

Human Resource Development

Building a Resilient and Inclusive Society Where Lives Are Protected



*Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strongly associated goals are shown.

Education

Education is a fundamental human right that everyone must enjoy; it is a crucial element that underpins the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Education is also the cornerstone of a peaceful and inclusive society as it fosters the respect for diverse cultures and values.

However, 258 million school-age children and youths worldwide still remain out of school,¹ and it is estimated that at least 617 million children and youths have failed to acquire minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.² In addition, there are disparities in education due to factors associated with poverty, gender, disability, ethnicity, language, and place of residence. Ensuring quality education for all children is high on the agenda. To make matters worse, school closures due to the spread of COVID-19 are taking a heavy toll on children's learning and growth.

Furthermore, the global youth unemployment rate is on the rise, at approximately 13.6% in 2019.³ It is necessary to expand access to technical and vocational education and training and improve its quality. Access to higher education, which has been steadily improving, still remains limited in some parts of the world, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. The pace of developing the teaching force, upgrading educational facilities and equipment, and securing research funds is lagging behind, leaving significant challenges in terms of the quality of higher education and research.

In view of these circumstances, JICA has collaborated with its partner countries in achieving quality learning continuity to meet each individual's learning needs while taking a holistic view of the education sector, which encompasses everything from early childhood education, primary and secondary education, and technical and vocational education and training to higher education, literacy, and non-formal education. Priority is given to three pillars: (1) improvement in children's learning, (2) human resources development for innovation and industrial development, and (3) education for building inclusive and peaceful societies.

To guarantee access to education for all in a post-COVID-19 society, JICA will continue to work with various partners to devise innovative solutions to promote global mutual learning that transcends national and regional borders [[see the case studies on pages 52 and 55](#)].

Health

COVID-19, which emerged in 2019, has given rise to a global pandemic, raising the awareness that infectious diseases pose a great threat to the economy and society. Of particular concern is their impact on developing countries whose health systems are vulnerable.



Pakistan: Children going to a non-formal school supported by the Advancing Quality Alternative Learning Project (AQUAL) (Photo: JICA-AQUAL)

Developing countries are facing all kinds of health challenges simultaneously. Both maternal mortality and under-five mortality remain high. Many children are malnourished. Non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease are an emerging threat. The populations are aging. And a large portion of health expenditure is borne by out-of-pocket payment of individuals. The excessive burden of such health expenditure is likely to exacerbate people's health status and widen the poverty gap.

To protect people's health, it is important to ensure that all people have access to basic health services without entailing financial hardship, namely, to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC). This makes it essential to cooperate with leaders and officials not only in health but also in other sectors, including public finance. In addition to assisting partner countries in attaining UHC, JICA has widely advocated the importance of achieving UHC and attempted to strengthen collaboration with other actors in achieving this goal. As such, JICA has taken advantage of occasions such as international conferences to share the experiences gained and lessons learned through its cooperation activities concerning UHC.

In the face of the growing threat of cross-border infectious diseases, JICA has worked on building resilient health systems in normal times by supporting capacity building and networking of public health laboratories and relevant research institutions [[see page 19](#)]. For maternal and child health, JICA's assistance has also covered developing the system for sustainable delivery of maternal and child health services. In cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), JICA has contributed to the development of guidelines on home-based records for maternal, newborn, and child health records, including the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Handbook. JICA's assistance is now supporting the implementation of these guidelines in many partner countries. In addition, JICA works for nutrition improvement—the lack of which might cause children's deaths, stunting, and lifestyle diseases later in life—in close coordination among different sectors, including agriculture, sanitation, and education [[see the case study on page 47](#)].

1. UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Fact Sheet No.56, September 2019.

2. UIS Fact Sheet No. 48, February 2018.

3. ILO, "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020."

As for non-communicable diseases, JICA works on human resources development for prevention and early detection as well as on improving the therapeutic and diagnostic environment [→ see the case study on page 57].

To respond to diverse needs as soon as possible, it is increasingly important for JICA to work closely with other development partners to accelerate these activities, in addition to supporting the efforts of each country.

Social Security

As of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic is shaking the foundations of society all over the world, hitting socially vulnerable people the hardest. This adds to the importance of the role played by social security, which provides a means to create a more stable society through reducing poverty and enabling people to live a secure life.

From a viewpoint of improving the quality of the lives of all citizens, formation of social security systems is a policy issue in developing countries as well. In particular, some Asian countries that are experiencing rapid population aging are urgently required to cope with a number of emerging needs, including long-term care services for the elderly. There is a great demand for Japan's expertise in these areas; many partner countries express their desire to learn from Japan for developing new systems and improving the operation of the existing ones. To meet this demand, JICA has provided necessary information to, and has exchanged views with, these partner countries.

Furthermore, the participation of diverse people—including



Mongolia: A wheelchair user checking the usability of a wheelchair-accommodating train car under the Project for Promoting Social Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Ulaanbaatar City

persons with disabilities—in social and economic activities will help shape a vibrant country with inclusive and sustainable growth. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by 182 countries and regions,⁴ including Japan, stipulates that participation of persons with disabilities must be secured in international cooperation activities. The elimination of social, cultural, economic, political, or physical barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from social participation is a major challenge.

JICA views persons with disabilities as important contributors to development. Reflecting the perspective of disability and development in all of its development activities, JICA focuses on such specific aspects as (1) mainstreaming disability by engaging persons with disabilities as beneficiaries and contributors; (2) empowering persons with disabilities through leadership training and capacity building for their organizations; and (3) improving physical and information accessibility.

Developing countries also face increasing cases of work-related accidents and occupational diseases associated with economic development; however, they often lag behind in addressing occupational safety and health. JICA also extends assistance to help overcome these issues.

4. United Nations Treaty Collection, "15. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" (as of September 2020).

Viet Nam: Project for Strengthening Clinical Training System for New-Graduate Nurses

Helping to improve the quality of nurses through a sustainable training system



A new-graduate nurse receiving training at a provincial general hospital

In Viet Nam, the requirements for obtaining a nursing license include completing a nine-month clinical training at a health care institution following the completion of the required course at a nursing school. However, the required clinical training is not clearly defined by law with regard to both content and curriculum. As a result, some nurses who completed the clinical training are not up to standard in terms of competency and quality.

As such, JICA worked with the Ministry of Health (MOH) of Viet Nam, the Vietnamese Nursing Association, local nursing colleges and universities, and pilot provinces to develop training curricula, training materials, and training management guidelines. This enabled the training of 1,080 new-graduate

nurses and 1,403 clinical trainers at health care institutions in four provinces and one city in Viet Nam. JICA provided opportunities for the pilot provinces to learn from one another on how to manage the training so as to ensure its sustainability. The project also assisted MOH in institutionalizing the training system by stipulating it in a legal document.

MOH plans to authorize the developed training materials as standard clinical training materials to be used across the country and to expand this initiative nationwide. The nationwide expansion of the clinical training by the Vietnamese government is expected to improve the quality and competency of nurses across the country.