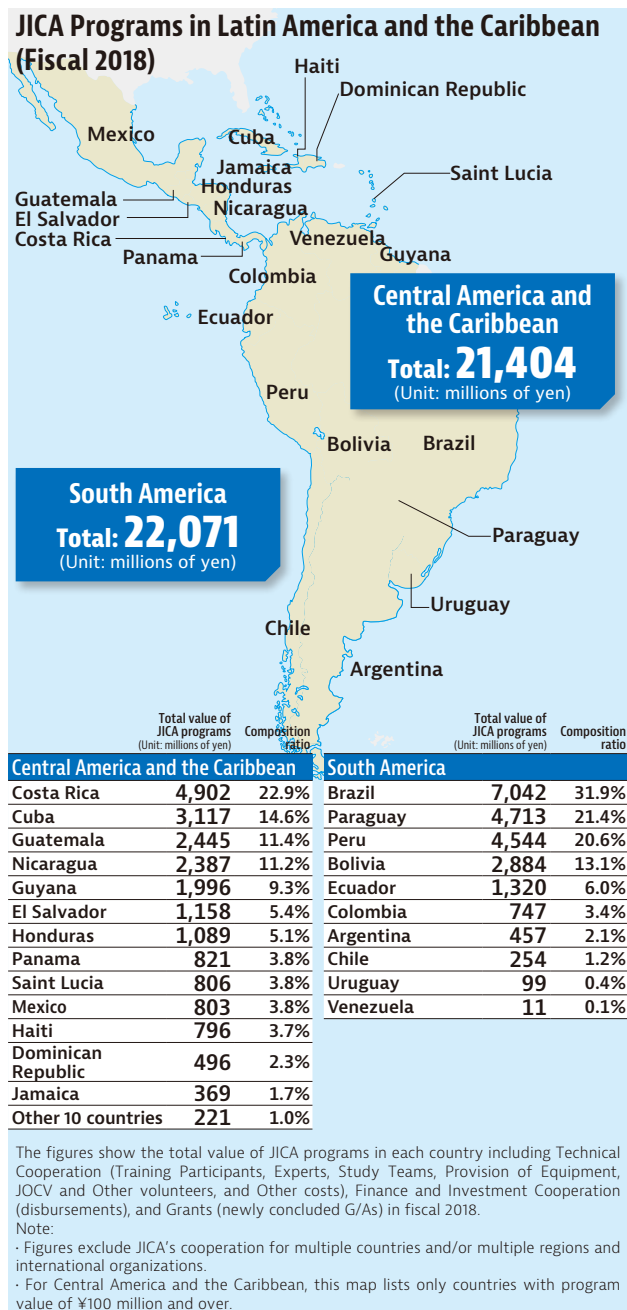


Latin America and the Caribbean

Formation of New Partner Relationships



Regional Issues

Latin America and the Caribbean, located on the opposite side of the earth, constitute the region farthest from Japan. Through media coverage of visits to the region by the Imperial Family members marking the anniversaries of Japanese immigrations, and consuming fishery and agricultural products from the region, there are, however, many opportunities to find familiarity with Latin America and the Caribbean.

Latin America and the Caribbean comprise 33 countries with a total population of 640 million, accounting for 8.4% of the

world population.¹ The region's GDP accounts for \$4.74 trillion, approximately 1.7 times larger than that of ASEAN, as of 2017.² Japan and many of the countries in the region traditionally maintain friendly relationships attributed to the presence of more than 2.1 million Japanese emigrants and their descendants, known as *Nikkei*, and their large exports of food and mineral resources to Japan, among other reasons. Moreover, stable democracy, environmental measures, being members of the G20, and participating in trans-Pacific economic agreements further strengthen ties between Japan and a number of the countries in the region. The region's average income is relatively high on account of high-income countries, notably Chile and Uruguay, which joined the group of high-income countries in January 2018, as well as countries with relatively high income such as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina.

However, the region continues to confront many development issues, such as regional and internal disparities; vulnerabilities to climate change and natural disasters, particularly in the small island states in the Caribbean; the middle-income trap³; and other social issues, such as aging population, that Japan is also facing.

JICA Activities

JICA's development cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean aims to (1) focus on specific sectors while leveraging its achievements gained through past cooperation in the region, and (2) further strengthen friendly relations between Japan and the region's countries to take coordinated actions in the international arena. Specifically, JICA is extending its cooperation in areas such as infrastructure development that helps to improve the investment environment, disaster risk reduction, climate change measures, and reducing economic disparity. JICA is also committed to developing human resources who are supportive of and knowledgeable about Japan and to strengthen ties with *Nikkei* communities [➔ see page 64].

1. Infrastructure Development

A lack of logistics infrastructure development and cumbersome border-crossing procedures in Central America have adversely affected regional connectivity. JICA has therefore begun providing assistance to formulate a master plan to facilitate strategic logistics beyond national boundaries for six countries in Central America. JICA is also transferring technologies for demand forecasting and planning in transportation and logistics.

2. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Similar to Japan, Chile frequently suffers from earthquakes,

1, 2. World Bank World Development Indicators (2017)

3. An economic situation in which a fast-growing developing country has reached a middle-income level and successfully reduced poverty, but has lost its international competitiveness in export manufacturing and its past growth momentum, due mainly to rising wages.

tsunamis, and other natural disasters, and JICA has extended cooperation in DRR over many years. Under the strategic partnership between Chile and Japan, JICA has promoted human resource development for DRR in the entire region of Latin America and the Caribbean, through disseminating the knowledge and techniques accumulated in Chile to the rest of the region. Furthermore, in October 2018, JICA began a new technical cooperation project to further strengthen Chile's DRR governance.

3. Climate Change Measures

In Peru, JICA has provided cooperation aimed at mitigating climate change caused by the deforestation of tropical rainforests, in order to conserve forests and the biodiversity of the Amazon, the world's largest tropical rainforest. In Brazil, JICA has provided assistance for creating a new model of coexistence between humans and nature through developing the "Field Museum," whose exhibits are the natural environment itself and through which scientific research of ecosystems, environmental education, and ecotourism are promoted.

4. Reducing Economic Disparity

JICA has extended cooperation for resolving pesticide residue problems in sesame seeds, which is an important source of revenue for Paraguayan small farmers, with a view to further promoting exports by Paraguay, one of the world's leading agricultural products exporters, and stimulating economic growth and poverty reduction. JICA is also providing assistance to improve roads for better access from agricultural areas to shipping ports through the ODA Loan project "Eastern Region Export Corridor Improvement Project." In this way, JICA is contributing to world food security, including that of Japan, which is a major export market for sesame seeds and other products from Paraguay.

5. Human Resources Development with a Training Program That Offers Opportunities to Study in Japan

JICA is implementing programs for the development of



Brazil: Japanese experts and Brazilian researchers conducting a forest survey (Project for Biodiversity conservation in Amazon based on a new concept of "Field Museum")
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human resources. Such programs are aimed at promising young administrators and researchers who will contribute to developing the potential of their countries and advancing socioeconomic development in the region. In fiscal 2018, JICA commenced a new technical cooperation project titled "SDGs Global Leadership Program (Latin America and the Caribbean)" by inviting young administrators and researchers to promote development cooperation in an effort toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region and building long-lasting friendly relations with Japan.

In future cooperation, JICA will work together with diverse development partners such as the Inter-American Development Bank and private companies, and extend its cooperation in developing economic infrastructure, promoting renewable energy and energy saving, training human resources for DRR, and environmental conservation. Such cooperation is based on the three guiding principles: "Progress together," "Lead together," and "Inspire together," and Japan's Initiative to Enhance Connectivity (connectivity of economies, values, and wisdom), both the basis of the Japanese government's policy concerning Latin America and the Caribbean. JICA is also striving to reduce social disparities including immigration and refugee issues [→ see the case studies below and on page 36]. Moreover, JICA is committed to developing human resources who are supportive of and knowledgeable about Japan and strengthening ties with *Nikkei* communities for fostering networking between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Latin America and the Caribbean Region: Triangular Cooperation among Japan, Brazil and Central America to Promote the Community Police System

Contributing to the immigration issue by improving security



Guatemala: Police officer interacting with local residents (Project for Strengthening of Police Human Resources through the Promotion of Community Police)

In October 2018, a 3,000-strong immigrant caravan left northern Honduras and headed north, passing through Guatemala and entering Mexico with the ultimate goal of reaching the United States. The reason for such large-scale migration from the three northern countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) in Central America is not just poverty; many are fleeing the violence, extortion, and active recruiting by criminal gangs known as *Maras*. Improving security is vital for resolving the immigration issue.

In the past, JICA provided support for the spread of the Japanese model of the community police system through the Project on Nationwide Dissemination of

Community Policing in Brazil, and based on this experience, JICA is promoting triangular cooperation among Japan, Brazil, and Central America in which Brazilian experts are sent to countries in Central America.

Utilizing the experience gained in Brazil, JICA is currently implementing the Project for Strengthening of Police Human Resources through the Promotion of Community Police in Guatemala, a major source of immigrants. The greater trust and confidence the police are gaining from the local community has resulted in an increase in arrests, a reduction in the number of murders, and an improvement in community security.