

International Cooperation to Increase

Disaster Response

The frequency of large-scale natural disasters has increased in recent years throughout the world. According to a United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) report, there were 373 disasters in 2010, a five-fold increase from 1975. The devastation of these disasters has been concentrated in developing countries, and the loss of livelihoods has made it more difficult for people to raise themselves out of poverty.

Japan is a “disaster-prone country” that has seen events ranging from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions to meteorological events including typhoons, rain-induced flooding, and snowstorms. As a result of these hardships, however, Japan is also a “disaster-response leading nation” that has developed advanced disaster-related technologies in partnerships among industry, academia, and government.

JICA has been involved in sharing these Japanese solutions with developing countries through construction projects, including coastal levees in the Maldives and breakwaters in the Philippines. More recently, JICA efforts have focused in particular on supporting the development of disaster-resistant communities based on the concept of “mainstreaming” disaster preparation. This means making preparedness and mitigation a core part of policies from the early stages of infrastructure construction and city planning. In the end, it is also a means of reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development.

This special feature introduces the international cooperation projects that JICA has undertaken around the world in the field of disaster readiness and response.

