

Human Resources Strategy

With major changes in the international community, aid needs are becoming increasingly more complex and diverse. JICA has been undertaking a variety of programs to secure professionals capable of responding to these ever-changing needs. It has also been exerting its efforts to achieve a structure in which employees with diverse backgrounds and capabilities can function effectively as development cooperation professionals.

Recruiting and Training Human Resources for Development Cooperation

Securing capable personnel

Experts who will work on the frontline of JICA's operations are generally selected either by open recruitment via the comprehensive international cooperation career information website called PARTNER (the Participatory Network for Expert Recruitment) or based on recommendations by stakeholder organizations, except for cases in which they are selected based on a consulting-service contract that was publicly bid. JICA has introduced a roster registration system and a batch recruitment system for project formulation advisors responsible for project formulation as well as implementation and management at overseas offices.

In addition, JICA endeavors to secure people who can take on the positions of senior advisors and special advisors, ready to be sent overseas to international cooperation project sites at any time. The former, especially, contribute to the improvement of JICA projects based on their excellent expertise in their respective specialist fields.

Training human resources for the future

1. Internship Program

The Internship program is open primarily to undergraduate and graduate students, adults with the aim of deepening their understanding of international cooperation as well as to develop them as professionals for international cooperation in the future.

In fiscal 2020, due to the spread of COVID-19, JICA canceled the dispatch of interns abroad. The program was implemented only at domestic offices.

2. Associate Expert Program

This program is designed to train future JICA experts from among young professionals who have a certain level of expertise, career, and overseas activity experience in fields where human resources shortages are anticipated in the medium- to long-term. Those who have completed the program are expected to be sent to sites of JICA's overseas operations as JICA experts.

3. Development of personnel ready to work at project sites

JICA offers Capacity Enhancement Training, a program designed to provide information on recent trends in international cooperation, as well as opportunities to acquire expertise to address emerging challenges. In fiscal 2020, JICA offered 18 courses under this program. JICA also holds a monthly pre-dispatch training session for those set to leave Japan for overseas assignment.

4. Expansion of HR for international cooperation

The website PARTNER was designed with the principles of promoting international cooperation activities on an all-Japan basis. PARTNER is a comprehensive platform, providing information concerning a broad range of actors, such as international organizations, development consultants, NGOs and NPOs, national and local governments, universities, private companies, as well as JICA. PARTNER is widely utilized as a common international

Overview of Programs in Fiscal 2020

Recruitment	JICA Senior Advisors 103	Special Advisors 60	Openly-recruited or recommended and screened experts, including project formulation advisors 650*	
Training Human Resources	Internship Program 58 participants	Associate Expert Program 37 participants	Capacity Enhancement Training 473 participants	Pre-Dispatch Training for JICA Experts 318 participants
The Comprehensive International Cooperation Career Information Website "PARTNER"	Number of individuals registered on PARTNER (accumulated total) 51,979	Number of companies and organizations registered on PARTNER (accumulated total) 2,101	Number of information offerings on job openings (outside JICA), training, and seminars 2,821	Number of career consultations 193

*Total number of expert dispatches during fiscal 2020 out of the short-term and long-term experts who have been selected either by open recruitment or based on recommendations. The figure does not include recruits on a consulting-service contract.

cooperation platform from which the latest information can be obtained concerning employment opportunities, training courses,

seminars, and events. JICA also organizes seminars and offers consultations on how to build a global career through the website.

Human Resources (Human Capital)

Work at JICA entails overseas assignments and business trips, so various innovative measures are required to foster a balance between career and personal life. In order to enable a broad range of “human capital” to contribute to JICA’s mission and function effectively as development cooperation professionals, JICA is introducing systems that support a range of work styles, creating an organizational culture that values diversity and encourages mutual assistance, and actively working on staff training to bring out the potential and resourcefulness of all employees.

Promoting “Smart JICA” work-style reform

In 2015 JICA launched the “Smart JICA” project, and since then has been endeavoring to increase work flexibility, provide support for balancing work and family life, and reduce the amount of overtime work [→ see Graph 1]. In 2018, JICA’s efforts were widely recognized when the organization was the only public-sector agency chosen by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications as a Telework Pioneer. In fiscal 2019, JICA introduced “Smart JICA 3.0: Teamwork in Diversity” [→ see the chart below], and under this policy version, in addition to the existing

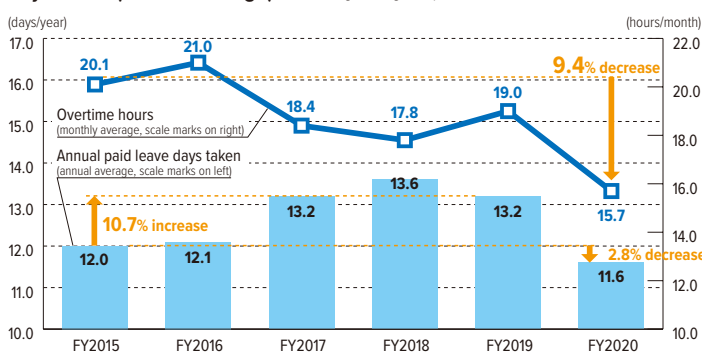
initiatives, JICA has been focusing on building teamwork to create new values within diversity and promoting a work environment in which employees can achieve their full potential.

In fiscal 2020 JICA continued pushing ahead with far-reaching work-style reform to enable the organization to fulfill its duties to developing countries and Japanese society, while taking all necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. JICA created a work environment more conducive to remote work. It also further increased the flexibility of the telework system and made more use of it. As a result, the number of employees who commuted to JICA Headquarters in May 2021 (up to the 21st of the month) fell to 57% of the normal level. JICA has also introduced flexible work hours in order to allow employees to avoid the peak commuting hours and cope with remote work from different time zones. In this way, JICA continues to support new work styles.

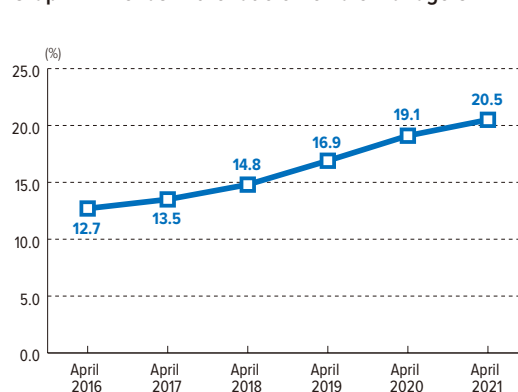
Realizing diversity and inclusion

JICA is making every effort to create a workplace environment in which women can play a more active leadership role. The target is to increase the ratio of women in managerial positions to at least

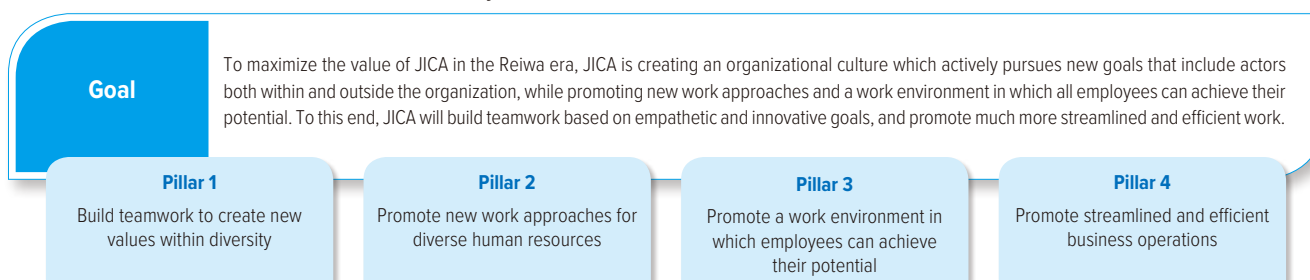
Graph 1 Trends in overtime hours (monthly average) and annual paid leave days taken (annual average) *excluding managerial positions



Graph 2 Trends in the ratio of female managers



Overview of “Smart JICA 3.0: Teamwork in Diversity”



Fiscal 2020 training for new JICA employees: After the state of emergency, which had been in place between April and May 2020, was lifted, JICA gave face-to-face training in business manners while taking strict anti-infection measures. The photo shows new recruits practicing answering phone calls.



20% during the 4th Medium-term Plan (April 2017–March 2022). This target has already been achieved, with the ratio standing at 20.5% in April 2021. JICA has also achieved the overall target value for women in managerial positions set by the government for independent administrative agencies, which is 15% by March 2021 [→ see Graph 2].

JICA is also encouraging all employees to take advantage of the various support systems available to help them achieve a balance between their respective life events and careers. Many female employees are given overseas assignments after giving birth, and in recent years, this number has consistently been around 30. Also, more male employees have been taking childcare leave (17 in fiscal 2020). While actively employing persons with disabilities, JICA is also striving to create accessible workplaces for persons with disabilities (for example, holding regular internal discussion meetings, and conducting inhouse training for all staff through e-learning).

Over the past several years, JICA has also been putting considerable effort into training for local staff (“national staff”) recruited at JICA overseas offices, and in addition to local training and distance learning using videoconferencing systems, JICA is providing them with opportunities to work in Japan.

OJT and training that focuses on resourcefulness and independence

JICA places a particular emphasis on OJT, which promotes growth and development of employees through everyday duties. For example, JICA assigns both trainers and mentors to new employees for on-site training and guidance. A characteristic system that JICA has introduced to take advantage of its numerous overseas project sites is overseas OJT for new employees. New employees are dispatched overseas for a few months to instill in them a sense of *gamba*. (Overseas OJT was not conducted in

fiscal 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). From fiscal 2020, JICA assigns mentors to mid-career recruits as well in an effort to improve communication and raise awareness of the importance of human resources development within JICA.

Focusing on the spontaneity of the employee, JICA is also establishing and expanding systems that support independent career formation by each employee. These include a system in which employees can do up to a certain amount of work at a place other than their assigned workplace (“10% sharing rule”), as well as the “in-house intern training system” in which employees can experience work on a short-term trial basis in a different section of their interest. In addition, employees in all job grades are receiving training aimed at fostering leadership and management skills corresponding to their respective number of years’ service and positions. JICA also offers “JICA Academy,” a permanent training program designed to teach core skills every JICA employee should have. In addition, JICA has introduced a long-term studies system in which employees can take a leave of absence and study at a postgraduate college abroad or in Japan to gain an academic degree, and a secondment training system in which employees can broaden their knowledge and skills through work at a different organization.

In fiscal 2020, JICA conducted trainers training, given that many training sessions are provided by its employees. Because of the limited opportunities for face-to-face training due to the COVID-19 pandemic, JICA also made more training content available on an on-demand basis. Moreover, with the establishment of the Office for Human Resources for Development Cooperation in the Human Resources Department in April 2020, JICA is taking a strategic stance in moving forward with medium- to long-term personnel training and career development support for development cooperation personnel, including those outside JICA.

MESSAGE

To Be an Organization That Continues to Be Counted On, Chosen, and Given High Hopes



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We are entering an unpredictable age of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). COVID-19, which some say is comparable to the Great Depression and the world wars, continues to rage. Discontinuous social change is looming large in Japan and the rest of the world. Reform is needed more than ever to cope with this emerging age.

In retrospect, JICA has implemented significant reforms, including conversion to an independent administrative institution in 2003 and organizational integration in 2008, as well as its forays into new undertakings such as peacebuilding projects, SDGs Business Supporting Surveys, and the Science and Technology Cooperation. But what about our corporate culture? The Japanese-style employment system and work style that were prevalent more than three decades seem to endure almost unchanged, even at JICA. And JICA is apparently no exception when it comes to the over-adaptation to the “bureaucratic code,” which calls for more power, budget, and

personnel and boasts the infallibility of bureaucrats.

JICA needs to reform itself so that it can make a larger difference in addressing various social issues abroad as well as in Japan for sustainable contributions in this regard. To that end, it needs to move away from the long-held principle of self-sufficiency and accelerate innovation and partnership by sharing its values through dialogue with a wide range of actors.

Fiscal 2021 is the last year of the current Medium-term Plan of JICA as an incorporated administrative agency and the year when the next plan is formulated. Taking this as a golden opportunity to update the organization, JICA will reform itself based on three pillars: promotion of digital transformation (DX) and corporate transformation (CX); project management reform, including the creation of platforms for solving problems in a co-creative manner; and personnel system reform, including the development of SDGs-oriented human resources.