

The Need for International Cooperation

Lives in Japan are Supported by People Overseas

Advancing Together as “Japan That is Connected to the World”

Why is assistance for developing countries necessary? Assistance is provided not only for humanitarian reasons. People’s lives in Japan are founded upon interdependence with other nations, with Japan procuring numerous types of foods and resources from around the world while providing industrial products to overseas countries.

For this reason, stability in Japan can only be realized through stability in the world outside Japan. Today, the world faces a variety of issues that cannot be solved without the cooperation of each and every country. These include issues related to climate change, food, poverty and infectious diseases. Developing countries have thus placed high expectations on the role to be fulfilled by Japan as one of the world’s principal countries.

The Lives of Japanese Citizens Are Dependent on Developing Countries

Japan has experienced economic stagnation following the collapse of the so-called bubble economy in the 1990s, and a growing number of Japanese citizens feel uncertain about employment and their future livelihood. In such times, a commonly heard opinion is that given the current harsh conditions, boosting the domestic economy should be a far more important priority than providing assistance to developing countries. Despite such opinions, Japan’s economy and the lives of its citizens are heavily dependent on overseas countries, with developing countries also playing a crucial role.

Just how much does Japan depend on developing countries? To answer this question, in 2008 JICA implemented the Japan-Developing Countries Interdependence Survey, which focused mainly on Japan’s reliance on items that are a close part of the everyday lives of Japanese citizens.

The survey revealed the products for which developing countries account for a particularly high proportion of Japanese imports. For example, developing countries account for 97% of Japan’s imports of propane gas, 85% of TV video games, 69% of sweaters and 56% of sporting goods. Moreover, although Japan imports approximately 60% of its food (calorie basis), developing countries provide 80% of Japan’s shrimp, 64% of its buckwheat noodles (fruit seed) and 94% of its coffee, tea and spices.

Even for water as well, Japan imports 64.0 billion m³ of water*, equivalent to 77% of Japan’s annual water usage (water quantity intake basis). Of this amount, 6.0 billion m³ is procured from Central and South America, China and Southeast Asia.

* Virtual water: The amount of water that would be needed if imported foods were produced in Japan.

International Division of Labor Leads to Even Deeper Relationships

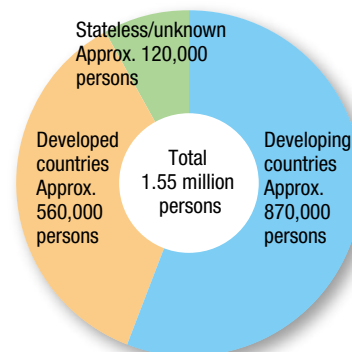
What is Japan’s relationship with developing countries from the perspective of international trade?

In 2008, Japan’s exports to developing countries accounted for 36.6% of its total exports, up 13.1 percentage points from 23.5% in 2000. During this same period, the value of these exports grew more than 2.4 times to ¥29.6 trillion. The rise in exports of not only finished products but also of highly advanced components reveals that an international division of labor between Japan and developing countries is advancing.

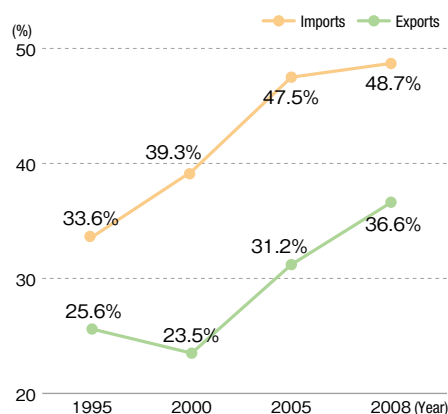
Taking a look at imports as well, Japan’s imports from developing countries as a percentage of total imports have risen to 48.7%. This represents a 9.4 percentage point increase from 39.3% in 2000. Likewise, the value of these imports has expanded more than 2.2 times to around ¥38.5 trillion. Imports from Asia of electric products and textiles top the list of these imports, but imports from Africa such as petroleum and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as well as platinum, rhodium and other precious metals also account for a large value of imports. Meanwhile, imports of octopus from Mauritania and Morocco, cocoa beans from Ghana and sesame from Tanzania are also becoming important.

In energy and natural resources, imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from developing countries have reached 53% of imports, while Japan imports 42% of its mineral resources from Central and South America and 33% from the Pacific.

Persons from Developing Countries as a Proportion of Foreign Residents in Japan (2005)



Trends in Japan’s Exports to and Imports from Developing Countries



Consumer Expenditure Items for Which Japan’s Dependence on Developing Countries Is Over 50%

Over 90%	Propane gas
Over 80%	TV video games
Over 70%	Women’s makeup foundation
Over 60%	Sweaters, gloves, baby wear, hanging clocks and table clocks, undergarments, socks, pajamas, others
Over 50%	Dress shirts/blouses, shirts, TVs, sporting goods, PCs, business suits, stockings, coats, skirts, school bags, others

Graph and chart source: JICA’s World, May 2010 issue

Tackling Global Issues

Today, there are an increasing number of issues that cannot be solved by one country alone.

A prime example is infectious diseases. The new-type influenza virus (H1N1 virus) spread instantly throughout the world because almost all humans and animals lack immunity to this virus. Although problems such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) are recent occurrences that come to mind, diseases such as regional endemic diseases that include HIV/AIDS also pose a major threat once these spread throughout the world.

Under the direction of the World Health Organization (WHO), humans have achieved certain positive results in combating diseases that include the eradication of smallpox and polio. In the future as well, it will be necessary for the world to strengthen cooperation and pursue effective countermeasures against such diseases.

The prevention of global warming is also one key issue the world must address. Since the Industrial Revolution, developed countries have used coal, petroleum and other fossil fuels to achieve growth and development. On the downside, however, the use of these fuels has resulted in the emission of large volumes of greenhouse gases and environmental pollutants into the environment. Today, developing countries are also expanding the use of fossil fuels to achieve social and economic development. As a responsibility of developed countries, there are growing calls for developed countries to utilize their own experiences and technologies to help solve global environmental issues. This includes providing assistance for countries and regions affected by problems such as rising sea levels due to global warming while promoting energy conservation and renewable energy.

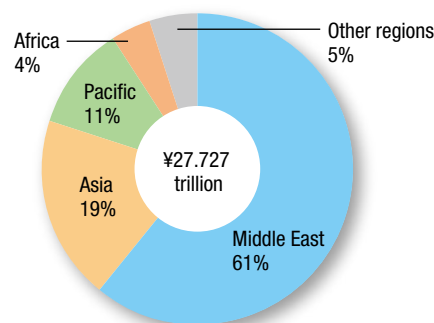
Aiming to Reduce Poverty

The reduction of poverty is a top-priority issue and Goal 1 of the United Nations Millennium Goals (MDGs). As its standard for measuring absolute poverty, the World Bank has set the poverty line at income of US\$1.25 per day. Nonetheless, one-fourth of people residing in developing countries and half of all persons living in Sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries live in poverty (UNICEF *The State of the World's Children 2009*).

Poverty is an obstacle to people's daily lives that not only takes away educational opportunities and claims the lives of children due to starvation and lack of access to sufficient healthcare but also is a cause of conflict. The large number of persons living in poverty in developing countries is becoming a truly major issue for global stability.

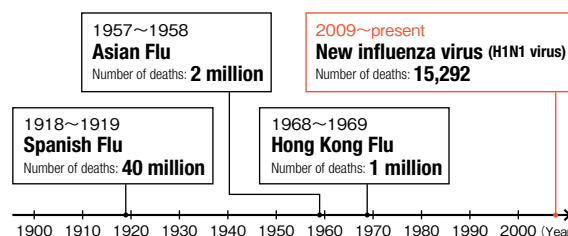
Japan also suffered from poverty and food shortages during the postwar reconstruction period, but was able to achieve development thanks to the support of the world. To repay this beneficence, Japan commenced ODA operations more than 50 years ago and is presently a principal member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Emancipating people from poverty by providing support to developing countries together with developed countries and assistance organizations is a crucial responsibility that Japan must fulfill as a member of the international community.

Import Ratio for Energy Resources by Geographic Region (2008)



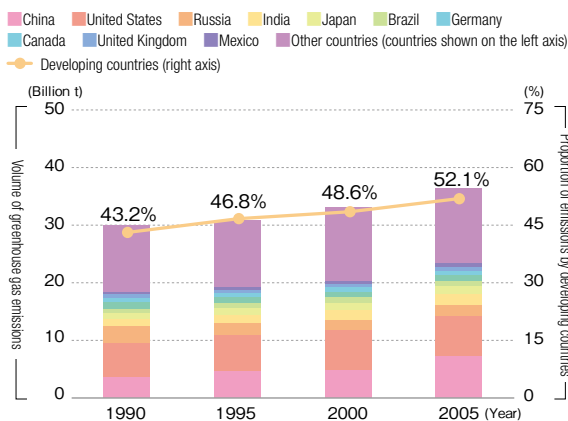
Energy resources: Refers to such fossil fuels as crude oil, LNG and coal.
Source: JICA's *World*, May 2010 issue

Influenzas and Pandemics from the 20th Century



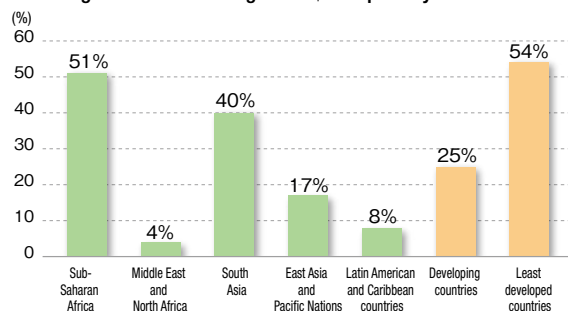
Sources: Prepared by JICA research team based on National Institute of Infectious Diseases, Infectious Disease Surveillance Center Q&A on *Influenza and Pandemics*.
For new influenza virus (H1N1 virus), based on the Infectious Disease Surveillance Center's *Number of Reported Cases of Pandemic (H1N1)*. (February 12, 2010)

Volume of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Region/Country (1990-2005)



Source: Prepared by JICA research team based on data from the World Resources Institute.

Percentage of Persons Living on US\$1.25 per day



Source: UNICEF *The State of the World's Children 2009*