### Current State of Development

In South America social disparities are historically prominent, triggered by colonial rule. In the 1980s, economic reform based on the policy of Neo-liberalism was promoted at the initiative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. As a result, while economic growth was achieved, in many countries problems such as widening disparities, an expanding poverty group, and increasing social instability became more serious.

The economies of countries in South America greatly depend on primary products, and they are significantly affected by trends in the world economy. In order to achieve continuously stable economic growth, development of an investment environment, including promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, trade promotion measures, and improvement in governance need to be supported.

One of the problems caused by poverty and economic growth is environmental degradation. Response to solid waste generated from gutters around the urban areas and water resources contamination, as well as global issues such as rapid deforestation in the Amazon, are urgently required.

The South American economic zone, which is endowed with natural resources, food supply capacity, and economic scale in South America implies the possibility that political and economic disorder and worsening environmental destruction in the region may affect the international economy and the environment on a global scale.

JICA addresses the following priority issues in order to correct disparities within and among countries and realize sustainable development in the region with the focus on the perspective of human security.
1. Poverty reduction and disparity correction
2. Sustainable economic growth
3. Addressing global issues
4. Peacebuilding and support for the socially vulnerable
5. Promotion of regionwide cooperation and South-South cooperation in line with regional trends and characteristics
6. Active collaboration with Nikkei (Japanese descendant) communities

### The Presence of Japanese Emigrants and their Descendants

Cooperation in South America cannot be considered without the presence of communities of Japanese emigrants and their descendants (Nikkei). The emigration of Japanese people to South America started more than 100 years ago and immigrants from Japan and their descendants have established a solid position as reliable members of the local regional society. Nikkei succeed in a wide area such as agriculture, health, and education, contribut-
Poverty Reduction and Disparity Correction

JICA provides support to reduce poverty and correct disparities that are shared by most countries in South America with the focus on collaboration with central and local governments, civil organizations and other donors.

In Bolivia, the Project “Water is Vital” is ongoing. Model sites were chosen from villages where wells had been built with Japanese grant aid and water management committees were organized by the residents in cooperation with local NGOs to promote enhancement of the water rating system, train well operators in maintenance and management, and disseminate a hygienic lifestyle.

In Paraguay, JICA is implementing the Diversification of Beekeeping (Extension and Upgrade of Propolis, Pollen) to increase the honey production of small-scale apairy farmers in rural areas. As part of this project, a guidebook entitled “Illustrated Apiary Technology,” which can be understood even by beginners or illiterate apairy workers, has been published in support of apiculture.

Sustainable Economic Growth

In order to address poverty reduction and disparity correction, the quality of life of the people needs to be improved by upgrading governance as well as generating employment through regional and national economic growth.

JICA is conducting the Study on Revitalization of Small and Medium Enterprises in Argentina for the purpose of revitalizing small and medium-sized enterprises that play a significant role in industrial structure to increase employment, as well as recommending policies and measures necessary for strengthening competitiveness in the international market. In Ecuador, JICA is carrying out the Project on Improvement of Vocational Training with the purpose of contributing to an increase in employment through development of excellent human resources in the areas of machinery, metals, electronics and electricity.

In Peru, with the aim of expanding agricultural production, Seed Quality Control is being implemented to produce and distribute high-quality seeds that meet international quality standards.

Addressing Global Issues

In South America, which has abundant natural resources and food supply capacity, cooperation to address cross-border issues such as environmental issues is important.

In Uruguay, the Project for Enhancement of Implementation Capacity of Afforestation and Reforestation CDM is being implemented. This project aims to strengthen the capacity of those engaged in afforestation to identify, plan, approve and implement CDM (clean development mechanism) afforestation projects.

In Argentina, JICA is implementing the Project to Intensify Ozone Layer Studies in South America to transfer necessary technologies for observing the ozone layer and analyzing data and install equipment necessary for such activities. This project aims to enhance the data supply system necessary to understand the conditions of ozone layer in the mid- and high-altitude areas of South America.

In Brazil, the Project for Forest Conservation and Environmental Education in the Eastern Amazon is ongoing, mainly in the Ecological Park of Gunma, a tropical rainforest reserve located in the suburb of Belem City, Para State, managed by immigrants from Gunma Prefecture. The project aims to promote natural environment education and disseminate agroforestry technologies.

Peacebuilding and Support for the Socially Vulnerable

To support internally displaced persons and the socially vulnerable, efforts aimed at reconstructing basic living infrastructure are required.

In Columbia, volunteers are dispatched to facilities where internally displaced persons and the socially vulnerable are housed. They give instructions on recreational activities and small plays that foster imagination as well as on the production of crafts using available materials so that the children in those facilities can have opportunities for the future. Moreover, a feasibility study is underway toward realization of the Support for Establishment of Microenterprise to the Household of People Reincorporated to the Civilian Life in cooperation with SENA (National Training Service), which assists the families of former soldiers who are disarmed and defected from outlawed organizations such as left-wing guerrillas and paramilitary groups.

JICA is implementing the Rehabilitation for Disabled People Project in the Republic of Chile, in order to improve rehabilitation services of the Pedro Aguirre Cerda National Institute of Rehabilitation (INR Pac), which is the only institution of its kind in the country.

A Japanese expert giving instructions on physical therapy skills to the staff of the rehabilitation hospital for children (Rehabilitation for Disabled People Project in the Republic of Chile)
Promotion of Regionwide Cooperation and South-South Cooperation in Line with Regional Trends and Characteristics

Since countries in South America share similarities in terms of history, culture and language, regional ties are very strong. Thus, assistance through regional mutual cooperation is important to address development issues common to the region.

For the purpose of contributing to the improvement of export competitiveness of each member of the MERCOSUR, JICA is conducting the Study on Packaging Technology Improvement for Merchandise Distribution in MERCOSUR. Regional Products to investigate transportation conditions within the region and set out rational packaging design and test standards.

JICA is also implementing the Project of the Capacity Development for Improvement of Livestock Hygiene in the Southern Part of South America through Regionwide Cooperation in Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, in order to develop human resources development systems in relation to livestock disease diagnosis and establish a network necessary for personal collaboration and sharing information on diagnosis and epidemiology.

Furthermore, various cooperation projects are being provided under respective partnership programs in Chile (JCPP: Japan-Chile Partnership Program), Argentina (PPJA: Partnership Program for Joint Cooperation between Japan and Argentina), and Brazil (JBP: Japan-Brazil Partnership Program).

Collaboration with Nikkei Communities

Many Nikkei play active roles in various areas in South America, contributing to regional development and fostering friendship and trusting relationships with Japan. They are key players in international cooperation and collaboration with them is quite effective.

In collaboration with Nikkei communities, Brazil has long dispatched Brazilian experts of Japanese ancestry to other countries in South America. Recently, there are also cases in which Brazilian experts of Japanese ancestry are dispatched for technical cooperation to Angola and Mozambique in Africa where the official language is Portuguese as in Brazil.

Promotion of Apiculture and Securing Markets for the Prospect of Export

Paraguay is an agricultural country with more than 30% of its GDP coming from agricultural products. More than 80% of agricultural producers are small-scale farmers, and the majority are engaged in self-sufficient agriculture. JICA has long given guidance in apiculture technology in Paraguay, where approximately 7,000 farming households produce honey. However, the honey hardly reaches the quality of the international market and is sold in the local markets on a small scale.

Diversification of Beekeeping (Extension and Upgrade of Propolis, Pollen) implemented by JICA aims to help small-scale farmers produce not only marketable honey, but also value-added propolis for export. The production of honey drops immediately if you neglect the work even a month. In addition, a detailed response is important to organize producers’ groups and have farmers acquire sales skills, while gaining their trust. To that end, JICA dispatches a Nikkei expert who has rich experience in production and sales from its neighboring country, Brazil, to Paraguay twice a month to offer guidance to five model producers’ groups throughout the country. As a result, one year after the launch of the project, honey yields increased three times on average.

Collaboration among Nikkei experts

However, once production surges, securing the market emerges as a serious issue. Intending to improve management of the central wholesale market in Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, JICA has additionally dispatched another Nikkei expert from Brazil. Thanks to joint support from the two JICA experts, the producers’ groups have succeeded in acquiring a space to sell farm-fresh honey in the central wholesale market and income has been stabilized. Now the farmers have gained incentive and confidence towards their dream of producing and exporting propolis.

Other donors have expressed their wish to learn the method of this project. Positive development is expected in the future, including collaboration with those donors.