

JICA's Central America and Caribbean Division Staff, Naoko Yamada, reflects on her secondment with the Inter-American Development Bank



From June through September 2019, Ms. Naoko Yamada worked as a secondee in the Energy Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)'s Infrastructure and Energy Department. The Energy Division serves as an operational section within the IDB that conceptualizes internal energy sector policies and prepares, executes and supervises financial and non-financial operations for IDB borrowing member countries in the energy sector.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and JICA have a long-standing partnership of working cooperatively across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In particular, since 2012, JICA and the IDB have worked together to implement their signature strategic partnership framework called, co-financing for renewable energy and energy efficiency (CORE).

Recently, the LAC region has seen a steady increase in its demand for sustainable energy solutions. This is especially the case for the majority of Central American and Caribbean countries who are now facing tight financial conditions because of their dependence on fossil fuel imports for energy generation. In the case of South America, it has recently worked to adopt more sustainable energy solutions with the aim to make nearly 100% of its energy come from renewable sources. To date, JICA and the IDB have worked to jointly implement various co-financing and technical cooperation initiatives to address existing energy challenges in the region.



Ms. Naoko Yamada, Central America and Caribbean Division, Latin America and Caribbean Department, JICA

Throughout Ms. Yamada's time at the IDB, she worked to strengthen the collaborative relationship between the two organizations by furthering joint initiatives through the promotion of the CORE Project, as well as other joint activities. By engaging in the daily tasks assigned to her by the Energy Division, she was able to deepen her understanding about the IDB's operations and become familiar with its outlook toward how it seeks to address regional energy challenges.

Ms. Yamada was especially impressed by the IDB's active involvement in conducting research and broadcasting its findings in various fora, including internal seminars and international conferences, to enhance people's sectorial knowledge in the region. Furthermore, she was fascinated by the IDB's work to catalyze "Innovation Solutions" that seeks to address regional infrastructure bottlenecks. As part of this effort, the *IDB-JICA Innovation Day*¹, held on September 9, 2019,

¹ IDB-JICA Innovation Day https://www.jica.go.jp/usa/english/office/topics/c8h0vm0000czwtl-att/topics_190910.pdf

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served as a unique opportunity for the two agencies to deepen their understanding of cutting-edge Japanese technologies and practices that could be used to seek optimal, innovative solutions to deliver quality infrastructure to LAC countries.

While Ms. Yamada's secondment with the IDB has now concluded, JICA remains determined to keep fostering its cooperation with the IDB to seek opportunities for joint activities that tackle existing challenges across Latin American and Caribbean countries.