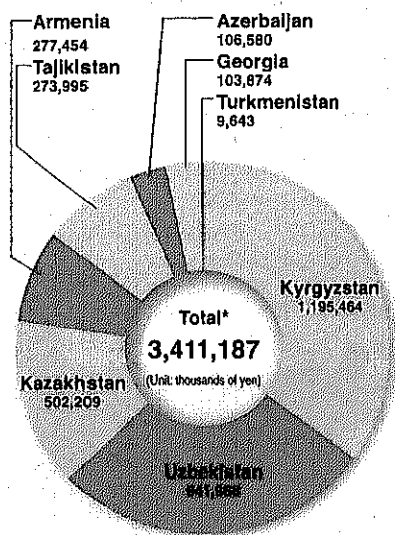


Central Asia and the Caucasus



Pillars of Aid Establishing Democratic Systems and Transition to a Market Economy

■ Cooperation results by country (FY2004)



*Total amount of cooperation provided to the countries listed in the graph

Historically, Central Asia and the Caucasus was a strategic location on the Silk Road that linked Asia and Europe, where people moved and goods were traded since time immemorial. The importance of this region, which borders large countries such as Russia and China, as well as Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, has not changed. With the development of petroleum and gas resources along the Caspian Sea, it attracts attention as a region that supplies new energy resources.

It will soon be 15 years since the region achieved independence following the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991. During this period, some countries have continued to enjoy steady economic development because of rich natural resources, and some are rather advanced in their transition to a market economy. On the other hand, some countries still maintain closed political and economic systems, and some have experienced civil wars following independence. Thus, the speed and direction of development vary.

However, due to strong control from the central

government and a clear division of industries during the Soviet era, many countries do not possess developed socioeconomic systems yet; they still have common issues, such as establishing democratic systems and changing over to market economies. Another common issue is the development of human resources who can push these reforms through. In addition, people living in rural areas face problems such as poverty alleviation and unemployment measures that have resulted from the economic crisis that accompanied independence.

JICA provides cooperation in the forms of policy advice and human resources development for the transition to a market economy and upgrading basic infrastructure, taking into consideration the stage of development in each country. In education and health, cooperation incorporating the perspective of human security is provided. In addition, problems that were not taken into consideration during the Soviet era, such as environmental pollution, have emerged and cooperation is promoted in this field as well.

Current State of Development

Strategic Location on the Silk Road

Central Asia consists of the five countries of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, while the Caucasus comprises the three countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. These two areas are located in the heart of the Eurasian continent; combined, they cover an area of 4.2 million km² and have a population of around 70 million. This is a strategic location on the Silk Road that has historically linked east and west. The countries in this region formed part of the Soviet Union from the 1920s onward, but they gained their independence when the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991.

In terms of religion, although the five countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan have been reverting to Islam in terms of everyday culture, each country has adopted a principle of separating politics and religion; thus Islamic rules are not strictly imposed. In contrast, the Christian tenets of the Armenian and Georgian orthodox churches are widespread in Armenia and Georgia, respectively, and both countries have their own cultures with their own languages and characteristics. This area has a complex ethnic mix including Turks, Slavs, and Iranians.

Diversifying Political and Economic Conditions

Since independence, each country has advanced in its transition to a market economy. However, disparities in economic development are great depending on the presence of natural resources or differences in the speed of reforms. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and the three countries of the Caucasus are moving firmly in the direction of trade liberalization, deregulation, privatization of state enterprises, and other types of structural reform. Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have achieved economic growth thanks to oil development in the Caspian Sea. Despite its efforts in economy liberalization, Kyrgyzstan suffers from large debts and has to address financial and economic reconstruction. On the other hand, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are distancing themselves from these radical reform programs and following their own slow paths. Tajikistan has embarked upon economic reform for sustainable development after going through difficulties with reconstruction following years of civil war.

Agriculture is the main industry in this region. Central Asia, most of which generally has a dry climate, is promoting structural reforms in order to be free from the monocul-

Computer Course for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Persons

Empowering Deaf and Hearing Impaired Persons

Deaf and hearing impaired persons with limited job opportunities

In the current situation in Uzbekistan, it is difficult for deaf and hearing impaired persons to attend academic high school after finishing compulsory education. As they cannot receive higher education, job opportunities for deaf and hearing impaired persons are limited, and most of them work in shoe making, sewing, and service businesses such as barbers.

The Uzbekistan Association of Deaf People provides training for sign language interpreters to support social self-sufficiency for deaf and hearing impaired persons. JICA has supported this training for three years since 2002 and 359 people, including sign language interpreters, headmasters of boarding school for the deaf have participated in the training from all over Uzbekistan. Experts were dispatched from the Japanese Federation of the Deaf and Hyogo University of Teacher Education, and a seminar related to the updated sign lan-

guage education system was also held.

Computer training started in Japan Center

The Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development started computer training for deaf and hearing impaired persons in cooperation with the Uzbekistan Association of Deaf People in 2005. In the training course, the persons with disabilities learn basic operation of computers and how to use office management software and the Internet, for the first time in Uzbekistan.

In the first training course attended by 18 people, lecturers consisted of a teacher of Tashkent University of Education and staff in charge of computer training of the Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development. They were assisted by a sign language interpreter of the Uzbekistan Association of Deaf People. The instruction from the lecturers to the participants was not given orally but used participants' computer monitors to show the contents of the lecture.

Participants were able to see both the operating method and text on their computer monitors and the demonstration monitor sitting next to it. Questions were asked through a sign language interpreter. By the end of the training course, most participants had mastered the basic operation of a computer, and were able to use general software. The Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development is planning to continue computer training for beginners and intermediate participants with the aim of promoting self-sufficiency among deaf and hearing impaired persons.

(JICA Uzbekistan Office)



Human development for deaf and hearing impaired persons by the Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development

ture of cotton production that relied on large-scale irrigation systems during the Soviet era.

In international relations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formed with China and Russia in June 2001. With the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent air strikes in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan offered military bases to US and European forces, thus demonstrating dynamic situational changes.

In the Caucasus, Azerbaijan and Georgia are strengthening their links with the West and Turkey, particularly in

connection with petroleum and petroleum pipeline development. In addition, Azerbaijan and Armenia continue to dispute possession of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.

Democratization and Poverty Issue

Following independence, in most countries leaders from the Soviet era continued to hold the reins of governments. However, democratization movements have recently emerged. In Georgia in January 2004 and in Kyrgyzstan in July 2005, new presidents were elected and efforts to rebuild the countries have since progressed.

The common development issue in Central Asia and the Caucasus is poverty. In Tajikistan, which experienced a civil war, and in Kyrgyzstan, which suffers from heavy debts, the gross national income (GNI) is as low as US\$210 and US\$340, respectively (both are data from the World Bank in 2003). In other countries as well, there are income disparities between large cities and rural areas, and thus poverty is an increasingly serious issue.

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia have already formulated a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and embarked on a national commitment (under formulation in Uzbekistan). Assistance to create employment and establish a social security system is urgently required to respond to these poverty issues.



Children learning Origami from a JOCV (Uzbekistan)

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

Supporting Self-sufficient Development of Independent Nations

In July 1997, Japan's then prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, announced that Japan would push forward "Silk Road Diplomacy" in this region. JICA has provided cooperation in four areas with the aim of supporting self-sufficient development in this region, namely: (1) support for transition to a market economy; (2) socioeconomic infrastructure development; (3) cooperation with social sectors such as health and education; and (4) conservation of the environment.

Support for transition to a market economy includes the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, support for WTO accession, support for establishing legal systems, institution-building, and human resources development in relation to reforms of financial systems. In the field of socioeconomic infrastructure, JICA has cooperated on formulating master plans to upgrade railways, roads, airports, and water supply systems. In social sectors, institutional reforms in the health field and policy support on education reforms and maintenance of equipment are under way. In order to address poverty issues, cooperation for community support incorporating the perspective of human security is provided.

Furthermore, it should be noted that JICA has set up Japan Centers in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. The centers continuously offer business courses aimed at developing practical human resources that will push forward the transition to a market economy, as well as Japanese lan-

guage courses and activities for mutual understanding.

New Phase of Cooperative Relationship

In August 2004, then Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi visited countries in Central Asia and proposed a new framework of "Central Asia and Japan," and agreed with every country. This framework, in addition to continuous conventional cooperation, refers to the importance of intra-region cooperation related to common issues in the region, such as terrorism, drugs, transportation, water and energy resources, trade, and environmental conservation. JICA is required to participate in the framework proactively.



The participants of the Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development show their Kakizome (annually first calligraphy) work (Uzbekistan).

Front Line Turkey Project on Energy Conservation

Transmit Energy Conservation Technology from Turkey to Peripheral Areas

Transfer Japan's energy conservation technology

In Turkey, the rate of dependence on overseas energy will reportedly reach 80% in 2020, and promotion of conservation of domestically produced energy has become an urgent task. Under such circumstances, JICA has implemented a technical cooperation project in the National Energy Conservation Center since August 2000. In this project, in order to transfer the energy conservation technology of Japan, which has reached the world's highest level of energy conservation since the oil crisis, activities such as (1) function strengthening of training courses, (2) factory diagnosis, and (3) public relations, policy advice are carried out.

Transmit information to Central Asia and neighboring countries

For the purpose of spreading the results of training from Turkey to neighboring countries, this project started international training in 2002. This attempt was hosted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in June of the same year, bringing together energy managers from seven countries in Central and West Asia, including Uzbekistan. JICA then implemented a training course that was attended by eight countries, including Black Sea countries such as Bulgaria, in October 2003. In 2004 the target was extended to 11 countries, including Macedonia and other countries in Central Europe. In the training course scheduled for 2005, countries in East Europe and

former member states of the Soviet Union will participate.

In this way the energy conservation technology that the project transferred to Turkey is now transmitted from Central and West Asia to countries on the Black Sea coast, Central and East Europe, and former member states of Soviet Union, thus spreading the outcomes of the project.

(JICA Turkey Office)



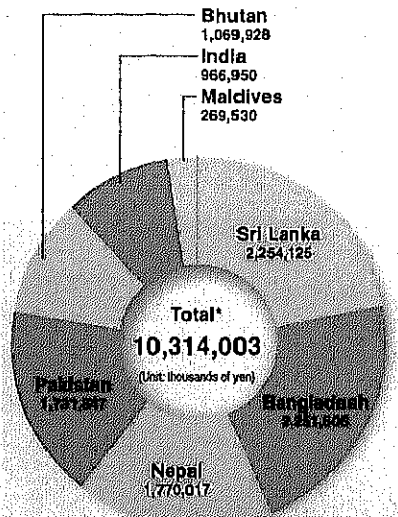
Many people from Central Asia also participated in a training course.

Southwest Asia



Pillars of Aid Top Priority Placed on Cooperation for Poverty Reduction

■ Cooperation results by country (FY2004)



*Total amount of cooperation provided to the countries listed in the graph

Southwest Asia has about 40% of the world's poor population. When looking at education and health, development in this region lags behind that in other poor regions. Gender disparities still exist and there are many issues to be solved.

Accordingly, JICA's cooperation in Southwest Asia prioritizes poverty reduction incorporating the perspective of human security. Specifically, approaches are made from both sides: (1) improving basic living standards (health care, population, education, and safe water) and (2) stable growth of economy (agriculture and rural development, promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises and investment, building of economic infrastructure). Also, cooperation will be provided for improvement in governance, response to environmental problems caused by urbanization and industrialization, and correction of gender disparities.

Support for peacebuilding will also continue, mainly for Sri Lanka. Medium- and long-term support will

continue for redevelopment and disaster prevention in Sri Lanka and Maldives, which were damaged by the Great Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster of December, 2004,



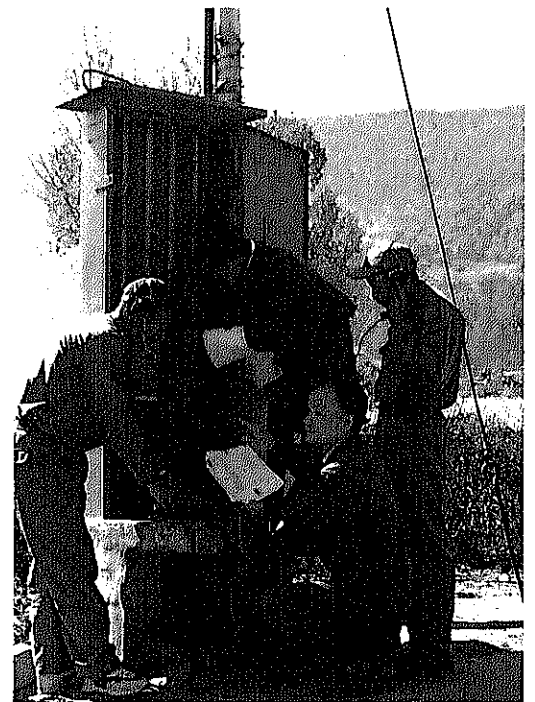
Women receiving literacy education using textbooks created by JICA (Nepal) Photo by Kazuo Hamada

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 1.3 billion and over 400 million people in the region are classified as poor. In the region, various 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 of society. A development policy is being promoted for poverty reduction by each country and improvements have been made in areas such as education and health care; however, development is still behind.

For the past several years, the economic growth of Southwest Asia has progressed at a rate of about 5% annually and growth seems comparatively good. However, many countries depend on exports of specific products, such as clothing and agricultural products, and with a vulnerable economic framework the trading and fiscal balances are chronically in the red. Given the fact that the tense relationship between Pakistan and India is gradually easing, the proposed establishment of a South Asia free trade zone will stimulate economic activities in each country in the region and contribute to its stability.



An expert and workers of Bhutan Telecom working on facility upgrading of the telephone network

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

Support for Governance Improvement

In recent years, the trend for democratization is accelerating in this region as well, and transition from centralization to decentralization is progressing.

JICA is implementing the Decentralization Support Program with citizen participation in Pakistan and Bhutan for the purpose of capacity building in local governments. In Bangladesh as well, JICA is supporting system building to reflect the intentions of the residents on development by connecting local administrations to the local residents.

In Sri Lanka, where the existing educational system is a burden on the national finances and the quality of education is dropping, the Educational Reform Program is implemented to reconstruct the education administration system. Also in Sri Lanka, the Health Care Administration Support Program is implemented as cooperation to expand the health service in consideration of poverty reduction by changing its policy in the health field and promoting an evolution to efficient treatment system. In Pakistan, Police Reform Program is implemented to introduce a fair and just criminal justice system by promoting fundamental changes, including decentralization of police administration based on the new police law.

In the future, JICA further promotes this sort of support for governance improvement and, at the same time, by sharing the know-how and lessons learned through support JICA will examine how to utilize them when implementing proj-

ects for governance support.

Perspective of Human Security

In Southwest Asia, with its enormous poverty group, JICA will underline poverty control as a common priority issue, as well as formulate and implement projects by proactively incorporating the perspective of human security.

Specifically, support directly reaching the people and areas difficult to secure basic living conditions (securing safe water, health care, etc.) is provided. Such projects include: the Manner District Rehabilitation and Reconstruction through Community Approach Project in Sri Lanka, which focuses on rehabilitation of basic infrastructure and empowerment of community groups; the Project to Combat Infectious Diseases in Bangladesh, targeting polio and filaria; the Safe Water Supply Support Program in India targeting impoverished areas; and tuberculosis control and Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI)/polio control in Pakistan and Nepal.

The poverty group is vulnerable to natural disasters and environmental contamination. In Bangladesh, the Arsenic Contamination Countermeasures Program (refer to pp. 16 and 17), in Pakistan and Bangladesh the Flooding Countermeasures, in India the Integrated Pollution Abatement and River Basin Management Project for Ganga Basin are provided. Especially in Bangladesh, support for

Front Line India • Supporting Women's Self-help Groups

Promote Sales of Products Directly from Producers to Consumers and Help Women's Self-reliance

To live on one's own

SOMNEED, an NPO with its headquarters in Gifu prefecture, has implemented a women's self-reliance support project in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India since July 2004. Those who are most affected by poverty are women, either in urban or rural areas. The purpose of this project is not to help these women but rather nurture leaders and empower women to think of living on their own. Specific activities include sales of products directly from producers to consumers using the network of producers and consumers as well as the management and operation of the production and distribution center.

In the first year, training and visiting tours were carried out to encourage them to think of whether or not those activities were useful for living on one's own, and why women's self-help groups are necessary.

Grow initiative and draw out power

Initially all groups only thought that it was good enough to receive aid from an NGO or the government. The women who live in urban and rural slums believed that they could not make decisions to do anything. This project keeps asking them, "Think for yourself, whose group is it?" The characteristics of this project are to have women find the potential of the groups and draw out the power they did not realize by keeping account books and making rules for the group under their own initiative.

Presently the committee members for the management and operation committee of the production and distribution center have been selected, and they

have started saying, "This is our job." "We are the partner of JICA and SOMNEED." "We have to operate the center." Committee meetings are held twice a month, and the meeting for each group that was held irregularly before is now held periodically.

(JICA India Office)



Women who are now proactively taking part in question and answer sessions

greater impact is the intention by approaching both central and local governments and communities, collaborating with NGOs, and combining various schemes such as grant aid and technical cooperation.

Peacebuilding Assistance and Post-tsunami Reconstruction Assistance

In Sri Lanka, a civil conflict that continued for the past 20 years caused a great number of deaths, and internally displaced persons and many other refugees. However, in February 2002, the civil conflict was suspended indefinitely, and the Tokyo Conference on Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka was subsequently held and the international community demonstrated a uniform commitment to support the consolidation of peace in Sri Lanka. In order to support the consolidation of peace actively, JICA will implement cooperation projects that pay attention to the balance between areas and ethnicity groups so that all the people in Sri Lanka can enjoy peaceful lives and thus the achievement of peacemaking will be pushed forward. Also in Nepal, a project related to peacebuilding continues to be formulated carefully.

The Great Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, which occurred in December 2004, caused great damage to the coastline of Sri Lanka and Maldives. From the initial stage

of cooperation that JICA started, the smooth transition from the short-term response, such as emergency humanitarian relief, to the medium- and long-term support, such as redevelopment and disaster prevention after reconstruction, was considered and such cooperation will continue into the future (refer to pp. 11 and 12).

Furthermore, in Sri Lanka many of the areas damaged by tsunami are also areas affected by conflicts. Therefore the perspective of peacebuilding is incorporated into reconstruction support for the tsunami damage.



Supporting resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons generated by armed conflicts (Refugee camp of Trincomalee in northeastern Sri Lanka)

Front Line Sri Lanka

Support Activities for Tsunami Victims in the South

People in the Disaster Area Smile Again

Supporting the evacuation centers for one month

A group of 19 JOCVs was dispatched to Sri Lanka, which had been devastated by the tsunami in Indian Ocean, for one month starting at the beginning of March. They engaged in support activities at the 19 evacuation centers in Matara, 160 km south of Colombo. In Matara 1,087 people died and 29,550 people were being forced to live in evacuation centers as of April 2005. JOCVs organized art and craft classes (creation of ceramics and folk handicrafts, etc.), recreation (picture story show, Origami, puppet show, folk dance, bowling, etc.), and sports (soccer, volleyball, etc.) in order to ease stress and allay the fear of victims in the evacuation centers. At the end of their assignment term, they organized a dance event, which is the traditional exorcism in the south region, and enjoyed it with the residents of the

evacuation centers. Everyone from children to adults enjoyed singing, dancing, and playing sports. When playing team sports, they cheered so loudly that the voices of others could not be heard.

When JOCVs were about to leave their camp after ending an activity, they were almost always asked, "When are you coming next time?" or told "Please come again." Every time they heard that, the JOCVs strongly felt the significance of the activity.

Encounter with many smiles

Many of the disaster victims live in fear and dread without any prospect of rebuilding their houses or finding jobs, not to mention the sadness of having lost family, friends, and property. Those activities were good opportunities for the dis-

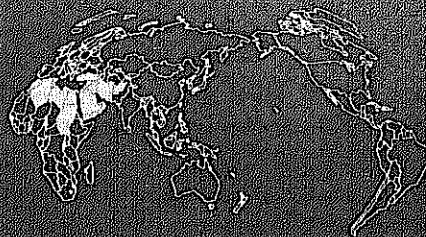
aster victims to regain some sense of normality. All the JOCVs dispatched this time had experience working as JOCVs in Sri Lanka and were able to speak the local language, Sinhalese. This quickly shortened the distance between them and the disaster victims and they could encounter many smiles.

(JICA Sri Lanka Office)



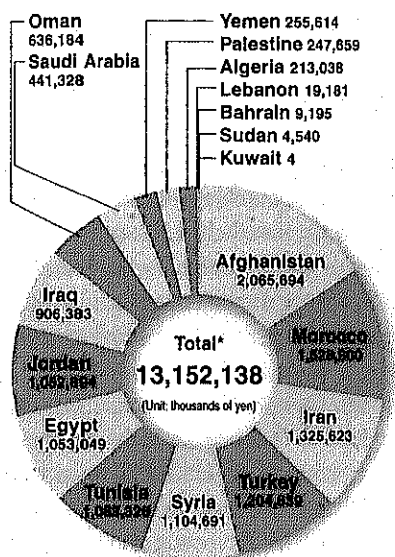
Folk dancing with children brings back smiles.

Middle East



Pillars of Aid Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Assistance for Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine

■ Cooperation results by country (FY2004)



*Total amount of cooperation provided to the countries listed in the graph

In the Middle East, many countries have factors of social instability; for example, increased unemployment due to population increase, widening income disparities accompanied by economic deregulation and political concern. The longstanding Palestinian issue greatly affects the entire region and the realization of peace in the Middle East is vital to stability not only within the region but also worldwide. Like Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq are also in the process of national reconstruction that receives support through international collaboration under new political systems.

JICA places the utmost priority on peacebuilding and reconstruction assistance for Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine as the key to stability of the Middle East. JICA is promoting assistance that stress the perspective of human security, including self-governance by residents and improved self-reliance capacity in support of these countries, where the governments and administra-

tive bodies do not always function at the community level.

In addition, Iraq, Palestine, and the neighboring Arab countries are closely related not only in politics and economics but also in culture and society. Based on the policy of Arab unity, JICA proactively promotes capacity development projects for Iraq and Palestine in cooperation with Egypt and Jordan.

A common issue in the Middle East is industrial human development. This targets the two large tasks of securing industrial competitiveness in view of trade liberalization and solving employment issues. In countries in the Middle East, where trade liberalization with EU is in progress, raising the level of technical capacity supports industrial competitiveness. JICA is therefore making efforts on cooperation for vocational training and technicians training programs to improve technical skills and expand employment for young people.

Current State of Development

The Middle East region has been involved in numerous wars, and as a result borders and nation systems have repeatedly changed. Since the end of World War II, the region has seen much conflict, including several Middle East wars, the Lebanese conflict, the civil war in Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq War, the Persian Gulf Crisis, and the Iraq war.

The region has complicated social problems regarding ethnicity and religion, and in addition to them, increased unemployment, expanded income disparities, and limited political activities have started fueling public discontent recently, overlapping with larger instability factors. Against the background of international antiterrorism measures and the problem of natural resources, the fluid situation is expected to continue in this region.

Since the terrorist attacks in the US in September 2001,

democratization has emerged as an outstanding issue of the region. In January 2005, the presidential election of the Palestinian Authority and the election for the Transitional National Assembly in Iraq took place. Both were seen as being more democratic than past elections in the Middle East. The issue of democratization will remain a large one in the region, and the governments of individual countries have announced proactive commitment to it.

In terms of economy, the movement for trade liberalization within the region is making progress, and developing competitive industries and technicians and securing employment are key issues. Development of internationally competitive industries and employment expansion are important development issues that need to be addressed urgently.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

Efforts by Country

Palestine—Middle East Peace and Human Security

Though the Middle East peace process was stalemated following the second Intifada in September 2000, a Middle East Peace Road Map was agreed upon in June 2003 and Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate, was elected as the president of the Palestinian Authority in January 2005, showing promise for further progress.

The Japanese government announced US\$60 million in support to promote the Middle East peace process as well as an aid policy with the four pillars of humanitarian support, reform support for the Authority, confidence building, and economic independence support. In view of the perspective of human security, JICA will also proactively provide support directly, helping improve the living standards of the people (short-term support). Furthermore, in order to contribute to infrastructure development and self-reliance of a future Palestinian State, JICA will lend support in priority areas like administrative reform, democratization support, production sector development, improvement of living infrastructure, and confidence building (medium- and long-term support).

Afghanistan

—Democratization and Socioeconomic Development

Since the collapse of the Taliban regime in 2001, Afghanistan has progressed with reconstruction based on support from the international community. About 60 thousand ex-combatants were disarmed by June 2005 and about 3.8 million refugees have returned home. Democratization started taking root with the beginning of the new administration and the inauguration of President Karzai, who was elected in the national election, and Lower House of the National Assembly and Provincial Council Elections were held in September 2005.

JICA has implemented projects worth about 6.7 billion yen for the past three years. At the emergency reconstruction stage, roads, schools, and medical facilities were recon-

structed and major development issues such as education, health, and agricultural development were tackled.

JICA will implement activities based on the perspective of human security centering on projects from which the community will directly benefit in areas of literacy education, tuberculosis control, maternal and child health, gender, and rural development. Also, in view of medium- and long-term development, infrastructure development such as roads, power, water resources, agricultural development, and administrative capacity enhancement will be supported in collaboration with international agencies and other donor countries.

Iraq—Peacebuilding, Post-conflict Reconstruction

After the Hussein administration was overthrown in the spring of 2003, an election took place in Iraq in January 2005, pointing to the beginning of reconstruction by the Iraqi citizens. However, attacks by armed groups continue and the unstable situation in the country casts a dark shadow over the entire region.

At the International Donors' Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq held in October 2003, the Japanese government announced support totaling US\$5 billion, including financing of US\$1.5 billion grant aid and loans of up to US\$3.5 billion. JICA is implementing various studies in relation to such support. In areas such as medical care, power, and water resources control, more than 600 Iraqi people are being trained annually in neighboring Arab countries such as Egypt and Jordan, as well as in Japan, to cooperate with the human development required for Iraq's nation-building.

Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia

—South-South Cooperation

Arab countries are not only closely connected politically and culturally but they also share many development issues within the region. Regional cooperation in which the region works to solve problems together is effective for solving these issues, leading to stability for the whole region.

JICA conducts many training courses for Iraq and Palestine in Egypt and Jordan, promoting South-South cooperation as the embodiment of peacebuilding and regional cooperation. As technical cooperation in support of Africa under the partnership agreements with Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco, JICA conducts many training courses for Africa based on the outcomes of JICA's past projects.

Human Development and Vocational Training

In many countries in the Middle East, according to the rapid increase in population, unemployment among young potential workers has become a social issue. Amid the advanced trade liberalization and



Training for Afghanistan people involved in agriculture implemented in cooperation between Syria and JICA



A museum was constructed with Japan's cooperation to utilize the abundant tourism resources for economic reconstruction. A workshop was held for local elementary school students (Jordan).

intensified international competition, industry development and expansion of employment require improvements in technical skills. JICA has actively provided support in relation to human development and vocational training in the Middle East region. For the future, JICA will further promote aid by enhancing vocational training and development of technicians and promoting collaboration with the private sector in line with needs in the labor market.

Water Resources Control and Environmental Conservation

As a region, the Middle East contains the world's smallest amount of renewable water resources, and conflicts associated with water resource distribution have become a fac-

tor in making the region unstable and in delaying development. Recent economic development and rapid urbanization and industrialization have worsened environmental problems such as water contamination, solid waste, and air pollution. While addressing the stable supply and efficient use of water, it is urgently necessary to introduce regulations to protect the environment, pollution reduction technology, and energy saving technology. JICA is providing a wide range of technical cooperation to develop technicians who will lead the future of the region in areas such as environmental administration, water resources control, and water supply control.



Community-based rehabilitation activity to build a regional society open to persons with disabilities (Syria)

Front Line Egypt • Training for Iraq in Medical Care

Japan and Egypt Cooperate in Supporting Human Development in Iraq

Third-country training started in March 2004

While hope for a new Iraq grew after the election carried out in January 30, 2005 by the transitional government, third-country training started on March 4 in Egypt for 113 Iraqi doctors and nurses.

Various functions of social infrastructure in Iraq have substantially declined

owing to repeated war damage and economic restrictions that had been in place for 13 years. Although the international community strongly supports Iraq reconstruction, there is no sign of improvement in the security situation, and support activities inside the country are not progressing as expected.

Under such circumstances, JICA supports human development in collabora-

tion with Iraq's neighboring countries. In Egypt, JICA started third-country training for Iraq doctors and nurses in March 2004 and 446 doctors and nurses had participated in the training by the time of the fourth training course.

Cooperation for Egypt bears fruit

There were various difficulties in implementing the

training. Due to poor telecommunications inside Iraq, communication and coordination to implement the training required considerable time and labor. The technical level and training needs of doctors and nurses participating from all over Iraq varied, too.

However, the medical school of Cairo University, which is the training implementation body, sensitively responded to the various training needs of more than 100 training participants. JICA has implemented various projects for about 20 years at Cairo University to help with improvements in medical skills, and the results of cooperation have emerged in the form of cooperation to another country.

It is expected that the Iraqi doctors and nurses who have participated in the training will apply what they learned to the reconstruction of Iraq.

(JICA Egypt Office)



Medical professionals had little opportunity to acquire the latest knowledge and technology in Iraq due to lack of international exchange after the Persian Gulf Crisis.