

· TRENDS ·



JICA-WBG Hold High-Level Dialogue



On July 20 and 21, 2017, JICA and the World Bank Group (WBG) held the Fourth JICA-WBG High-Level Dialogue at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. The heads of the two agencies co-chaired the meeting, in which further partnership between the agencies was discussed.

JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka and WBG President Jim Yong Kim led the discussion of seven topics, which encompassed three thematic issues and four regions. The three thematic issues were health, focusing on universal health coverage (UHC) and nutrition; infrastructure and resilience, namely sustainable urban development and resilience/disaster risk reduction (DRR) and reconstruction from crises and disasters; and the private sector. The four regions are

WBG President Jim Yong Kim (right) and JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka

East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

The private sector was newly added as a topic of discussion. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) from the WBG led the discussion, which examined the mobilization of private sector finance, reflecting the enormous gap in development finance.

As a result of the meeting, the two agencies agreed to strengthen their partnership in private-sector finance and development; to promote UHC globally, including in Africa; to work jointly on urban development; to enhance collaboration in resilience building and private sector development in South East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia; and to work toward stabilization of MENA. The two agencies will continue to hold regular discussions at various levels to further strengthen their partnership.



Myanmar

New Textbooks Delivered to Primary Schools throughout Myanmar



New textbooks that were developed with JICA's technical cooperation have been distributed to primary schools throughout Myanmar. When the new school year began on June 1, approximately 1.3 million first-graders started learning with the new textbooks.

Myanmar underwent a transition from military rule to democratic government in 2011, and training people to build a new state is an urgent issue. For many years, JICA has supported the promotion of a child-centered approach in Myanmar. This approach emphasizes methods that enable children to learn by themselves. However, the textbooks formerly used in classrooms were developed nearly two decades ago and reflected a rote style of learning.

Since 2014, a JICA technical project has sup-

ported the development of new textbooks in all nine subjects for all grades (one to five) at the primary level. The new textbooks are designed to help all students learn to observe things with their own eyes, think, communicate and cooperate with each other in order to improve their own lives and society. The textbooks also aim to stimulate a spirit of curiosity and fun in learning. Teacher's guides for all subjects were developed and distributed to the teachers, and training was carried out throughout the country for current teachers as well as at teacher training colleges to teach educators to promote independent student learning.

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This project brought in approximately 40 Japanese education experts to provide multifaceted technical support in various areas such as subject content, effective teaching and learning methods, textbook editing and design, and teacher training.

Students look delighted to have new textbooks



ASEAN

ASEAN Journalists Report on Initiatives to Solve Japan's Urban Problems



Every year since 1995, JICA has been inviting journalists from overseas to Japan in order to deepen public awareness of Japan and JICA's projects in countries where JICA has been active. This year, ten newspaper reporters from as many ASEAN countries visited Japan between June 18 and July 1.

As ASEAN countries continue to experience marked population and economic growth, their cities face growing urban problems. This year's program encouraged participants to report on Japanese initiatives that may be applicable to solving problems in the participant's home countries. Participants visited facilities where Japanese technology is used, such as water supply facilities and waste incineration plants. The journalists also reported from Higashi-Matsushima, Miyagi pre-

ecture, on the state of recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake.

On June 20, the journalists visited the Tokyo Metro Comprehensive Learning and Training Center to learn about urban transport management. Tokyo Metro opened the facility in April of 2016 to educate its staff and improve its training. After listening to an explanation of the center's role, the journalists observed actual training on emergency responses. They learned how Tokyo Metro keeps trains running on time and in a safe and secure manner.

Journalist Tin Aung Kyaw of the newspaper The Voice in Myanmar pointed out that flooding during torrential rains and waste management processing were problems in Yangon and elsewhere. He said that based on his reporting in Japan, he wanted to write articles with actionable information that might be put to use by the Myanmar government in the future.

A training session at the Tokyo Metro Comprehensive Learning and Training Center