JICA’s Security Measures

In general, developing countries have problems with poverty, which in some countries leads to a high incidence of general crimes.

Also, there are countries that tend to be subject to coup d’etat, and some suffer from prolonged civil wars that last for many years. Furthermore, there are some personnel who live and work in countries where political situations are unstable and many safety problems persist after civil wars end. In order to secure safe living and working environments for those involved in international cooperation who continue to carry out their activities under such conditions, JICA has implemented the following security measures and crisis management policies.

1. Implementation of Training and Seminars before Departure

JICA provides training in security measures for experts, volunteers, and accompanying families before departure. The training contains explanations regarding regional characteristics of crime; how to choose dwellings; how to get along with local residents; how to safe-keep valuables; how to react to holdups and car-jackings from the viewpoint of crime prevention; and emergency actions.

After arriving at the assignment site, JICA overseas offices offer individual orientations in updated local security situations and anti-crime measures. In addition, the JICA overseas offices hold Public Safety Control Report Councils twice a year for everyone related to JICA. This council provides local safety information furnished by overseas offices, as well as experiences and information that is shared by everyone involved, including experts, volunteers, and accompanying families. Specific know-how of updated safety measures are presented by those who live and work in the same country in this council. For instance, strategies for keeping a low profile to prevent crime, such as how to take out money while shopping; what types of bags are appropriate to bring; how to dress and wear jewelry appropriate to local situations; and where to safe-keep valuables, are given to new residents who have just been dispatched by those who have stayed for a long time.

2. Posting Security Officers/Advisors

In order to strengthen on-site security measures, JICA utilizes human resources that are familiar with the country’s public security measures. The security officers are engaged around the clock in a wide range of work, including the collection and transmission of safety information on a daily basis, crime prevention in residential areas, and prevention of traffic accidents. The security officers are knowledgeable about both local crime trends and behavior of Japanese people, and based on both aspects, conduct appropriate safety guidance.

3. Establishing an Emergency Communication Network

JICA establishes an emergency contact system covering all staff in each country. Communications by telephone, mobile telephone, pager, INMARSAT, (International Maritime Satellite Organization), and satellite mobile radiotelephone are taken into account for regular occasions and at the same time are secured in emergencies for information communication and safety confirmation. This double communication system is positioned as a key to all security measures.

4. Dispatch of Study Team for Security Measures

JICA dispatches study teams to check local safety situations in countries where there is a concern about safety. Based on the outcome of such local research, country-specific security measures are enacted in detail. For instance, in one country, the security situation is analyzed according to province/state to determine the range of activities for JICA personnel and to make adjustments in response to aid needs.

In addition, security expert teams are dispatched from Japan to the countries that have high incidence rates of gener-
al crime. They teach safety guidance regarding residential crime prevention, anti-firearm crime measures, and anti-car-jacking measures to those who live there and work for JICA.


JICA pays a part of the cost for installation of security equipment, the hiring of security guards, and installing alarm security systems in dwellings of experts and volunteers. JICA also assists in construction work such as raising fence heights, reinforcing doors and windows, and installing iron bars on windows if necessary. Alarm systems to call security guards are utilized, if the services are available.

6. Implementation of a 24-hour Crisis-management System

JICA headquarters has a 24-hour, 365-day emergency contact system that can receive and respond to emergency reports from overseas at any time, even outside of regular working hours, such as weekday nights and holidays.

7. Anti-terrorism Measures

Recently we are concerned about the increasing number of countries and regions where terrorism has occurred. Terrorism was also a fear in the Cold War era, as Communist insurgents carried out bombings around the world. However, the trend in recent years has been for larger scale incidents carried out by Islamic fundamentalist extremists, such as the international terrorist network al-Qaeda. In order to lower the risk for JICA-related personnel to be caught up in terrorist attacks against European and American rights and interests that occur in areas like the Middle East, JICA provides briefings on concrete matters that require attention to personnel working in high-risk areas during pre-dispatch training.

8. Safety Measures in Post-conflict Reconstruction Areas

JICA projects take place in post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan and Palestine, or in areas where conflicts are ongoing. Other aid agencies and UN organizations active in such regions examine their activity areas carefully and take appropriate safety measures, such as radio transmissions and bulletproof vehicles during the implementation of projects while monitoring the day-by-day political and security conditions. Taking such safety measures is inevitable if JICA is to expand reconstruction assistance and peacebuilding support. In addition, since unexpected incidents such as kidnappings, political changes, riots, and terrorism may occur in such areas, know-how at the site with regard to potential risks is very important. In response, Emergency Training in Japan and overseas started in collaboration with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2003. By enhancing this activity in the future, JICA intends to contribute to the development of human resources who will work in areas under assistance of post-conflict reconstruction as well.