



Southeast Asia

Pillars of Aid Promote Comprehensive Cooperation toward ASEAN Integration

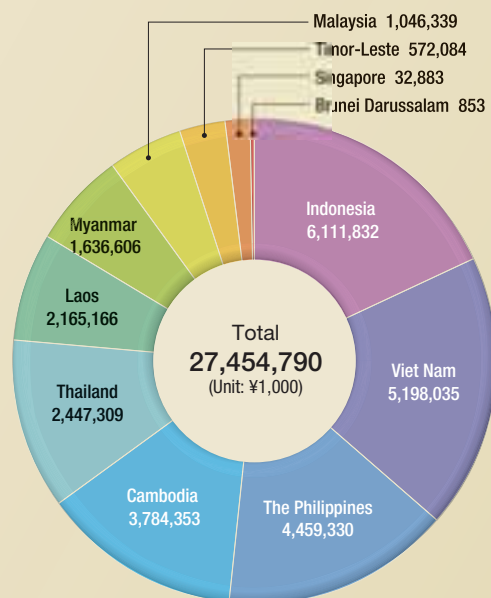
The Southeast Asian region consists of 11 countries: 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Timor-Leste, which achieved independence in 2002. ASEAN, which was formed in 1967 with the aims of achieving economic growth and regional peace, is made up of six original members (Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, which are the founding signatories, and Brunei Darussalam, which joined in 1984) and four new members (Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, which joined later).

ASEAN promotes regional market integration based on the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) signed in 1992. At the 13th ASEAN Summit in November 2007, the ASEAN Charter, which is to be the highest constitution for the association, was adopted. The ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, which outlines the processes and other details for the realization of the ASEAN Community by 2015, was also adopted, signifying a major advance toward the integration.

While the original members of ASEAN have reached a certain degree of development, the new members are lagging behind. Thus, the development of regional economies and correction of regional disparities remain as important tasks to tackle toward ASEAN integration.

Japan puts a focus on Asia as one of the pillars of its postwar diplomacy. Southeast Asia has a close relationship with Japan in various respects. In particular, in economic terms, Southeast Asia is one of Japan's most important interdependent partners. Recently, in both political and security terms, the importance of the region including the sea lanes, such as the Malacca Strait, has been increasing, and therefore Japan will continue to provide aid to this region.

● Cooperation results by country in Southeast Asia (FY2007)



* This is the total amount of bilateral cooperation. The amount of cooperation provided to Asia including cooperation that covers a group of countries is 45,121,925 thousand yen.

Current State of Development

To date, JICA has offered significant contributions in terms of human resources development of ASEAN member states and Timor-Leste during their years of postwar reconstruction and economic development. Quantitatively, Japan has invited approximately 83,000 trainees from ASEAN member states and dispatched around 34,000 experts to them.*1 Some example projects include those related to maternal and child health books for which Japan shared its successful experiences, cooperative research with Viet Nam in the fiscal and monetary sector with the aim of assisting the development of a market economy and the establishment of an environment for overseas investment in Viet Nam, and offering guidance and advice based on Japan's experiences in drafting a civil code. Though ASEAN member states differ in terms of their development level and economic scope, their economic growth rate has been 4.5 to 13.4% (as of

2005)*2, indicating that ASEAN is generally following a path of steady and sustainable growth.

In providing future cooperation to ASEAN, it is important that Japan fulfills its responsibilities as a reliable friend to ASEAN by utilizing the networks that Japan and ASEAN have cultivated thus far in order to further strengthen the Japan-ASEAN relationship. JICA will continue to offer its assistance based on the three approaches described below.

First, Japan will strive to offer the types of cooperation that make the most impact on the ASEAN member states. To do so, Japan will select priority areas for each ASEAN member state and will advance cooperation efforts by organically combining and utilizing its various development tools. By implementing yen loans and technical cooperation in a unified manner, Japan is able to cultivate human resources in the developing countries

while applying its own experiences to further disseminate the fruits of its cooperation efforts.

Secondly, while ASEAN member states are achieving economic growth, they are at the same time still faced with disputes. Therefore, Japan will place priority on cooperation that promotes stabilization of the region by making use of the development tools and humanitarian networks cultivated by JICA.

Finally, in preparation for the ASEAN integration scheduled for 2015, Japan will promote regional cooperation with the aim

of correcting regional disparities as much as possible and establishing a common framework and system that govern the entire ASEAN region. As the advancement of globalization within the ASEAN region has led to diversification of issues that must be resolved, Japan must make full use of its systems and the know-how it has cultivated.

*1 Source: Accumulated total through fiscal 2006.

*2 Source: World Development Indicators Online (March 2008), World Bank.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

1. The Philippines

The Philippines is one of the Southeast Asian countries that suffers from the most number of natural disasters. Over the past decade, more than 12,000 people have died or been injured due to such disasters as typhoons, floods, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes. Such disasters have also greatly damaged the country's agricultural products and social infrastructure such as roads and bridges, causing people, particularly those who suffer from poverty, to endure further hardship. In recent years, there has been concern that climate change may lead to even more disasters, and a prompt response to this issue is called for.

To tackle these issues, JICA has been providing emergency assistance, restoring disaster-stricken areas, and repairing rivers. At the same time, JICA developed a Cooperative Program on Disaster Prevention for the purpose of supporting a comprehensive effort that includes policies and systems assistance and enhancement of disaster prevention capabilities of communities, in order that the government and people of the Philippines would be able to respond to disasters independently and continually.

The goal of this program is, by 2017, to: (1) develop a disaster-prevention policy, enhance institutional capacity, and develop human resources of the Philippine government; (2) provide the equipment and facilities in areas that are most susceptible to damage caused by disasters; (3) effectively utilize and enhance capabilities for the management of disaster prevention equipment such as earthquake observation equipment and flood warning and forecast systems; and (4) enhance disaster prevention capabilities of communities through such means as developing hazard maps.

Combining grant aid and yen loans in addition to technical cooperation to implement the program is expected to offer a comprehensive approach that integrates the tangible aspects (e.g.,

equipment and facilities) and the intangible aspects (e.g., human resources), leading to the provision of the kind of cooperation that makes an even greater impact.

2. Indonesia

Indonesia has emerged from a period of economic crisis and has entered a period of stable growth. However, in order for Indonesia to continue to grow economically in the future, JICA believes it is important for the country to pursue a "simultaneous eastern-western growth" style of economic development. To pursue this type of growth, the capital-intensive industries are strengthened in the western region that centers on the metropolitan area where a comparative degree of economic growth can be anticipated, and the resources processing industries are developed in the eastern region that includes many poor areas. Therefore, JICA is currently developing a program for effectively assisting both of these regions.

For example, 30% of GDP is concentrated in Jakarta and the surrounding metropolitan region, which lead the country in its economic growth. At the same time, this region is faced with a serious traffic congestion problem, owing in part to the fact that the number of privately owned vehicles ballooned by 162% over the five years between 2001 and 2006. Another problem is the delay of this area, compared to the surrounding regions, in making a shift to public transportation.

Such serious traffic congestion negatively affects the local businesses and investment environments. However, given the large number of ministries, agencies, and regional governments that are involved in this issue, no concrete solutions are being pursued at present.

As a way to help alleviate this situation, JICA implemented a project formulation study in March 2008, and is currently in the process of developing a program, through consultations with the relevant ministries and agencies of the Indonesian government, to improve urban traffic in a comprehensive manner. The program aims to develop an infrastructure that facilitates economic activities in the urban region without inducing serious traffic congestion even as transportation demands continue to rise in the metropolitan region.

Specifically, the project aims to achieve the following three goals:

- (1) To establish a new urban transportation system
- (2) To manage urban growth through transportation
- (3) To promote and improve computerization of roads

To achieve the goal of (1) establishing a new urban transportation system, for example, JICA is about to begin developing a mass rapid transit system (MRT) through yen loans based on the results of a development survey conducted by JICA related to the improvement of traffic in urban



A settlement devastated by a mudslide (Philippines)

areas. In the future, JICA aims to promote development efforts with greater impact by offering technical cooperation to enhance the management capabilities of the MRT operating company and improve its communication with other public transportation agencies.

3. Efforts Aimed at Regional Stability

Peace-building is specified as a priority issue in the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter of 2003 and the Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance (Medium-Term ODA Policy) announced in 2005. In Southeast Asia, too, efforts are being promoted to build and consolidate peace in local regions within the greater context of assistance designed for ASEAN integration. Specifically, JICA is making efforts to respond not only to the needs of Mindanao Island in the Philippines, Maluku and Aceh in Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Myanmar where poverty caused by conflicts has become a serious issue, but also to the situation in the southern region of Thailand in which stability has been deteriorating since 2004. To promote stabilization and consolidation of peace in Southeast Asia, JICA aims to provide assistance to these countries and regions that are affected by conflicts in a two-tier format. In addition to the traditional technical cooperation projects carried out within the framework of bilateral cooperation, JICA will offer training, seminars, and workshops for human resources development and capacity building through partnership with each ASEAN member state, to offer multilayered assistance through which a synergic effect can be anticipated.

To Mindanao Island in the Philippines, JICA dispatched Japanese personnel, from October 2006 onwards, to the Economic and Social Development Division of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) to survey the development needs of the area and to summarize cooperation project efforts. In addition to this, since February 2007, JICA has been developing a mid-to-long term development plan for the region while implementing emergency

restoration projects at the community level.

Moreover, JICA is also cultivating human resources on Mindanao Island through cooperation with Malaysia. When the Japanese government issues the new Support Package for Peace and Stability in Mindanao, which was compiled with a view to undertaking development work in Mindanao after the conclusion of a peace accord between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), JICA's aid will be stepped up to a new level that includes yen loans.

For Maluku, Indonesia, JICA has been implementing the Maluku Peace-Building and Reconstruction Assistance Project in Indonesia since June 2006. This project aims to revitalize the economy, improve education, ensure safety, and enhance the capabilities of regional governments. In Timor-Leste and Myanmar, JICA is carrying out projects based on the concept of human security. At the same time, to develop human resources, JICA supplements domestic assistance efforts by using the framework of third-country training implemented in other ASEAN member states. To help the five provinces in southern Thailand to which access has been blocked due to the deterioration of the security situation, JICA has been holding capacity building workshops for southern Thailand college professors and students on Penang Island in cooperation with Malaysian universities since 2006. Also, JICA has thus far held two seminars to which people were invited from the three conflict-stricken regions of Mindanao, Aceh, and southern Thailand for the purpose of learning from each other's peace-building and reconstruction experiences. In these ways, JICA has continued to carry out multilateral efforts to promote stability in the Southeast Asian region.

4. Regional Cooperation

As Southeast Asian countries grow economically, we are seeing less cooperation being offered to countries such as Malaysia and Thailand, where development has progressed significantly.

On the other hand, in countries such as Viet Nam, Laos,

Front Line The Philippines The 23-year-long Philippine Nautical Chart Cooperation

A New Edition of Electric Nautical Chart of the Manila Bay Vicinity was introduced to the international community.

In the Philippines, an archipelagic state made up of over 7,000 islands, ships are an important means of transportation. When sailing along the convoluted coastlines, however, there is constant danger of stranding the ship.

Nautical charts are used to ensure safety when sailing in such waters, and are created in line with international standards and issued under the responsibility of each country's government agencies in order that they may be used by sailors around the world.

But in the Philippines, the nautical charts being used were those created 50 years ago with the cooperation of other countries. As they had never been updated, they contained many errors and used an old style of measurements based on yard and pound. They were therefore difficult and even dangerous for the sailors to use. To help improve the precision of the nautical charts of the Philippine vicinity, JICA began providing technical cooperation in 1984 that centered on human resources development, and has continued to the present to offer cooperation in line with the times. As a complete summary of all the cooperation, which began with the dispatch of experts who taught tidal observation done manually and the hydrographic survey method, the Enhancement of Hydrographic Capabilities for Navigational Safety project was started in 2006, with the goal of enhancing technical capabilities for revising nautical charts and computerized nautical charts.

Only six months into the project, the stranding of a survey craft

damaged the multibeam echo sounder, the main equipment of the hydrographic survey system, forcing a halt to the hydrographic survey for seven months.

However, this accident prompted the Philippine staff that had originally been slow in making progress to work faster. As a result, they were able to make up for the seven-month delay and achieved results that went beyond the initial goals.

A long-term expert who was involved in this project stated with a smile: "Experience is power. This is a job in which one can gain greatly from experience. I expect great things of the hard work put in by the Philippine staff. In the future, I will be on the receiving end of the Philippine staff members as they come to us as trainees. I look forward to working with

them again in a different form."
(JICA Philippines Office)



Enhancement of Hydrographic Capabilities for Navigational Safety Project

Myanmar and Cambodia, which joined ASEAN later, GDP per capita is significantly less than \$1,000. Therefore, there continues to be a great economic disparity in Southeast Asia between countries where development has progressed and those in which it has not. Moreover, as the economic activities in the region have become more vigorous, so has the movement of people and goods. Some negative impacts have stemmed from this. Avian influenza, infectious diseases, terrorism, and drug trafficking are among the cross-border issues that have been witnessed in recent years.

To deal with issues that are difficult to solve simply through bilateral cooperation, JICA and external experts have been exploring the possible approaches that could be taken from the viewpoint of “regional cooperation.” As a result, while keeping in mind the questions of whether or not the issue is one that straddles borders and whether or not the country in question has the human resources or organization that can implement the policy initiatives of the Japanese government and/or Japanese-style cooperation, four areas were selected for the time being as issues for the region in which formulation and implementation of a project can be anticipated. They are: (1) goods distribution network development assistance and regional development for Southeast Asia; (2) marine transport and transportation network and maritime safety; (3) measures against infectious diseases; and (4) measures against climate change and environmental issues. Surveys and studies are already underway for some of these areas in preparation for concrete project formulation.

For example, in the seas of Southeast Asia, which contain the Malacca Strait and the Singapore Strait and have a great volume of marine traffic, ensuring safety in marine transportation and implementing appropriate measures against pirates and other forms of cross-border crimes are essential in maintaining and improving the value of the waterways of Asia as public goods. Former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda announced at the Japan-ASEAN Summit in November 2007 that financial assistance and human resources were secured for ensuring marine safety. In accordance

with this initiative, JICA and the Japan Coast Guard, which had been carrying out bilateral cooperation in the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to improve the capabilities of each country, are additionally formulating a cooperation framework and actual projects that promote cooperation among the maritime safety authorities of the countries within the region through human and technical exchange.

Moreover, cooperation with the regional international agencies is essential for promoting regional cooperation. Based on this viewpoint, the ASEAN Charter was adopted in November 2007, and JICA is currently considering collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, which is to enhance its legal and effective capacities in order to meet the goal of ASEAN integration in 2015. The aim is to steadily respond, in addition to policy initiatives of the Japanese government and together with the ASEAN Secretariat, to issues which the entire region must tackle together, in accordance with ASEAN’s policymaking developments.



Coastguards receiving training (the Philippines)

Front Line

Myanmar

Supporting Social Welfare Administration (Social Participation of the Deaf) Project

Creating an environment that promotes social participation by the deaf

In Myanmar, where welfare services for the disabled are extremely lacking, it is very difficult for deaf people to participate in society. Under this project, social welfare administrators, schools for the deaf run by the government and nonprofit organizations, and organizations for the deaf work together to create and distribute a textbook on standard sign language. By doing so, the goal is to enhance the cooperative relationship between the administration and deaf people, and to create an environment in which social participation by the deaf is promoted.

At present, experts with knowledge in sign language are being dispatched to Myanmar on a long-term basis. When these experts first arrived in Myanmar, the deaf people were so excited to be able to communicate without an interpreter that they simply kept talking one-sidedly about their demands. For four months since then, the administrators, deaf people and experts have continued to discuss how the opinions of the deaf could be reflected in government. The awareness of deaf people is now steadily beginning to change. They are starting to realize that simply offering their opinions is not going to change anything unless action is taken, and as a way to take action, the deaf themselves must

move to play an active role in cooperating with the administration. At the same time, the administrators are noticing the changes in the deaf people and are beginning to consider how the opinions of the deaf may be reflected in government.

Under the current project, all relevant personnel are learning the grammar of sign language for the purpose of creating a sign language textbook. The deaf and the hearing have joined hands to move forward,

one step at a time.
(JICA Myanmar Office)



Presentation given by the deaf to the task force.