

Southwest Asia

Pillars of Aid Eradication of Poverty is the Common Agenda

Southwest Asia has about half of the world's poor population (the poverty line is represented by an income of one dollar a day). Thus, eradication of poverty is the common agenda in the region.

It is important to formulate well-balanced cooperation combining activities for the improvement of basic living standards and for the stable development of the economy, and to implement this cooperation taking into account the specific

needs of each country in the region.

For this purpose, JICA is providing a wide range of assistance in fields indispensable for daily living (such as health and medical care, education and ensuring the supply of safe water) and for economic development (such as the development of the agriculture, small and medium-scale enterprises and economic infrastructure*).

In addition, because the region is densely

populated, which means that people's living situations have a great impact on the natural environment, JICA is providing cooperation that focuses on the preservation of the natural environment and urban environmental problems. It is also necessary to consider approaches to structural issues by examining reasons why the region has so many poor people, and why the number of poor people does not decrease despite economic development.

Current State of Development

■ Alleviating Poverty

Southwest Asia consists of seven countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. It has a population of approximately 1.38 billion, or one-fifth of the global population. Five hundred and sixty million people in the region are classified as poor—around half of the world's poor.

For the past several years, the economic growth of Southwest Asia, excluding certain countries, has been progressing at about 5% annually, which seems comparatively good, but poverty still persists. In the region, factors such as ethnicity, religion, language, and climate are complexly related to politics and society, contributing to social and cultural diversity and depth as well as instability.

In Southwest Asia, which is in need of aid, cooperation is mainly provided in basic living fields such as health and medical care, agricultural and rural development, and primary education aimed at poverty alleviation; in upgrading the infrastructure to stimulate economic and social activities; and in environmental conservation corresponding to population growth and economic development. Special consideration needs to be given to gender* disparities that are apparent in the

literacy rates and aid corresponding to the high death rate related to pregnancy and childbirth. It is also necessary to make sure that the cooperation results reach the socially vulnerable, such as women and at the grass-roots levels, through joint projects with NGOs.

■ Support for Regional Peace and Stability

The terrorist attacks that occurred in the United States on September 11, 2001, had a large impact on this region. As the international community has acknowledged that poverty is a root cause of terrorism, the urgency and importance of poverty alleviation in southwestern Asian countries, which generate many socially stable factors such as conflict due to ethnic and religious differences, became clearer.

JICA plans to provide cooperation for regional stability, such as support for Pakistan, whose economy and society were seriously damaged by the terrorist attacks in the United States, and post-conflict reconstruction for Sri Lanka, where peace negotiations are underway between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) following the cease-fire agreement of February 2002.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

■ Aid Reaching the Community Level—Bangladesh

Bangladesh, one of the most impoverished countries in Southwest Asia, has severe conditions, such as frequent flood damage owing to its low-lying geography.

In 2000, Japan formulated the Country-Specific Aid Program, specifying priority areas for aid: (1) agriculture and rural development; (2) improvement of social sectors (basic living, health and medical care); (3) investment encouragement and export promotion; and (4) disaster control. It has been confirmed that these four areas will continue to be a priority between Japan and the current regime.

Locally, close collaboration among the Japanese Embassy, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)*, and the JICA Office has been built. Rural development, health care, education, arsenic contamination control, and electric power have been selected as the five most important sectors. Working groups, including dispatched JICA experts, have

been formed in each sector. In this way, we try to share and systematically accumulate the knowledge and experiences of people in each sector so that a comprehensive Japanese cooperation program can be formulated.

JICA is also promoting collaboration with other donors. For example, in the education field JICA participates in a primary education development program that was planned with a sector-wide approach, together with other donors*. Under the aforementioned cooperation program, various joint projects have been carried out jointly with Shapla Neer (Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support), the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP), and the Asia Arsenic Network, in active collaborations with NGOs.

■ Development for Gross National Happiness—Bhutan

Bhutan is a kingdom with a population of 680,000, located

on steep mountains in the eastern part of the Himalayan mountain range. Under a unique development principle declared by the King, Gross National Happiness (GNH), the development plan that will coexist with Bhutan's traditional culture and natural environmental conservation, has been promoted alongside economic growth measured by GNP.

Taking this policy of the Bhutan government into consideration, JICA has been implementing cooperation in the major fields of agricultural development and economic infrastructure upgrading (roads, communication, and electricity). Agricultural development is especially important, because agriculture is the major industry in this country, with 80% of the citizens engaged in farming. Japan, with experience in leading successful agricultural development in the western region of Bhutan in the past enjoys a great deal of trust. Currently, Japan has been providing cooperation mainly for rice farming technologies and agricultural road construction in the eastern region, where living conditions are harsh and where most of the poor reside.

Local Development after Peacebuilding—Nepal

Nepal is one of the most impoverished countries in the world due to its social and cultural background related to ethnicity and caste, as well as because of its steep mountainous terrain, which hinders the effects of development. Therefore, JICA believes that improving poor people's living standards should be the primary objective of cooperation for Nepal, and places emphasis on health care service, primary education, socioeconomic infrastructure development, agriculture and rural development, and environmental conservation in the implementation of cooperation projects. In fiscal 2002, a Japan-US joint project formulation study was conducted in the health care field, proceeding with coordination between Japan and the United States regarding the health of mothers and children, and HIV/AIDS. In response to the severely deteriorating environment in the capital Katmandu, technical cooperation has also begun to transfer the waste treatment technologies and administrative management skills of the Japanese central and local governments.

Front Line

● Bangladesh Flood Control and Support for Income Improvement

Participatory Rural Development Administrative Support

Dispatch of Technical Cooperation Experts

One third of the land flooded

In Bangladesh, which borders on India to the east, approximately 140 million people, almost the same numbers of people living in Japan, live in a land area only twice as large as that of Hokkaido. From the upper basin, which is approximately 12 times larger than the entire country and which includes the Himalaya Mountains, Nepal, and India, large amounts of water flow into the rivers during the rainy seasons, repeatedly bringing severe flood damage to the country. Bangladesh belongs to an estuary delta area where 20 to 33% of the land is inundated every year during the flood seasons.

A wide area of low flatlands (Haor) and a similarly wide area of river shoals (Char) cover the country. In Haor, vast rice paddies surrounding villages are flooded and look like lakes for three

months of the rainy season.

Protect lives during flood seasons

JICA helps the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) carry out activities in flood control and income improvement for residents simultaneously through participatory approaches. For residents of rural areas such as Haor and Char, flood prevention measures are implemented so that residents can remain in the area instead of evacuating during flood season. These countermeasures include village protection with wave prevention walls, improvement of well facilities to secure water for living, and building levees for evacuation areas. At the same time, regular vocational training is provided for residents so that they can secure an income during flood seasons by breeding freshwater fish, raising livestock, and vegetable garden-



Kishoreganj District suffering from floods

ing within the scope of this cooperation for rural development.

This approach is experimentally applied at Grai village in Nikli County of the Kishoreganj District, where residents are willing to participate. The key to future success is finding out what is effective flood control and establishing a cooperative system between residents and local administration so that the residents' motivation can be encouraged.

(JICA Bangladesh Office)

However, Nepal has seen an increase in Maoist antigovernment guerrillas in recent years, and public safety in rural areas is especially unstable. As most of the poor in Nepal are concentrated in rural areas, it has become increasingly difficult to implement cooperation for people who should benefit from JICA's cooperation. Since the beginning of 2003, there seems to be a greater chance for a cease-fire and peace negotiations between the guerrillas and the government; however, due attention to safety is still needed when providing cooperation.

Alleviation of Economic and Regional Disparities and Poverty—Pakistan

In Pakistan, the Musharraf administration, which came to power through a bloodless coup in October 1999, has implemented various reforms to accomplish national reconstruc-

tion and democratization. The conservative party supported by President Musharraf and the army, known as Pakistan Muslim League, Quaid-Azam faction, became the government party in the general election of October 2002 and has followed these reform and development lines.

In November 2002, the third Pakistan Country-specific Aid Study Group was formed in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). Based on the recognition that the alleviation of economic and regional disparities and poverty needs to be addressed, the study group has been examining the future direction of Japan's cooperation and the possibility of narrowing priority aid fields.

At present, technical cooperation is provided in the fields of good governance* (improvement of local administration ser-

Front Line

● Pakistan Literacy Cooperation in Pakistan

Strengthening Literacy Education Administration

Dispatch of Technical Cooperation Experts

Expand non-formal schools

In Pakistan, the literacy rate is 49% (36.8% for females) and the primary education enrollment rate is 66% (50% for females). Following the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, Pakistan formed a national action plan to achieve 100% primary school enrollment rate (Education For All) by 2015. Improving the literacy rate for females in remote areas, including rural areas, has become a major goal.

In order to raise the literacy and school enrollment rates, the Pakistan government is constructing more classrooms, increasing the number of teachers, upgrading teacher training, and distributing teaching materials while providing primary education at non-formal schools. Non-formal schools allow children between the ages of five and 14, who have no access to public schools or who have dropped out of schools, to complete primary education in three-and-a-half years instead of the usual five years. Construction of 200,000 non-formal schools is scheduled to be complet-

ed by 2015. In addition, literacy classes for illiterate adults, especially women, are being expanded and training in skills such as sewing for income improvement and granting micro-credits is planned for the future.

From teaching materials production to policy support

JICA has dispatched long-term experts to the Pakistan Ministry of Education since 1997, supporting the curriculum development of literacy education and teaching material production. Since 2001, JICA has been providing policy support for overall literacy education, including organizing a Seminar on Literacy and Basic Education after Decentralization. Following the UN principle of the Decade for Human Rights Education starting in 2003, we also support the formulation of specific national plans in the literacy field in cooperation with UNESCO.

Furthermore, JICA supports the promotion of adult literacy education programs by organizing workshops for liter-



Education support provided at non-formal schools

acy education instructors in the region on project cycle management* methods, including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

In the future, several districts in Punjab Province will be selected as model areas and a three-year technical cooperation project will be implemented to improve the quality of primary education at non-formal schools. Together with the administrative cooperation provided at the federal level, our future tasks include strengthening literacy education administration through model projects at the province and district levels.

(JICA Pakistan Office)

vices and support for police reforms), health and medical care, education, environment, economic infrastructure, and agriculture. For the future, in combination with grant aid and loan assistance*, Japan will assist the Pakistan government in addressing poverty alleviation, economic recovery, the realization of good governance, and the promotion of devolution to local administration.

■ Cooperation for Achieving Peace—Sri Lanka

Technical cooperation is easy to provide in Sri Lanka owing to its high levels of income and education compared to other countries of Southwest Asia. In Sri Lanka, development of the economic infrastructure has been smooth with Japan's loan assistance. Cooperation in effective combination of

development study and technical cooperation through dispatch of experts will be further implemented.

In February 2002, the 19-year civil conflict was suspended indefinitely and peace negotiations between the parties concerned are underway. The civil conflict created more than 800,000 internally displaced persons, who have started to repatriate since the cease-fire. Following the cease-fire, JICA added "support for the peace process" and "post-conflict reconstruction" to its major tasks, and conducted a study on the needs of the affected areas. In the future, support for the resettlement of displaced persons and humanitarian and development support will be implemented in areas devastated by the conflict before peace is achieved, in order to help people in the affected areas actually feel the impact of peace, and thus, support the achievement of peace.

Front Line

● Sri Lanka Support for Welfare for Persons with Disabilities

Better Education and Nursing Care for More Children

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

A country of devout Buddhists

Sri Lanka is called the teardrop of India. Sinhalese and Tamils live in this drop-shaped land. Since peace negotiations to stop the civil conflict have been promoted with the mediation of other countries, there has been an unprecedented amount of hope for peace among the citizens. The literacy rate of Sri Lanka is approximately 90%, and basic medical services are free; there are many aspects of this country that are far more developed than in other Asian developing countries. Japan has been providing human resources and financial aid in the fields of health and medical care, education, regional development, and sports.

Buddhist beliefs, which are held by 70% of the population, affect various aspects of the people's thoughts and lifestyles. One of the beliefs is reincarnation, which is held by most people in this country. This belief can be observed in the field of welfare for persons with disabilities. There seems to be a strong belief that physical disability in this life is imposed as retribution for bad behavior in a previous life; in other words, people should acquire enough virtue while they

are living this life.

Such belief hinders proper understanding of disabilities, even among the families of persons with disabilities and welfare related personnel. Although welfare programs tend to be overlooked, the dispatch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) for the last 10 years has gradually been improving the situation in this field.

Results of steady activities

JOCVs dispatched in the early days of cooperation were mostly engaged in policy-making for persons with hearing difficulties. In cooperation with the National Institute of Education in Sri Lanka, they supported the establishment of teacher training programs and the production of textbooks. Later, the dispatch of JOCVs was extended to NGO-operated facilities for children with physical and mental disabilities. In February 2003, the National Center for Children was opened, and marked the first huge step forward in Sri Lankan welfare policies, which had been held back. The assistance of JOCVs is indispensable here, as well.



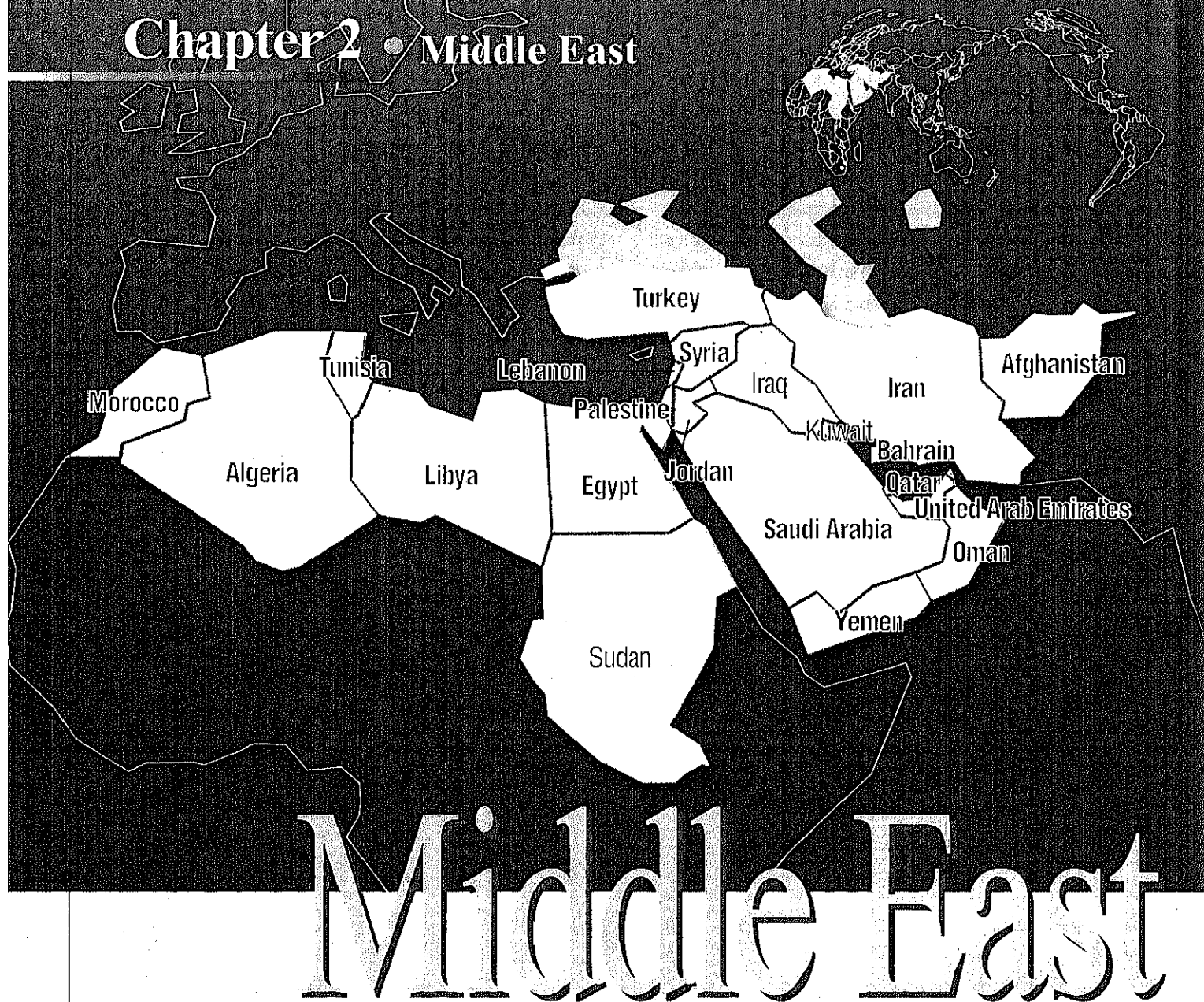
A JOCV and children with disabilities

Current activities of the National Center for Children include the promotion of health examinations for babies and infants for the purpose of early discovery and treatment of disabilities, the production of pamphlets to introduce information about children's development to mothers, the implementation of teacher training programs to deal with children with many different kinds of disabilities in addition to hearing impairment, and counseling tours of schools.

Steady cooperation involving local people will continue and it is expected that local people themselves will be able to provide better education and treatment for children in the future.

(JICA Sri Lanka Office)

Chapter 2 • Middle East



Pillars of Aid Water Resources Management, the Environment, and Human Resources Development

JICA provides cooperation in various fields of development, in particular, the management of water resources, environmental conservation, the promotion of industry, and human resources development.

From the standpoint of supporting the Middle East peace process, which is the region's most critical issue, JICA is providing technical cooperation for Palestine by offering training courses in the fields of vocational training and enhancement in legislative, judicial, and administrative capabilities, with support from regional governments of Japan and the government of Jordan.

For Afghanistan, which being reconstructed after more than 20 years of civil war, JICA has implemented projects in various fields of education promotion, recovery of medical services, empowerment* of women, and restoration of the media, together with support from the international community. Post-conflict reconstruction for Iraq, whose aim is to build a new nation, is under consideration.

In Saudi Arabia and other oil-producing states, JICA is providing support for the economic diversification efforts needed to enable these countries to break free of a petroleum-reliant economy. Specifically, cooperation is

centered on the training of engineers and technicians.

In countries with relatively high-income levels, such as Tunisia and Turkey, technical cooperation is being provided with an emphasis on human resources development.

On the other hand, JICA provides technical cooperation and grant aid to countries with relatively low-income levels, such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Yemen. Cooperation relates to upgrading and expanding industrial infrastructure* and satisfying basic human needs (BHN)* in areas such as health and medical care.

Current State of Development

■ Diverse Political and Economic Backgrounds

The Middle East, which consists of 22 diverse countries, extends over a very large area, from Afghanistan in the east to Morocco in the west, and from Sudan in the south to Turkey in the north.

The climate throughout most of the region is arid or semi-arid, apart from the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf, where there is high humidity; North Africa, which has a Mediterranean climate; and the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, which has a mountainous climate. Political systems include kingdoms, emirates, secular republics, and an Islamic republic based on clerical rule.

In terms of the economy, the Gulf states and the North African countries are blessed with extensive petroleum and natural gas resources. However, countries such as Yemen and Sudan are classified as least developed countries (LDCs)* since they lack natural resources and are lagging behind in socioeconomic development.

■ Varied Development Conditions

Many countries in the Middle East have rich histories dating far back to before the birth of Christ. They also have varied social and cultural backgrounds.

Since the end of World War II, the region has seen much conflict, including the Middle East war, the Lebanese con-



Buildings destroyed by conflict in Palestine

flict, the civil war in Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, the US military attack on Afghanistan, the Palestinian conflict, and the Iraq war. The Middle East is thus a very diverse area, and the development picture it presents is in no way uniform.

For instance, the Gulf states have pushed ahead with economic and social development using vast oil revenues gained from the development of petroleum resources, and this has enabled them to establish a high level of infrastructure. However, these countries urgently need to train personnel to support their nation-building efforts since, particularly because of their small populations, they still have insufficient technical human resources of their own to support the economy.

In contrast, there are also several countries experiencing difficult economic conditions where the provision of services remains inadequate with regard to basic human living conditions, such as basic health and medical care and a safe water supply.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

■ Support for Peace in the Middle East

Since the 1993 Oslo agreement, Japan has actively taken part in multinational discussions by chairing the Environmental Working Group, which is one of five working groups established at the Multilateral Middle East Peace Negotiations held in 1992 to support the peace process (Environment, Regional Economic Development, Water, Arms Control, and Regional Security and Refugees). Japan has also made active contributions by providing direct support through international organizations.

Since September 2000, armed conflicts have intensified. However, several subsequent events took place in 2003, presenting favorable opportunities for the promotion of peace in

the Middle East. These events include the inauguration of the Abbas Palestinian Authority in April, approval of a Roadmap for bilateral coexistence by both the authorities of Israel and Palestine in June, and a three-month cease-fire agreement in July.

Under these circumstances, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi announced the New Japanese Assistance Package for restoring and reforming the Palestinian Authority when she visited Palestine in April 2003. Based on this announcement, JICA will actively implement training in Japan and third-country training* regarding basic living condition improvement and production sector. Both activities form the major focus of cooperation, while further promoting

support for Palestinian Authority reforms, in which JICA has been involved since last year.

■ Cooperation in Water Resources

Due to natural conditions, recent economic development, and population growth, a stable supply of water and effective water use have become urgent issues in this region, which is mostly short of water. In response, dispatch of experts and acceptance of technical training participants are carried out in the fields of water resources management planning, improvements in water and sewerage facilities, and techni-

cal guidance in water services to assist each country in addressing its water resources problems.

■ Environmental Conservation

As economic growth has been prioritized in this region's nation-building efforts, measures for environmental conservation are lagging behind. As a result, the region experienced serious contamination of air, water and soil. JICA assists in monitoring the environment, improving pollution measurement skills, and introducing environmentally-friendly manufacturing process in the fields of environment monitoring sys-

Front Line

● Syria

Seminar for Instructors at Educational Facilities of Persons with Disabilities

Expand Welfare for Persons with Disabilities

Dispatch of Technical Cooperation Experts, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

Persons with disabilities left behind

The weak are traditionally regarded as being in need of protection in Syria, therefore social independence is not been normally expected by persons with disabilities. It is also strongly believed that disabilities are hereditary. In rural areas, there are extreme cases where children with disabilities never leave their homes their entire lives for fear of adversely affecting the marriage prospects of siblings. Although official statistics claim that the number of persons with disabilities in Syria is approximately 150,000, or equivalent to 0.85% of the total population, the actual percentage is reportedly as high as 4%, since the definition of disabilities in the statistics is vague.

Training methods rich in ideas

JICA has been dispatching Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) with expertise in nursing and scientific therapy to facilities for persons with disabilities since 1995, in order to transfer Japanese experiences to local teachers individually. We then realized

that the knowledge and technologies should be spread to teachers all over the country, so we dispatched experts from Japan to organize a seminar. The seminar introduced ideas on how best to offer vocational training and organize employment support for persons with disabilities by using the actual examples of Japan and other countries. During the practical training, experts taught methods for basic activity training with assistance from JOCVs utilizing inexpensive materials that are easily available in Syria.

Participants seemed to have found teaching and guidance in line with the levels of disabilities—such as handcraft activities and gardening treatment methods—interesting and useful. Also, the seminar made the participants realize that they could provide various assistance using simple ideas without advanced equipment, thus increasing their enthusiasm and creativity.

Independence of persons with disabilities

At the seminar, for the first time in



An expert working at a facility for persons with disabilities in Syria

Syria, an activity report was made by a person with disabilities. Following an expert's suggestion, we asked a disabled person who makes cardboard assistance tools in the cerebral palsy center to report his experiences. This attempt instilled confidence not only in the presenter, but also in disabled participants who work in facilities for the disabled. As the next step, not limited to educational facilities, JICA will extend cooperation in regional communities for persons with disabilities so they will be able to gain independence.

(JICA Syria Office)

tems, cleaner production, and waste management.

Industry Promotion and Human Resources Development

The European Union (EU) has been promoting a free trade partnership in this region to achieve economic and social development and stability in the Mediterranean area. In the next several years to several decades, Algèria, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Palestine, Morocco, and Jordan are expected to join the partnership. Accordingly, internationally competent domestic industries need to be developed. JICA assists human resources development by providing vocational training and advice on policy-making in various industries.



An expert discusses Juniper (Japanese cypress family) conservation in Saudi Arabia.

Front Line

● Afghanistan Afghan Female Teacher Training

First to Improving the Skills of Female Teachers

Acceptance of Technical Training Participants

Priority field in post-conflict reconstruction

After the collapse of the Taliban regime, Afghanistan started reconstruction with aid from various countries. Setting 'support for the peace process and national reconciliation' and 'support for human resources development' as the priority fields for assistance, Japan announced it would provide assistance for education, empowerment of women, and nation-building.

In February 2003, at the Tokyo International Centre, training for Afghan female teachers was held with the participation of 20 principals and teachers. The objectives of the training program were to assist with understanding the current conditions and tasks of female education in Afghanistan and making a framework for female education by the Afghans themselves, and to nurture a group of leaders by improving the skills of female teachers in order to eradicate gender* disparities in access to education in the long run.

Female teachers from all over Afghanistan participated in this training and held lively discussions. The opinions

expressed include: "The problem is that many parents do not allow their daughters to receive education." "The situation should be improved in the future, because the situation was imposed by the civil war and the Taliban regime." "I think the real cause of this problem is the low awareness of the entire citizenry on this matter." "There should be more female teachers," and "We don't have enough teaching materials because many of them were burned in war."

Do what they can specifically

There was an opinion among training participants from various countries who have received technical training in Japan that "although we learned many things in Japan, the situations are so different in Japan from those in our own countries that we didn't know what we could actually do back home."

Taking such an opinion into account, we focused this training on giving advice on educational policies and encouraging participants to think of what they can



Afghan female teachers who came to Japan to receive training

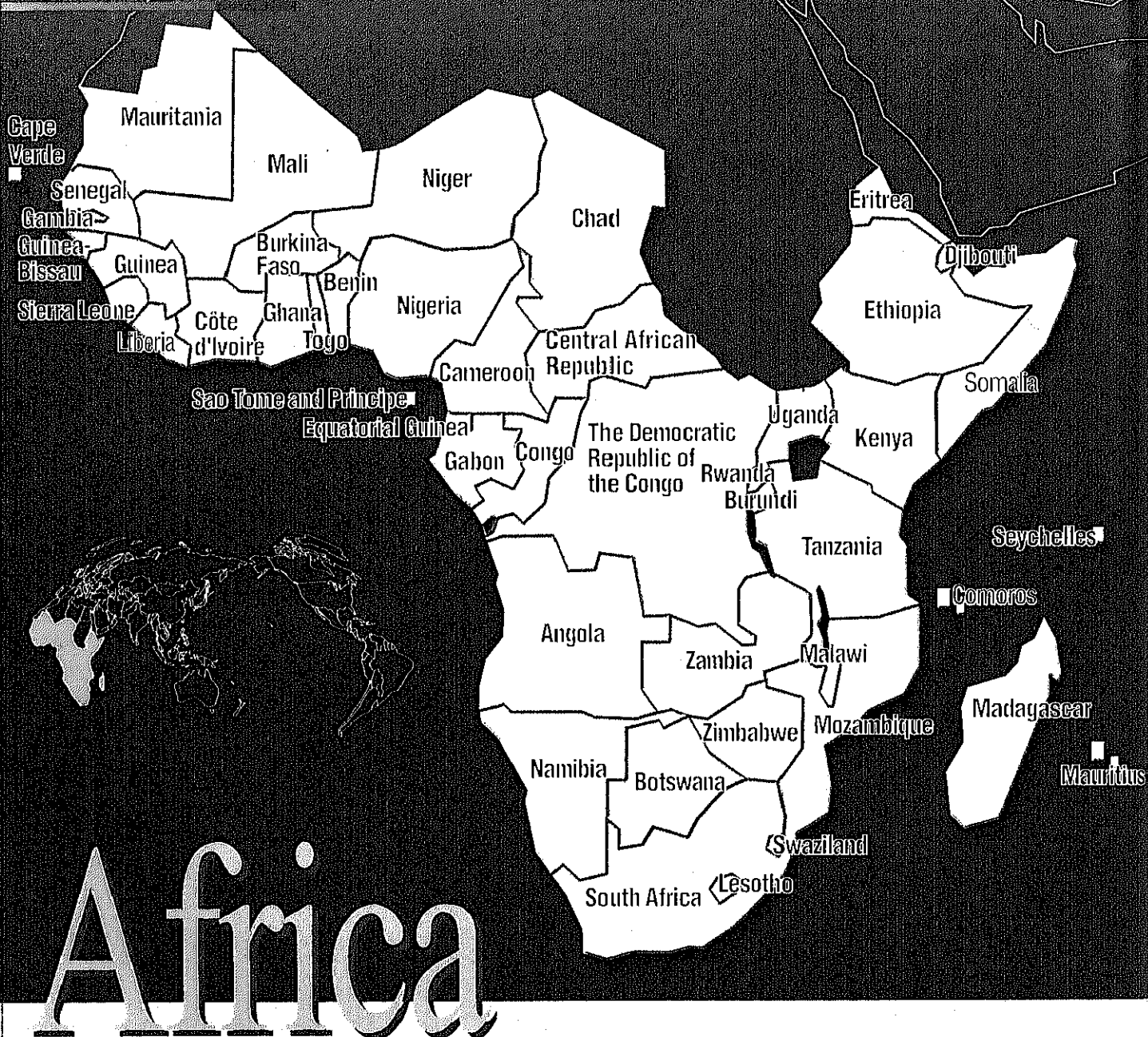
actually do, based on what they learned in Japan.

The training participants returned home with high hopes and confidence, commenting that "The training was very useful because it clarified the causes of problems and which activity to start with. I will do my best in utilizing what I have learned when I return home."

When the female teachers returned to Afghanistan, they might face impediments to carrying out the plans they devised in Japan. Sustainable support for human resources development is our ambition. It enables these female teachers to overcome difficulties as well as to recognize and analyze problems.

(Tokyo International Centre)

Chapter 3 • Africa



Pillars of Aid Ultimate Goal of "Poverty Alleviation"

After the end of the Cold War era, aid from Europe and the United States to Africa did not increase significantly. Considering the importance of Africa in terms of international politics, etc., Japan hosted, as a co-organizer, the First Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993 and TICAD II in 1998. The aim of these conferences was to stress the importance of African Development to the international community and to increase understanding of and support for Africa.

Based on the guidelines for Japanese aid, Tokyo Agenda for Actions presented at TICAD II, and the common goals of international soci-

ety such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*, JICA is providing support for human resources development and capacity building to achieve the ultimate goal of "Poverty Alleviation."

The following are JICA's priority areas.

- 1) Social development with emphasis on education, health, and water supply
- 2) Agricultural and rural development for food security and pro-poor growth
- 3) Development of the private sector by strengthening market economy systems and promoting small and medium enterprises

- 4) Democratization, prevention of conflict, and post-conflict recovery as the foundation for development

In providing cooperation in these areas, JICA is promoting South-South cooperation* such as Asia-Africa cooperation and intra-regional cooperation among African countries. JICA is also actively participating in formulating, implementing, and monitoring process of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)* and Sector Programs (SP)* to strengthen ownership* of African countries and partnership and coordination of donors*.

Current State of Development

■ 40% of the Population Live on Less than US\$1 a Day

Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa excluding Sudan, which is classified as a Middle East country) is a vast region covering an area of 21.25 million km². It has a truly diverse climate, ranging from desert-like arid regions to hot and humid tropical rain forest regions, and is home to more than 600 million people in 47 countries.

Although most African countries gained their independence during the 1960s, many, still influenced by their colonial past, have inherited economic structures that rely on specific primary products. These monocultural economic systems are vulnerable to drought and other natural disasters and fluctuations of international commodity markets.

Limited access to education has also hindered national development by undermining their human resources. They had to face many difficulties in socioeconomic development following independence.

During the 1960s, these countries benefited from an international economic environment characterized by stability in the international prices of primary products for export and were able to achieve steady growth. However, with the exception of a few countries, their economic growth has become sluggish since the 1970s owing to a long-term fall in the prices of primary products; the failure of economic management; unstable political foundations; drought, flooding and severe climate changes; regional conflict; and civil war. Since the

1980s, the external debt of many countries grew to enormous proportions. In these countries, governments suffered from a constant shortage of funds for development (for new investments) but also funds for recurrent costs to provide basic social services.

The stagnation or even decline of economic production and increased burden of debt have led to a serious situation in which 34 of the world's 49 least developed countries (LDCs)* are in Africa. Approximately 40% of the total population of Africa live under the poverty line of one dollar per day.

In addition, infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, and marginalization from the world economy in terms of investment, trade, and information is aggravating African poverty.

■ Support for Africa in Transition

African countries have been in transition in terms of political, economic, and social development since the 1990s.

Politically, many countries have made the transition to a multiparty system, and progress in democratization can be seen in some countries in Africa; for example, peaceful changes of government took place in Kenya (2002) and Senegal (2000). The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has been introduced into the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a development initiative emphasizing the ownership of African countries. This sys-



HIV/AIDS test JICA supports in Kenya

tem, which mutually monitors the democratization of other countries, has drawn attention from the international community. On the other hand, it must be noted that 19 countries have experienced conflicts since the 1990s, generating more than four million refugees, which accounts for one-third of the world refugee population. It is widely understood that peace and good governance are prerequisites to development. Therefore, the reinforcement of new approaches under the initiative of African people to secure peace and good governance* has become important.

As a result of the economic and financial difficulties in

many countries mentioned earlier, a policy shift has been attempted since the 1980s to liberal economic policies from the conventional public-driven and controlled economic policies with the aim of liberalizing economies and restoring financial and international balance of payments. After the 1990s, the foundation of economic policies based on market mechanisms must be consolidated while paying close attention to the poverty group (reconstruction of public services such as health care and education, etc. and broad based economic development).

Front Line

● Kenya Strengthening Project for Secondary Mathematics and Science Education

Class Reform Movement Spreading in Africa

Technical Cooperation Project

Student-centered class

Kenya has set a goal to achieve industrialization by 2020, however, the academic achievements of elementary and secondary school students who will play an important role in achieving the goal are not particularly prominent, and those in mathematics and science, in particular, are low. Thus, JICA sends Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to improve mathematics and science education and launched the Strengthening Project of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) in July 1998.

Nine target prefectures out of 70 in Kenya were selected, and retraining systems for mathematics and science teachers in secondary schools were established (central training and regional training). The system involves promoting class reform movements using principles called ASEI—"A" for activity; "S" for student-centered; "E" for experiment; and "I" for Improvisation—and PDSI—"P" for plan, "D" for do, "S" for see, and "I" for improve. Lessons were changed from being teacher-centered to being student-centered so that students could enjoy the lessons; consequently, they achieved better academic records. The

effectiveness has already been recognized by the students, the teachers, and the principles on the project sites. Requests were made to carry out the project in other prefectures. In response, the Kenyan government decided to provide training nationwide with continuous support from Japan.

Network of mathematics and science education

Participants of this training program in the project do not receive daily allowances since they are beneficiaries themselves, although they customarily receive allowances in developing countries, including Kenya. This scheme was not fully understood at first; however, complaints ceased once they realized that the training program was attractive and the response from the students was positive when the learned teaching methods were applied to classes. Also, a new scheme of applying a portion of the school tuition paid by students to the operation and management of the project was established in the regional training. Through such efforts, a low-cost and sustainable training system was realized and 40% of the total cost is now borne by Kenya.



Mathematics and science education in school

In order to share the experience and accomplishments of Kenya, African regional conferences were held twice. There, Kenya's class reform movements advocated by SAMSSE gave birth to a network called SMASSE-WECSA (Western, Eastern, Central and Southern Africa) with the consent of 12 neighboring countries in June 2002. This organization was introduced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa in August 2002 and is deemed an important partner in Japan's cooperation in mathematics and science education in Africa. The future of SMASSE to disseminate the reform movements of mathematics and science classes from Kenya seems quite promising.

(JICA Kenya Office)

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

■ Building on TICAD

In fiscal 2002, JICA provided technical cooperation worth 20.8 billion yen. When grant aid (based on Exchange of Notes) is added, Japan extended support of more than 62 billion yen and has attained the position as a major donor country for Africa.

The Japanese government held TICAD and TICAD II jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other organizations in 1993 and 1998, respectively, in order to draw the world's attention to the importance of African development. TICAD III took place in September/October 2003. On the basis of the results of the meetings and with the awareness that the goal of African development is poverty alleviation, JICA will actively support capacity building* in African countries in connection with the approaches and priority issues described below.

■ Development Approaches for Africa

1. Emphasis on Capacity Development

In Africa, efficient administrative services provided by the government in sectors such as education, health care, agriculture and rural development, as well as local residents' capacity development for protecting themselves and improving their living standards, are more important than they are in other developing regions. This makes human resources development at the level of both government and civil society essential. JICA perceives human resources development in Africa and capacity development of administrative institutions and local residents as priority issues. JICA will attempt to achieve sustainability that is deeply rooted in regional communities.

2. Promotion of South-South Cooperation

Africa is a conglomerate of various countries and different communities. At the same time, there are many issues that can be solved by the concerted efforts of several countries in the region. A similar experience in one country can be a good model to solve a problem in another. For example, at the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD), Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have established a network to tackle issues of the region. AICAD conducts various activities including research, human resources development, and information transmission for the purpose of poverty reduction under the initiatives of African people.



Headquarters of the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) Project

In addition to South-South cooperation in Africa, sharing development experience in Asia with Africa can be an effective aid approach in the sense that lessons can be learned from successful cases and precedents although they have different situations and historical backgrounds. This cooperation between Asia and Africa is an approach to aid that emerged from the TICAD process, and JICA will continue to work on the reinforcement of cooperative relationships between the two regions while trying to match African needs to possible areas of cooperation from Asia.

3. Collaboration with Other Donors

In a process to achieve successful aid in the region with financial difficulties more effectively, we are now in a transitional period in terms of aid approaches. In many cases, the administrative systems in Africa are less functional in terms of both human resources and finance than other regions. Independent and different implementations of various projects from various doors may cause operational difficulties in the recipient countries, and this may eventually become an obstacle to capacity development in developing countries. Therefore, the governments of donors and recipient countries need to share development strategies and programs when providing cooperation. As an embodiment of such cooperation,

approaches in line with Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and Sector Programs (SP) have been undertaken by many countries since the latter half of the 1990s.

The PRSPs present poverty alleviation strategies with a comprehensive view of the national poverty issue, based on participation of all stakeholders, such as donors, governments, and citizens, and function as development guidelines with resource allocation mid-term plans. JICA participates in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring process of PRSPs with emphasis on cultivating ownership of African countries.

The "sector program" approach, which is important as a

driving force of the PRSP process at each sectoral level, is being promoted in such fields as education and health care. JICA is working to realize more effective cooperation by means of the SP approach. JICA is also working on such issues as the harmonization of aid procedures and improvement of the predictability of aid. As part of these efforts, JICA began a study on the support program for rural and agriculture sector development in Tanzania in March 2001. JICA aims to improve the capacity of the Tanzanian government by providing support for the formulation of a development strategy and sector program in this area.

Front Line

● Madagascar Reform Plan for the General Hospital Center of the University of Majunga

Technical Cooperation Project between Japan and France

Technical Cooperation Project

Improve regional medical care

Majunga Province, located in Northwest Madagascar, is in an all-year-long tropical climate zone, and many villages become isolated due to heavy precipitation during the rainy seasons. Most villages in the vast area are poor, and residents do not receive sufficient health services and medical care. Facilities of the provincial central hospitals have not been improved for a long time, though they are required to treat patients with special diseases and serious illnesses. Such special care cannot be provided by the primary health care centers or local hospitals where only simple medical procedures can be performed.

This project started in 1999 in a collaboration between the governments of Japan and France to improve Majunga University Hospital as the provincial central hospital and extend its services to the local community. The development of medical equipment at the university hospital by the Japanese government is the core of the project. The improvement of hospital management and operations (France), the reinforcement of the referral system linking regional health care

and the hospital (Japan), and the improvement of patient care that can be trusted by local residents are all supported by the two countries with a clear distinction of roles.

Unlike conventional technical cooperation, the role of health care experts from Japan and France in this project is to assist local medical professionals and officials in charge of medical care policies so that they can lead the project to success on their own, and to work on individual activities together with them. Through this project, the trust of the community has gradually increased, and the number of people who came to the hospital has risen. The quality of patient care has steadily improved: many premature babies with complications of pneumonia could not be saved before, but the mortality rate of such babies has dropped below 20%.

Mutually complementary assistance

This was the first attempt to implement a health care technical cooperation project from the planning and implementation to evaluation in the form of the



A student of Majunga University interviews local citizens of the province.

cooperation between Japan and France. In French-speaking African countries, cooperation from the French government has a long history, so it has already improved the infrastructure necessary for technical cooperation, including human resources training and equipment maintenance. On the other hand, since Japan has no relations with those countries as a former suzerain state, we can take more neutral approaches. The provision of mutually complementary assistance from the two countries can more than double the effect. This new approach can be applied to other areas of cooperation and in other French-speaking African countries.

(JICA Madagascar Office)

■ Actions for Priority Issues

1. Setting Poverty Reduction as the Ultimate Goal

In light of Africa's severe poverty, social development fields such as health care and education play an important role, and at the same time economic development is indispensable for sustainable poverty reduction. Along with cooperation in social development fields, JICA actively provides development in fields that facilitate economic growth (development of agriculture, forestry, and fishery, and rural development, secondary education and vocational training, income improvement, infrastructure* building, etc) while paying close attention to providing benefits to as many people as possible.

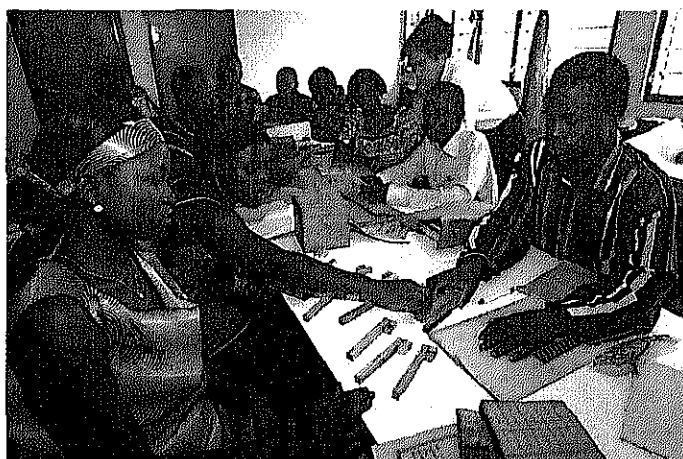
2. Social Development: Human-centered Cooperation

In the field of health and medical care, cooperation is being provided to improve capacity in relation to prevention and early treatment of infectious diseases that are serious problems in Africa with an emphasis on strengthening primary health care (PHC). While assisting with improving the organizations and institutions of health and medical care administration, JICA is also training medical practitioners working in the field as a priority issue. Concerning infectious diseases that constitute a urgent issue in Africa (such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis), projects are being implemented in Kenya, Ghana, and Zambia to provide support in capacity improvement of research institutes and test laboratories, as well as education and enlightenment activities in collaboration with volunteer projects and local NGOs.

In the field of water supply, Japan is attempting to further expand regional water supply projects (including deep well construction), which is in line with priorities of TICAD. For example, in order to raise the maintenance and administration capacity of water supply facilities and to expand hygiene education, we are implementing technical cooperation aimed not only at engineers but also at community organizations, such as water administration unions in Ethiopia and Senegal.

In the field of basic education, in addition to construction of school buildings with grant aid, we are making efforts to improve the quality of secondary mathematics and science education in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, and other countries. In recent years, we have been working on administrative capacity development (study on school conditions, improvement of planning ability in local education administration, training for school principles, etc.) and the promotion of school management with the participation of parents and the community.

In Africa, women play the major role in agriculture and



Training course for teachers of mathematics and science in Ghana

other economic and production activities, housework, and child-rearing, yet they have limited access to education and other social services, which places them in a socially vulnerable position. Based on such recognition, JICA tries to ensure that the benefits of social services are received equally by women and men. We encourage beneficiaries of our activities to participate in the development process at local communities from the initial stage. We are striving to introduce community participatory development* methods in order to improve our operations and encourage the idea of ownership.

3. Poverty Alleviation Accompanying Economic Development

Most of the African population is involved in agriculture, and most people continue to produce food for their own self-sufficiency. It is important therefore to contribute to the alleviation of poverty in rural areas through efforts to raise the productivity of small-scale farmers and to diversify sources of cash income. JICA is thus assisting with the planning of development programs in the field of agriculture in Tanzania, while providing cooperation in technical development and dissemination of agricultural techniques designed for small-scale farmers in countries including Tanzania, Kenya, and Ghana.

Furthermore, in the midst of a transition of economy systems in Africa as a whole, development and reinforcement of market economy systems, promotion of trade and investment, and private sector development, including cultivation of small and medium-scale enterprises, have become important issues. Therefore, emphasis is placed on cooperation in human resource development in these fields. As for construction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, broadcasting and communication systems, assistance is provided mainly in the form of grant aid. Some efforts are also made on personnel training to improve the maintenance and management skills necessary at the post-construction stage.

In addition, in the area of basic education and human resources development, the cultivation of human resources

in secondary mathematics and science education and vocational training are taken seriously as a means of economic development.

4. Good Governance and Peacebuilding

Good governance and peacebuilding are important as prerequisites for promoting development. Taking into account the historical and cultural backgrounds of African countries, it is important to plant the basic principles of constitutionalism,

democracy, and basic human rights, and to raise transparency and efficiency of government. In addition, in such a conflict-prone region as Africa, conflict prevention through improvement of governance and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding are essential. Although not many projects have been implemented in this area of cooperation, JICA is extending support to the development of refugee-affected areas in Tanzania and re-integration in Eritrea.

Front Line

● Niger Dispatch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers in Physical Education Accomplishment by JOCVs in the Past

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

Volleyball attracts attention

Dosso City in Niger, Western Africa, is a medium-sized town located about 130km from the capital, Niamey. The sport that attracts the most attention in Dosso City is volleyball. The men's volleyball team of Dosso was the first runner-up and the women's team was the winner of the first national volleyball competition in Niger held in December 2002. Such impressive achievements have fueled the citizens' interest in volleyball. It was a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) who introduced and popularized volleyball in this city.

In 1994, a JOCV was dispatched to teach physical education for the first time in Dosso City. The only sport the people knew back then was football. The volunteer came up with the idea of introducing volleyball and started teaching how to play the game because it could be easily played by girls as well as boys and equipment was available even in Niger, one of the world's most destitute countries. Since then, a total of eight JOCVs

have been dispatched to three junior high schools in the city to teach volleyball as extracurricular activities. Every member made sure that his or her predecessors' efforts would not be in vain, and the results of such efforts has gradually emerged.

Together with their students

Most of the players who played in the national volleyball competition are the students of the JOCVs, and some are now teaching lower classes as coaches. As volleyball gained popularity, the Volleyball Association was established in Dosso City. Former participants who went to Japan for training under the Acceptance of Technical Training Participants Program organized a club team there.

Even now JOCVs are on service in Dosso City teaching volleyball to junior high school students. One colleague

who is engaged in volleyball coaching in the city said to the JOCV that he would not be here if it were not for the Japanese coaches and volleyball.

The legacy of the JOCV activities in Dosso City and among the local people is not limited to the spread of volleyball or its teaching skills; it is also evident in the strong ties with the local people, which were formed by their coaching.

(JICA/JOCV Niger Office)



A volleyball team coached by JOCVs performs well in the national competition.