

Message



Realizing a Free and Prosperous World through Official Development Assistance (ODA)

The world has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. A crisis like this can often accelerate global structural changes. Authoritarianism is on the rise, while trust in democracy has declined. Under these circumstances, Japan must exert its utmost effort and work closely with likeminded democracies to realize a free and prosperous world. With this in mind, Japan has promoted the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) as a core pillar of its foreign policy. FOIP envisions the realization of peace, prosperity, and the international order based on the rule of law in a region extending from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean and beyond to Africa, predicated on shared values of freedom and democracy. The international community also supports this vision. To this end, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) utilizes Japan’s ODA for human resource and infrastructure development in partner countries. These activities have been crucial to build Japan’s trust with the international community.

COVID-19 has not only endangered people’s lives; it has also threatened *human security* by disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable. Given JICA’s mission to realize *human security*, we launched our Initiative for Global Health and Medicine in July 2020. This initiative focuses on strengthening national health systems in partner countries to better protect people from COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. JICA is also providing emergency financial assistance to countries that have been severely impacted by the pandemic through our COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loans.

In Japan, JICA is partnering with a diverse range of stakeholders, including local governments, NGOs, academia, attorneys, and the private sector to promote initiatives that welcome foreign workers to local communities. As part of this effort, we launched the Japan Platform for Migrant Workers towards Responsible and Inclusive Society (JP-MIRAI) in November 2020. In Japan’s history, many Japanese people migrated to other countries. In fact, JICA was previously in charge of this emigration program. Later JICA came to invite many training participants and scholars from developing countries to Japan. We are sharing our experience working in

multicultural contexts to further strengthen Japan’s relationships with the developing world.

Furthermore, JICA is also committed to strengthening our relationship with partner countries by bolstering our mutual bonds of trust. JICA has long emphasized the importance of investing in human resources development for successful nation building. As such, for many years we have implemented training programs to support global socioeconomic development by conducting training courses for partner country practitioners and administrators across a wide range of sectors, including agriculture, education, infrastructure, and industrial development. As the first non-Western nation to become a developed country, JICA is now sharing information about Japan’s unique modernization experience with other nations through the JICA Development Studies Program in Japan and the JICA Chair (JICA Program for Japanese Studies) in developing countries to better inform their development.

Additionally, JICA is extending cooperation to achieve *quality growth* in partner countries through mutual dialogue to develop economic systems and the underpinning infrastructure to ensure their sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience. We will also build on the trust we have cultivated with our partner countries over many years to tackle some of the biggest challenges that lie ahead, such as digital transformation (DX) and climate change.

Looking ahead, JICA will continue to work hand in hand with the people of the developing world, and we will redouble our aspirations to create a fair, free, and inclusive democratic society. By doing our utmost to ensure the betterment of all nations, we are committed to enhancing global peace and prosperity under our vision of *Leading the world with trust*.

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