



JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development



March 2025

Message from the Executive Director

From climate change, demographic transitions, natural disasters, pandemics and debt crises to regional conflicts, the world now faces compounded, multi-layered crises. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has disrupted the post-Cold War world order and caused global energy and food crises. While the so-called Global South emerges and the world increasingly inclines toward multipolarity, inequalities within and between countries are growing, and populist sentiments are gaining force across the world. Despite persistent efforts to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), several billion people around the world remain exposed to acute poverty and violence and are tormented by uncertainty about the future.

From times like this, human security emerges as a concept that aims to achieve a society where each and every human being can live in dignity and no one is left behind. Guided by this idea, development agencies must push forward practice that creates a virtuous cycle of peace and development on top of existing development cooperation efforts. Madam Ogata Sadako, who raised the torch of human security throughout her life and pursued noble ideals for humankind, advocated that we should constantly revisit the challenges we encounter in the field. Madam Ogata urged us to partake of the joys and sorrows of the most destitute, such as refugees, and make sure that our assistance would reach them, while fully respecting their agency.

As members of a research institute that keeps the wishes of Madam Ogata alive, aims for sustainable peace and development, and pursues human security, we endeavor to create practical knowledge grounded on our experience in the field. While maintaining world-class academic standards in development studies, we will organize empirical research that contributes to international cooperation practice and try to disseminate research outcomes that make an impact on policymaking. Through lively research activities, we promote gender mainstreaming and inclusive development, paying full attention to those vulnerable to threats and risks.

Let us reflect on what kind of research is required of our institute. Research that “contributes to the practice” may have different dimensions. First, I believe that research to assess the validity of conventional methods that evolved from the long-standing experience of development practitioners is of great importance. We should confirm the effectiveness of the routine methods we have assumed to be effective, so that we can deliberately use and promote them as part of the advantages of Japan's development cooperation. Second, in development cooperation practice, we often feel at a loss as to the choice of appropriate options when several different means are available to realize a single objective. Lessons learned in various cases need to be compiled to ensure the relative effectiveness of different options. This is the kind of research that will contribute to wiser policy choices.

Third, precisely because we live in times of unprecedented crises, we must be able to produce research that proposes new paradigms that go beyond conventional beliefs and modalities. Such ambitious research will challenge existing norms prevalent in policymaking, development cooperation practice, and the world of academic research. Provocative, path-breaking research that would start spirited debates will be beneficial, as long as it is based on facts. Upon moving our research activities forward in such directions, we recognize the value of data, collect information and utilize digital technologies.

For development cooperation in an era of complex, compounded crises, we need to get a wide range of actors involved, including the private sector, civil society and local governments. At JICA Ogata Research Institute, in partnership with universities, the JICA Development Studies Program is growing very rapidly. In order to aim for the creation of comprehensive knowledge for peace and development, we would also like to enhance collaborations with researchers in natural sciences and humanities in addition to social sciences. Furthermore, as a development agency, JICA has been conducting activities in countries of the Global South for a long time. Taking advantage of this experience, while harmonizing with the principles of OECD-DAC and fully considering global trends in development assistance, we will further co-create knowledge with researchers and research institutes in developing countries. As we expand our collaborative efforts in our six research clusters, we will draw universal lessons from Japan's development experience and disseminate our research results widely, both domestically and internationally, through seminars and public relations activities.

Utilizing the great intellectual assets built under the directorship of my predecessors, we will continue to accumulate empirical research outcomes steadily. Moreover, based on the principles of Japan's 2023 Development Cooperation Charter, we will step into bold and exploratory research activities that are ahead of the curve. By doing so, we pledge to contribute to building a better world where everyone can trust each other and live in security.

Mine Yoichi

Executive Director, JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development

JICA Ogata Research Institute

Dr. OGATA Sadako led JICA as President from October 2003 until March 2012. Dr. OGATA emphasized a field-oriented approach in which projects were carried out on the basis of the needs of local people and local context, and she focused her efforts on promoting human security.

President OGATA spearheaded the establishment of the JICA Research Institute in October 2008 with the aims of conducting policy-oriented studies on challenges faced by developing countries in the field and strengthening Japan's intellectual presence in the international community.

Dr. OGATA passed away on October, 2019 but we are keeping her legacy alive. On April 1, 2020, we are reborn with a new name in order to carry on and develop the purpose for which she established the JICA Research Institute. We also seek to further enhance the intellectual contributions that the institute makes toward the dual purposes of world peace and development.

Our Vision and Basic Policy

The JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development attaches high importance to synthesizing and sharing the Japanese development experience, as well as its accumulated knowledge and expertise as a donor country. We will also enhance our research and dissemination activities, giving due consideration to today's challenges and threats such as the changing international order, the transition to an information-based society, and climate change. By doing so, we aim to become a world-leading research hub for development and international cooperation.

Our vision and basic policy are as follows:

Vision

Co-Creating Practical Knowledge for Peace and Development

Basic Research Policy

- 1. Conduct research of international academic standard and actively disseminate its results;**
- 2. Bridge research and practice by analyzing and synthesizing knowledge from the field; and**
- 3. Contribute to the realization of human security**

Building on these policies, we will undertake research such as strategic promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emerging development challenges, to respond to the priorities of the changing international community. We will also promote the JICA Development Studies Program as one of the responsible organizations and actively share Japan's own experiences, while strengthening our functions to provide for human resource development and research exchange.

Research Clusters

The JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development (JICA Ogata Research Institute) has established six priority research clusters.



1. Politics and Governance

Across the world, wars, coups d'états, and authoritarian regimes are destroying people's peaceful lives, depriving them of opportunities to pursue the rich possibilities of life and even their very life. Furthermore, with competition among the major powers intensifying, it has become more important than ever for many developing countries to establish a diplomatic environment free from their influence and to build a fair and stable system for governing their own societies.



Aware of such circumstances, the Politics and Governance cluster seeks to understand what kind of conditions in both domestic and international politics, as well as social mechanisms, will allow every person to enjoy human security regardless of the country they live in. For instance, we will look at norms and institutions, including liberal democracy and the rule of law. And, although it is an urgent task to reverse the global trend of liberal-democratic recession, it is also important to bear in mind that values that are inflexibly defined carry the risk of being used as an excuse to attack other countries. In this context, redefining political and social values and the institutional foundations that support them has become a more critical challenge than ever before. Also, we will explore what kind of bilateral relationships developing countries are trying to build with great powers such as China, to secure their development and peace, in the face of intensifying competition between those powers.

Representative Research Projects

- The New Dynamics of Peace and Development in the Indo-Pacific: How Countries in the Region Proactively Interact with China

2. Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction

There are still many impoverished people in the world, and poverty reduction remains a fundamental development challenge. In addition, some countries that have achieved a certain level of development are faced with the problem of disparities and delays in social development, and thus it is necessary to achieve not only quantitative economic growth but also quality growth with inclusiveness, sustainability and resilience.



Household survey in Cambodia

This research cluster is mainly engaged in the verification of the effectiveness of development policies and programs. This includes research on financial inclusion and overseas remittances in developing countries, and the analysis of the socioeconomic impact of infrastructure projects, one of Japan's major areas of assistance. To clarify that policies and initiatives in developing countries are effective for economic growth and poverty reduction, we conduct evidence-based analysis comparing intervention and non-intervention.

Representative Research Projects

- Study on the Promotion of Financial Inclusion: The Case of Cambodia
- Empirical Research on the Social and Economic Impacts of Infrastructure Projects

3. Human Development



Field study in Bangladesh

Human development is the process of enlarging people's capabilities and choices so that they can live full, creative and stable lives in freedom and dignity. Receiving an education, living a long and healthy life, and enjoying a good living standard are indispensable for individuals, as well as for the socio-economic development of communities. This is one area where Japan can make full use of its unique know-how cultivated in Japan and through the experience of providing assistance to developing countries during the past few decades. Faced with changes in the global context of human development, it is becoming more important than ever to create evidences and empirical knowledge and disseminate this to the world in a way that will guide the direction of future development policy and strategy.

Key research topics include the history of Japan's international cooperation in education, the impact of studying abroad, the acceleration of universal health coverage (UHC), and Japan's international cooperation and development experience in health care. Moreover, we aim to strengthen collaboration with global research institutes and expand our intellectual networks.

Representative Research Projects

- Empirical Research on Impacts of Study Abroad in Developing Countries - based on Study Abroad Experiences of Academic Professionals of Major Universities in ASEAN
- COVID-19 Study for UHC and Resilient Society

4. Peace Building and Humanitarian Support

In today's world, various crises threaten people's survival, livelihoods, and dignity. These include armed conflicts, large-scale natural disasters, outbreaks of infectious diseases, and transnational crimes.

There are many underlying causes of these crises—such as poverty, discrimination, inequality and climate change—requiring the international community to think and act innovatively and dynamically.

From the perspective of realizing human security and sustaining peace in the face of imminent threats, we attempt to analyze the factors behind these crises in a more systematic way and explore effective approaches to address them through comparative studies of initiatives taken by diverse actors engaged in humanitarian support, sustainable development, and sustaining peace.



Book launch and open symposium "How Is Human Security Practiced by ASEAN+3?" in Tokyo.

Representative Research Projects

- Contextualizing International Cooperation for Sustaining Peace: Adaptive Peacebuilding Pathways
- Human Security and the Practices of Empowerment in East Asia

5. Global Environment

In many developing countries, environmental problems such as disruptions of natural ecosystems, biodiversity loss, inadequate waste management, and water and air pollution are becoming more serious than ever with the progress of economic development, population growth and urbanization. Climate change is also a threat to the stability and prosperity of all countries and to human security as a whole.

On one hand, environmental problems need to be addressed locally in consideration of their often unique local contexts. On the other hand, they call for international cooperation as common global issues and need to be analyzed and addressed in the broader context of sustainable development because they are intertwined with other social and economic issues.

Under these circumstances, this research cluster undertakes both local-level case studies and global level sustainability analyses. More specifically, it conducts research on policy implications to address local issues related to environment and climate change in developing countries. In addition, it studies the indicator frameworks of sustainable development with a view to contributing to discussions on the post-2030 international goals for sustainable development.

Representative Research Projects

- Study on quantitative evaluation of climate change adaptation benefits of urban flood management
- Study on the Indicator Framework for Post-2030 International Development Goals
- Situational analysis on the most vulnerable climate change displaced people and their participation and empowerment for sustainable community development

6. Development Cooperation Strategy

Since Japan began its development cooperation activities, the political and economic environment in Japan and abroad has changed significantly. Cross-sectoral research to guide future directions for development cooperation, including JICA's programs and strategies, by learning from history and conducting empirical analysis is becoming more important than ever before.

Development Cooperation Strategy cluster is focusing on studies that recap the history of Japan's development cooperation, as well as those that explore the characteristics of its development cooperation in the field of industrial development as an example, and the history of Japanese migration to South America.

We also conduct research on contemporary issues such as the multicultural coexistence and research on cooperation approaches in the agricultural sector and international volunteers. Through these kinds of research, the cluster examines how international cooperation should function and what approach should be taken to make it effective in today's world.

Representative Research Projects

- Japan's Development Cooperation: A Historical Perspective
- An Empirical Analysis on Expanding Rice Production in Sub Sahara Africa
- An empirical research on the impact of the SHEP approach on small-scale farmers
- Research Project on the Japanese Experience of Industrial Development and Development Cooperation: Analysis of Translative Adaptation Processes
- International Migration Routes and Route Selection Mechanism

Joint Research and Networking

To participate effectively in the formation of international trends in development and international cooperation, the JICA Ogata Research Institute is actively engaged in intellectual partnership with internationally influential research institutions and in the construction of research networks. We are also cooperating in many other ways, including co-hosting seminars and exchanges among researchers.

Representative Research Projects

- For the World's Profit: How Business Can Support Sustainable Development (with Brookings Institution)
- Employment: The Impact of Global Changes in Industrial Structure and Demographics (with the Initiative for Policy Dialogue (IPD) at Columbia University)

JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP)



The JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP) invites future leaders of developing countries to Japan and offers them an opportunity to learn about Japan's development experience, as Japan has a unique experience of modernization and also has provided assistance to developing countries.

The JICA Ogata Research Institute collaborates with master's and doctoral programs at Japanese universities, mainly in the fields of law, politics, economics, and social development. Also, with the aim of promoting understanding of Japan among international students, we have produced the online program with the Open University of Japan: "Fifteen Chapters on Japanese Modernization."

Fifteen Chapters on Japanese Modernization

* Lecturers' titles as at the time of production.

Chapter 1: Meiji Revolution: Start of Full-Scale Modernization
Dr. Shinichi Kitaoka, President, JICA

Chapter 2: Rise and Fall of the Party Politics in Japan
Prof. Kaoru Iokibe, University of Tokyo

Chapter 3: Japan After World War II
Prof. Akihiko Tanaka, President, GRIPS

Chapter 4: Economic Growth and Japanese Management Prof. Hiroyuki Itami, President, International University of Japan

Chapter 5: Educational Development in Modernization of Japan Dr. Nobuko Kayashima, Senior Vice President, JICA

Chapter 6: From "Asia and Japan" to "Japan in Asia" Dr. Takashi Shiraishi, President, Prefectural University of Kumamoto

Chapter 7: A Japanese Approach to International Cooperation Prof. Hiroshi Kato, International University of Japan

Chapter 8: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Modernization in Japan Prof. Koichiro Matsuda, Rikkyo University

Chapter 9: Modern Japan and the Wars
Dr. Shinichi Kitaoka, President, JICA

Chapter 10: Japan and Modern International Law Prof. Atsuko Kanehara, Sophia University

Chapter 11: Modernization of Japan's Administrative System Prof. Izuru Makihara, the University of Tokyo

Chapter 12: Development of Industries and Industrial Policy Prof. Tetsuji Okazaki, the University of Tokyo

Chapter 13: Modernization in Japan—The Fiscal and Monetary Field President Hiroshi Watanabe, President, Institute for International Monetary Affairs

Chapter 14: The Road to a Nation of Science and Technology Dr. Mariko Hasegawa, President, The Graduate University of Advanced Studies

Chapter 15: Public Health and Health Systems in Japan – A Historical View
Emeritus Prof. Atsuko Aoyama, Nagoya University

Seminar Series "JICA Ogata Research Institute Knowledge Forum"

JICA Ogata Research Institute has been holding the open seminar series, "Knowledge Forum," on a regular basis. The forum not only disseminates various research findings to the general public, but it also provides an opportunity for open discussions among diverse domestic and international stakeholders interested in international cooperation to promote mutual learning and knowledge sharing between academic research and development cooperation practice.

The Knowledge Forum aims to function as a "Knowledge Co-Creation Platform," where diverse stakeholders can share and mutually learn international trends and knowledge on development cooperation and generate new ideas.

Main Publications

Other publications can be
accessed from here



Research Papers

The series aims to disseminate research outputs on development issues and development cooperation in the form of academic papers. In principle, the papers are peer-reviewed and assessed by the review committee under the JICA Ogata Research Institute.

Discussion Papers

The series aims to disseminate research outputs, including the interim findings on development issues and development cooperation in the form of academic papers. For the sake of quick dissemination, the papers are not peer-reviewed but assessed by the review committee under the JICA Ogata Research Institute.

Working Papers (~FY2021)

The series aims to disseminate research outputs on development issues and development cooperation in the form of academic papers. Since FY2022 Working Papers have been renewed as Research Papers or Discussion Papers.

Policy Notes

Policy Notes summarize findings and recommendations from studies conducted primarily by the JICA Ogata Research Institute to provide evidence-based information for policymakers and practitioners and to contribute to international debates on development policy.

Project History Series

The Project History is a series of books, which review the trajectories and results of JICA projects. The main target readers of the series are the younger generations who are interested in international cooperation, and gives them information about actual situations in development cooperation focused on describing people's activities.

Books and Reports (Selected Examples)

- Kharas, Homi, Makino Koji, McArthur John, Nelson Jane. 2025. *For the World's Profit: How Business Can Support Sustainable Development*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Guadagno, Lorenzo and Robles Lisette R. 2024. *Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action: Operational Challenges and Solutions for Supporting People on the Move*. London: Routledge.
- Okabe, Yasunobu. 2024. *State-Managed International Voluntary Service: The Case of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers*. Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Kayashima, Nobuko, Sugimura Miki, Kuroda Kazuo, and Kitamura Yuto. 2024. *Impacts of Study Abroad on Higher Education Development*. Singapore: Springer Singapore.

JICA Ogata Research Institute Report *Human Security Today*

JICA Ogata Research Institute has been publishing its flagship report series *Human Security Today* in Japanese and English as a regular publication since March 2022. The report discusses the concept of human security and its practice from various perspectives, with the aim of communicating the significance of human security in today's rapidly changing world. With the publication of this report, the JICA Ogata Research Institute aims to contribute to the creation of a resilient society that protects people's lives, livelihoods, and dignity by constantly reviewing human security in today's context.



Contact

Quick link to our contributions
to human security

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