

# A society where all people can live with dignity

JICA supports building of a society where human rights are guaranteed, democracy and the rule of law are realized, and each individual is respected.

JICA cooperates in the development and operation of legal systems, the improvement of public broadcasting functions, and the implementation of appropriate administrative services, with the aim of realizing universal values such as basic human rights, freedom, and the rule of law, and to achieve a society in which each individual is respected as a human being. JICA supports the strengthening of democratic and inclusive governance.



## Various issues that arise when the "rule of law" is not established

### There are people whose rights are undermined because of issues in the government and judicial system

There are many countries and regions in the world where people's rights are not protected because administrative and judicial systems and media do not function, and laws, even when in place, are not properly enforced. In particular, the rights of vulnerable groups such as children and women are threatened.



**1.4 billion** people have unmet **civil or administrative justice needs**

In the past two years, 1.4 billion people experience a civil or administrative justiciable problem related to accessing public services; money; housing or land; family; and employment and cannot meet their needs, according to the international survey on access to justice conducted in 2019.

Source: World Justice Project, Global Insights on Access to Justice (2019)

### The average prevalence rate of bribery in low income countries

is **37.6 %**, versus **7.2 %** in high-income countries

More bribery occurs in low-income countries than in high-income countries.



Source: UNODC, Monitoring SDG16 key figures and trends (2021)

### 1 in 10 children worldwide engaged in child labor

Globally, 130 million children aged 5 to 17 years are engaged in child labor. Child labor deprives children of access to education and healthy development.

Source: IOM, UNICEF, Global Estimates of Child Labour (2024)



Around **31%** of prisoners worldwide are held in detention without being sentenced for a crime

It is estimated that 31% of those in prisons, detention centers, and other penal institutions are held in detention without being sentenced for a crime.



Source: United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025(2025)

In **138** out of 180 countries, the press freedom is blocked

The conditions for journalism (the press freedom) are "difficult" or "very serious" in over half of the world's countries and satisfactory in fewer than one in four.



Source: Reporters Without Borders, 2025 World Press Freedom Index (2025)

## Why do Japan and JICA work on the issue?

### Building trust through cooperation that is close to the people and that respects societal values and the history of partner countries

In the Meiji period, Japan started modernizing its judicial and administrative systems by learning from Western countries. After World War II, Japan substantially reformed its judicial system and also established a new civil service system and a local government system. JICA has earned trust by

drawing on Japan's long experience in modernization, administrative reform, and consolidation of the rule of law and democracy, as well as by providing cooperation that is close to the people and that respects the actual conditions and historical background of each country.

**Approach 1 Realizing the Rule of Law**

In order to guarantee basic human rights, freedoms, and equality, it is essential to develop laws and regulations, and to train judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police, and other personnel and organizations responsible for the operation of the judicial system and law enforcement. JICA also provides support for the media, and the election management as freedom of expression and participation in election are fundamental human right and an important right that underpins democracy. In recent years, eliminating human rights violations caused by corporate activities has also become an important issue, and JICA is working on issues related to "business and human rights," including the elimination of child labor.



**Approach 2 Strengthening the capacity of public officials and public human resources**

JICA supports the improvement of civil service systems in partner countries and regions to ensure the appropriate and efficient the service delivery by public administration. First, JICA will work to develop human resources through the establishment of a civil service recruitment examination system and a training system, and also to create a mechanism to ensure the transparency of administrative procedures. By Promoting capacity development of public servants who will serve as national and local leaders, closer networks between Japan and partner countries can also be strengthened. Municipalities will provide support to strengthen policies and institutions to formulate and implement business plans based on the participation of and collaboration with local residents and nongovernmental organizations. These efforts are effective in ensuring that the effects of development are not temporary, but rather that they lead to democratic development.



**Approach 3 Strengthening Maritime Security Capabilities**

In order to maintain international order at sea, JICA is also working to share knowledge and experience in the law of the sea and international law through training and other programs, and to strengthen the

organizations responsible for maritime security to enhance their ability to enforce maritime law. The area of emphasis is the Indo-Pacific Ocean, a key region for maritime transportation.

## 1

Law and Justice Bangladesh

## Development of Mediation and civil litigation practice for enhancement of access to justice project

Since the launch of the first legal and judicial development cooperation in Vietnam in 1996, JICA has been working primarily on legislative drafting and the development of legal professionals, in collaboration with Ministry of Justice, university experts and Japan Federation of Bar Association. In recent years, however, JICA's efforts have also expanded to improving access to justice.

In Bangladesh, delays in court procedures and a shortage of judges have become major obstacles to people's access to justice. In response, JICA has been supporting the promotion of mediation at district courts and legal aid offices, as well as improvements in litigation practices since 2024.

Ensuring equal access to justice for all, including socially vulnerable groups, contributes to human security by safeguarding people's lives and dignity.



Mediation Seminar Held in Dhaka City, November 2024

## 2

Administration Honduras

## Contributing to people's well-being through the implementation of needs-driven municipal planning

Since 2006, Honduras has been developing an inclusive municipal planning methodology through citizen participation, in order to provide administrative services that meet the needs of its residents.

JICA has long supported Honduras in this effort by improving the methodology, establishing systems for monitoring and evaluating the formulated plans, and strengthening the capacities of municipal staff and other stakeholders.

Through this cooperation, municipal plans that reflect the needs of the people have been formulated, and high-quality administrative services have been delivered, contributing to the improvement of people's well-being.



Conducting censuses for village residents

## Working with Partners

## Pursuing new ways of cooperation with diverse partners with wide-ranging knowledge and expertise

In order to establish the rule of law and realize a society where people can live with dignity, JICA needs to rely on partnerships with ministries and local governments with rich experience and knowledge, legal professionals and researchers with advanced expertise, and universities with

a proven track record in international student programs, among others. JICA will build on various cooperation activities with a long-term perspective to identify new ways of cooperation.



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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.

<https://www.jica.go.jp/english/activities/>

## What is JICA Global Agenda

JICA's 20 cooperation strategies for global issues to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 and to the realization of Human Security as the guiding principle of Japan's development cooperation. We set global goals based on an analysis of the issues and promote our development cooperation projects to achieve them. Furthermore, we aim to expand the results of development cooperation by promoting dialogue and collaboration with our partner countries as well as various actors at home and abroad.

Cover Photo — The four areas of governance that JICA is working on, clockwise from top left: law and justice, public administration (as in Honduras), media, and police (as in Indonesia).  
photos: Getty Images (Law and Justice, Media), JICA (Public Administration, Police)

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