

Gender and Development

Pursuing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



*Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), relevant goals are shown in color.

Overview of the Issue and JICA Activities

Gender can be defined within social and cultural contexts and can refer to the roles of men and women as well as their mutual relationship.

Generally, the fixed roles and responsibilities of men and women in a society tend to be subconsciously specified according to the sense of value, tradition, and custom of the people in the region. That is to say, various kinds of policies, systems and organizations are also subject to the subconscious determination. In addition, the conventional wisdom and social system in the modern world are likely to be formed based on a male perspective.

In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 5, Gender Equality, focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Not simply positioned as one of the 17 goals, this goal is recognized as the indispensable common subject necessary for the achievement of all the development goals. JICA strives for gender equality and women's empowerment by promoting gender mainstreaming—a process of incorporating the gender perspective in all stages of its programs and projects—in light of the issues and needs resulting from different social roles and the power balance in society between men and women.

JICA extends cooperation to create policies and systems that promote gender equality, to boost empowerment

of women through activities including maternal and child health promotion, education for women, support to female entrepreneurs [→ see the **Case Study below**], capacity building to cope with violence against women, and support for security, and training for victims of human trafficking.

At the same time, efforts are made in various other fields, such as agriculture, natural environmental conservation, disaster risk reduction (DRR), governance, and infrastructure development to run projects in a manner in which the gender perspective is reflected in the results and actions that should be achieved through the projects. For example, JICA's training course Gender and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction addresses disaster risk reduction from gender and diversity perspectives. Based on the fact that more women than men have actually been affected in past natural disasters, JICA aims to develop professionals through this training so that the voices of people in diverse situations, including women, can be reflected in the planning processes of disaster-prevention measures. In another case, in its ODA Loan project titled Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project in India, JICA addressed many of the issues and needs of women, including the introduction of women-only cars, the deployment of female guards and station attendants, and the installation of emergency notification equipment. All these measures have made public transportation in India safer to use for women, thereby contributing to their greater role in society [→ see the **Case Study on page 61**].

Africa: Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Group & Region Focus) "Africa-Japan Business Women Exchange Seminar"

Toward Capacity Building and Networking for Women's Entrepreneurship



Visiting a woman entrepreneur in the fashion industry

Women's entrepreneurship creates new value and markets as well as provides a major boost to communities and society. Many women in the developing world, however, face several challenges in starting a business. Challenges involve restricted access to funds and information, policy and institutional limitations, and inadequate opportunities for business networking.

This training seminar was launched as an outcome of the side event of the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 2013. So far, the seminar has been carried out five times, attended by a total of 74 people. In the seminar, women entrepreneurs and government officials from such ministries as the ministry of SMEs, with the mandate of supporting entrepreneurs

from African countries, pair up to learn government measures designed to support women entrepreneurs and observe businesses by women entrepreneurs in Japan.

In July 2017, JICA organized a knowledge-sharing seminar in Côte d'Ivoire for former participants of the seminar from neighboring countries. It was impressive to find that many of them have already begun their activities for contributing to society at large. In addition, former seminar participants have been invited to the Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum, a side event of the World Assembly for Women held in Tokyo for the last three years. Through such opportunities, JICA continues its support to women entrepreneurs for wider networking and greater leadership.