country to combat infectious diseases.

The above is based on the premise of collaboration with existing core universities. If we receive a request to support the establishment of a new university, we carefully consider it based on the following four principles.

- 1) It should be useful for the development of the country.
- 2) It should help strengthen the relationship between the country and the Japanese academic and industrial communities.
- 3) To ensure self-sustainability and continuity, there should be a long-term commitment from both the country and Japan (universities, foundations, education-related government agencies, etc.) to the operation of the established institution, including the burden of operating funds.
- 4) In principle, the support required in the initial stages of establishment should be in the form of loans. If necessary, technical cooperation will be provided for up to two five-year terms.

### **(3) Indicators**

By 2030, we aim to achieve the following indicators:

- Twenty million children benefit from our cooperation activities in this Global Agenda in education; in addition, more than forty million children benefit from our collaborative activities with various partners
- Three million girls and vulnerable children benefit from our education support to improve schooling and learning environments
- Academic performance in mathematics improve in certain representative projects of the "Cluster for improving learning through development of textbooks and learning materials" and the "Cluster for educational improvement through community-wide collaboration."

- A total of 300,000 highly skilled human resources are to be developed at the target universities through the cluster's efforts to strengthen leading universities.

## 5. Strategic Approaches for the Global Agenda and Clusters

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### (1) University cooperation (including JICA Development Studies Program) and JICA Chair

In all higher education projects, Japanese universities are assumed to be the domestic resource, and networking and joint projects (international joint education programs, student exchange, joint research, etc.) between Japanese universities and the target universities are promoted.

- In collaboration with the JICA Development Studies Program, JICA Chairs are held at the target universities in the recipient countries, and lectures on Japan's development experience are given. Meanwhile the faculty members of the universities participate in the JICA Development Studies Program when studying in Japan (long-term training).
- In basic education, we have strengthened our relationship with Hiroshima University and Naruto University of Education as our primary partners, seconding our staff members to these universities. We will further expand this kind of partnership with other Japanese universities to enhance our cooperation activities in the sector. For realizing more effective and efficient cooperation, the capacity development of counterpart personnel should be addressed more and the Japanese universities can further contribute to this by accepting them as international students to their study programs.
- The Knowledge Co-creation Program is the first step in building cooperative relationships with universities. We take this as a foothold to expand into the wider area, new fields, and in the future, in cooperation with the JICA Development Studies Program.

### (2) Private sector collaboration (including the use of DX)

In developing textbooks and learning materials, it is helpful to utilize the expertise of textbook publishers. In addition, the use of DX is an important tool in the transition from group instruction in the classroom to personalized learning. Especially as the pandemic of COVID-19 makes it more difficult to travel to school, the use of DX in our cooperation is becoming

increasingly important. Then we will strengthen our ties with private businesses and promote the use of DX technology.

"Edu-Port Japan," a public-private partnership platform led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), is a platform established by the Japanese government for the overseas development of Japanese-style education and JICA has been involved in its operation since the beginning.

As good examples of collaboration have been accumulated on this platform, we will support expediting the overseas activities of Japan's education industry, and seek the possibility of collaboration with them, especially in textbook and learning material development and distance education.

In terms of cooperation in higher education, we promote collaboration with industry in all regions, including internships and joint research. In particular, we encourage collaboration with Japanese companies in Southeast Asia and South Asia, where many Japanese companies operate.

### **(3) Return to Japanese society and multicultural harmony**

We are also strengthening our links with Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs). JOCVs are key players in promoting and developing JICA's activities at a field level in respective countries. As education is one of major areas of their activities, we can strengthen the impact of our projects at a field level by sharing textbooks, learning materials, and other related tools developed by the projects with the JOCVs and getting feedback from them.

It is also important to proactively support various initiatives such as extracurricular lessons in Japan delivered by ex-JOCVs, as sharing their overseas experiences can help domestic students in Japan deepen understanding of cultural diversity in the world. Furthermore, it can contribute to supporting children with foreign roots. JICA has provided textbooks developed in Central America as learning materials for children with Spanish roots living in Japan. In the future, we will expand this and establish a system to widely provide in other languages such learning materials and tools developed by our projects and JOCVs to students with foreign roots in Japan through local governments.



## What is the JICA Global Agenda?

JICA's cooperation strategies for global issues. JICA, with its partners, aims to show global impacts realizing the goals set under JICA Global Agenda. JICA Global Agenda and its goals will be shared among partner countries and various actors, enhancing dialogue and collaboration, therefore, maximizing the development impacts. Through these efforts, JICA will comprehensively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 as well as realize Japan's Development Cooperation Charter which focus on "human security," "quality growth," and "addressing global challenges".

Cover photo: Jiro Nakahara/ JICA



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Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is an international cooperation organization that is centrally responsible for the implementation of bilateral assistance among Japan's Official Development Assistance. JICA cooperates with about 150 countries and regions around the world.

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