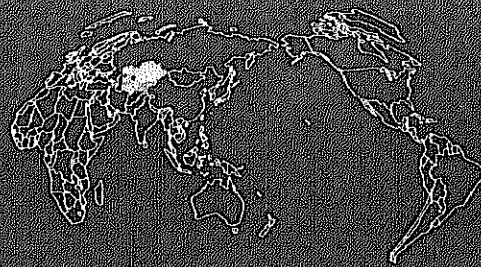
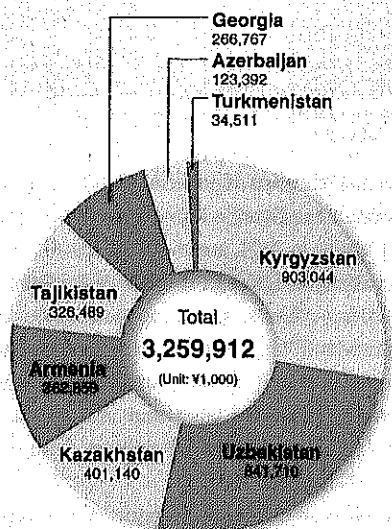


Central Asia and the Caucasus



Pillars of Aid Light and Shadow of the "New Silk Road"

■ Cooperation results by country in Central Asia and the Caucasus (FY2005)



*This is the total amount of bilateral cooperation. The amount of cooperation provided to Asia including cooperation that covers a group of countries is 54,091,326 thousands of yen.

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. With the development of petroleum and gas resources along the Caspian Sea, construction of new pipelines and reconstruction of roads and railroads attracts attention; it is said that the "new Silk Road" era has come. However, except for urban areas, people's lives in rural areas are harsh and poverty alleviation and creation of job opportunities still remain as serious issues.

It is over a dozen years since the region achieved independence following the collapse of Soviet Union. 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 remain impoverished and maintain closed political and economic systems, and some have experienced regime changes due to democrati-

ic revolutions. Thus, the speed and direction of development vary.

While each country is in the process of nation-building as an independent country, there emerged a necessity to promote regional cooperation for resolving the issues common to the region (establishment of systems for democracy and transition to a market economy, etc.), as well as issues transcending national boundaries (development of traffic and transportation network, etc.).

JICA is providing support for system-building and human resources development for the transition to a market economy, reconstruction assistance of social infrastructure including health sector and development of rural and impoverished areas, and support for economic infrastructure such as roads. JICA is also carrying out activities to promote business vitalization and regional cooperation, which was specified in the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue, a cooperation framework between the region and Japan.

Current State of Development

The Dynamic Silk Road Area

Central Asia, which consists of the five countries of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, is located in the heart of the Eurasian continent, bordering Russia to the north, China to the east, and Afghanistan, Iran, etc., to the south. The Caucasus stands on the other side of the Caspian Sea, which is situated in the western part of Central Asia, comprising the three countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia.

The countries in these areas were integrated into the Soviet Union in the 1920s, but they gained their independence when the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. This is a strategic location on the Silk Road that has historically linked east and west. The two areas combined cover an area of 4.2 million km² and have a population of around 75 million.

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 traditionally widespread in

Armenia and Georgia, respectively, and both countries have their own cultures with their own languages and characteristics. This region has a complex ethnic mix including Turks, Slavs, and Persians.

The area stretching from East Asia, Central Asia to the Middle East is referred to as the "arc of instability." Achievement of stability and socioeconomic development of Central Asia and the Caucasus, located in the heart of the arc, will greatly contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community. To that end, Japan has actively provided assistance to these countries following their independence.

Diversifying Politics and Economy

Since independence, each country has advanced in its transition to a market economy. However, disparities in economic development are becoming 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 econom-

ic growth thanks to oil development in the Caspian Sea. The economy of Georgia, located in the middle of the route of the BTC pipeline (from Baku in Azerbaijan to Cyhan in Turkey), which transports crude oil produced in the Caspian Basin, is expected to benefit from pipeline transportation income as the BTC pipeline was completed in 2006. 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 overcame difficulties of years of civil war, achieving a peace agreement in 1997 and implementation of congressional elections in 2000. It is now pushing forward economic reform after formulating a Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP) in 2002.

The major industries in this region, except for natural resources, are agriculture and livestock and food processing and textile businesses using the agricultural and livestock products. The agriculture in Central Asia is represented by rain-fed upland farming (wheat and barley) and livestock in the steppe centered in Kazakhstan and the monoculture of cotton production employing large-scale irrigation centered in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Most of the Caucasus region enjoys a Mediterranean climate, and each country is engaged in agriculture suitable for the regional climate and conditions, as represented by Armenian cognac and Georgian wine, which were already renowned during the Soviet era.

Though efforts differ from country to country, the establishment of new systems appropriate for production, processing, distribution, and sales in replacement of the kolkhoz remains a critical issue in agriculture and livestock along with the progress of transition to a market economy.

Democratization and Trends in International Relations

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 boosting the presence of the US in Central Asia.

Following independence, in most countries leaders from the



Nursing students receiving practical training at a medical high school affiliated with the Ministry of Health (Nursing Education Improvement Project in Uzbekistan)

Soviet era continued to hold the reins of governments. However, the Rose Revolution broke out in Georgia in November 2003, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, and the Tulip Revolution in March 2005 in Kyrgyzstan (though slightly different in nature), resulting in regime shifts. When a massacre took place in Andizhan, Uzbekistan in May 2005, western nations condemned the Uzbek government for putting it down by armed force, thus damaging the relationship between Uzbekistan and western nations and causing the withdrawal of the US military from the air base in Uzbekistan in November 2005.

In contrast, China has been increasing its political and economic involvement in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Furthermore, Russia became a member of the Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO) in 2005 and Uzbekistan joined the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC) in early 2006, leading to the decision of the integration of CACO and EEC. This shows that China and Russia are getting close to Central Asia and the international situations surrounding this region are changing dynamically.

In the Caucasus, Azerbaijan and Georgia are strengthening their links with the West, particularly in connection with petroleum and petroleum pipeline development. On the other hand, Azerbaijan and Armenia still continue to dispute possession of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

Embodying New Regional Strategies

In August 2004, then Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi visited countries in Central Asia and proposed a new cooperative framework of "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue and agreed with every country. It was decided that under this framework, in addition to strengthening bilateral relationships, which was promoted in the conventional "Silk Road Diplomacy," Japan assists in the promotion of intra-region cooperation related to common issues in the region (terrorism, drugs, transportation, water and energy resources, trade, environmental conservation, etc.) as well as the promotion of coordination with neighboring countries outside of the region such as Afghanistan.

Cooperation for Central Asia

While promoting intra-regional cooperation for "Central Asia plus Japan," JICA provides cooperation in four priority areas with the aim of supporting self-sufficient development in Central Asia, namely: (1) support for transition to a market economy; (2) support for rebuilding social sectors; (3) economic infrastructure development; 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. Specifically, JICA has launched projects,

Legal Assistance for Improvement of the Conditions for Private Enterprises and Drafting Commentary on the Law on Bankruptcy in Uzbekistan. In Kyrgyzstan, the opening ceremony of the National IT Center was held and courses for training IT engineers who will contribute to industrial promotion were opened.

Furthermore, in the above two countries and Kazakhstan, Japan centers offer business courses aimed at developing practical human resources that will push forward the transition to a market economy, as well as Japanese language courses and activities for promoting mutual understanding.

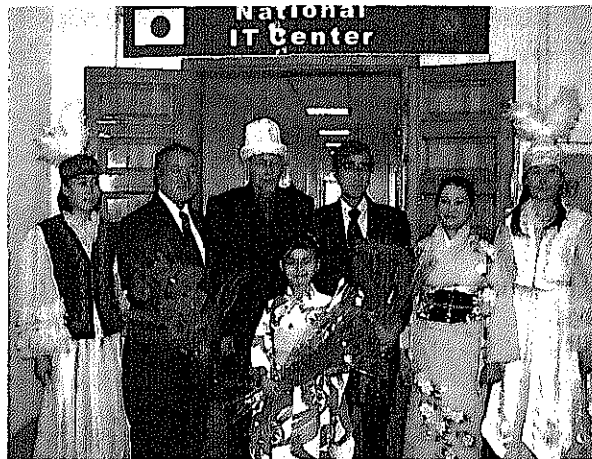
Support for rebuilding social sectors includes policy support and upgrading equipment with respect to health and education reforms. In Uzbekistan, Nursing Education Improvement Project has been implemented to support curriculum development. Furthermore, nurse JOCVs are making strenuous efforts to improve nursing care services.

In the area of economic infrastructure development, cooperation centered on upgrading roads that reach the outside of the region is being considered. In the environmental area, cooperation in relation to water monitoring and flood control has begun.

Cooperation for Three Caucasus Countries

In order to support efforts for poverty reduction and improvements in livelihood in the three Caucasus countries, JICA has des-

ignated income improvement, promotion of employment, and enhancement of the quality of and access to public services as priority areas. As such, support for training business owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperation in the area of water have commenced.



Experts attending the opening ceremony of the National IT Center, which plays a central role in the promotion of IT industry (The IT Human Resource Development in the Kyrgyz Republic)

Front Line Uzbekistan

Support for NGOs by Volunteers

Aiming for Women's Independence and Participation in Society

BWA promotes women's independence

In Uzbekistan, about 60% of the women marry by the age of 20. In general, women marry at a young age and live with the families of their husbands, bearing the responsibility of household tasks. Thus, they rarely think of becoming independent. However, once they are past the child-rearing stage, they develop the urge to do something to improve their position in the household by helping or pleasing the family members. Women often have to work to support their families if their husbands lose their jobs. The Business Women's Association (BWA) is an NGO that such women can turn to. BWA helps women acquire skills to become independent, and imparts knowledge (about management, tax, registration, etc.) that is necessary for starting a business. Furthermore, it provides consultation on finance to starting up a new business, which is the major issue for women.

The need for such consultation is particularly high in rural areas, and the BWA has strengthened its function to respond to this need. All these activities of the BWA are supported by volunteers, who are women entrepreneurs chosen for the role.

Support by senior volunteers

JICA has assisted BWA in developing new trainers, strengthening trainers' skills, and strengthening the function of training centers. In order to accelerate the speed of the assistance, since April 2005 JICA has dispatched senior volunteers to the Tashkent region to provide support upon request.

Currently, Tashkent has 21 districts, only half of which have training centers with competent district leaders and some of which have not even appointed responsible personnel. Senior volunteers visit these districts to motivate prospective women entrepreneurs to start up

businesses and offer seminars to women entrepreneurs who have already started businesses as to how to increase sales. These activities have attracted much attention.

Promotion of women's independence and increase in rural women's employment will be achievements of BWA's activities as well as the outcomes of JICA's assistance.

(JICA Uzbekistan Office)



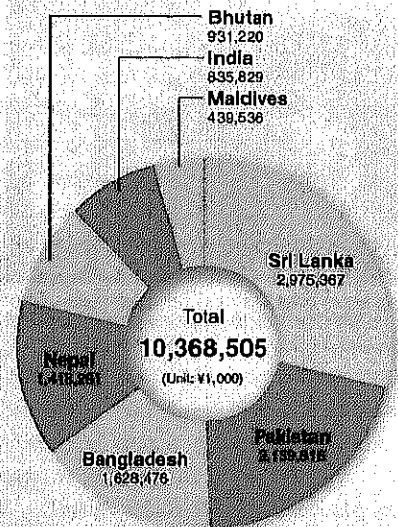
Women learning sewing techniques at the BWA to acquire job skills

Southwest Asia



Pillars of Aid Priority Placed on Cooperation for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development

■ Cooperation results by country in Southwest Asia (FY2005)



*This is the total amount of bilateral cooperation. The amount of cooperation provided to Asia including cooperation that covers a group of countries is 54,091,826 thousands of yen.

Southwest Asia has about 40% of the world's poor population. Development in health and education lags behind the rest of the world, and gender disparities still exist. Also, the region, where ethnicity, religion, and language are mixed, is politically and socially unstable and has areas of conflict.

Given the fact that the tense relationship between India and Pakistan is gradually easing, it is expected that economic activities in each country in the region will be activated and contribute to political stability in the region. The economic growth has been comparatively good for the past several years but with a vulnerable economic framework the balance of payments and fiscal balances are chronically deficit in every country.

Considering these situations, JICA's cooperation focuses on poverty reduction and economic growth as two pillars of aid for Southwest Asia. Specifically, underling the perspectives of human security and gender consideration in the area of poverty reduction, JICA provides support for the improvement of living conditions such as health/population, education and supply of safe water, community development, and human resources development. As poverty issues are

closely associated with political and social stability, JICA promotes cooperation towards that end.

In terms of economy, JICA will provide cooperation to develop economic infrastructure and promote investment and trade in a private sector with the aim of stable growth of the economy. At the same time, JICA will further strengthen coordination with financial assistance projects to develop economic infrastructure. Support for economic development in Southwest Asia is effective for promoting economic ties between Japan and the region, which are getting stronger particularly with India, and is essential for facilitating reduction of the poor population of more than 400 million.

Support for peacebuilding and conflict prevention also continue, mainly for Sri Lanka. JICA will continue support for Sri Lanka and Maldives, which were damaged by the Great Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster in 2004, and provide medium- and long-term support for disaster prevention and reconstruction in response to the damage caused by the earthquakes that hit Pakistan in October 2005.

Current State of Development

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

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 balance of payments and fiscal balances are chronically deficit. Given the fact that the tense relationship between India and Pakistan 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.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

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, including securing safe water, health and sanitation, is provided. One example is a project which focuses on rehabilitation



Water contamination study for improving the quality of lake water (The Project for Strengthening Capacity on Restoration and Management of Hussainsagar Lake in India)

of basic infrastructure and empowerment of community groups in Sri Lanka.

The poverty group is vulnerable to widespread infectious diseases and environmental contamination. JICA provides support for infectious disease control targeting filaria and tuberculosis in Bangladesh, and in Pakistan JICA supports tuberculosis control and an expanded program for immunization (EPI)/polio control. Since contamination of rivers and underground water is developing into a serious problem, countermeasures against contamina-

tion of rivers, lakes, and ponds are supported in India.

In Bangladesh, JICA combines direct support for the residents who are under serious threat of contamination of vital drinking water and support for the development of capacity of the central and local governments, with an aim to extend support to as many people as possible. JICA thus provides comprehensive support to extend and consolidate county-level outcomes at a prefectural level by combining various forms of schemes, including partnership with NGOs.

Post-disaster Reconstruction and Disaster Prevention

An earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale struck Pakistan in October 2005, leaving catastrophic damage mainly in the northwestern frontier of Pakistan and Kashmir. In response, JICA has provided seamless support from emergency relief to reconstruction using Japan's experience. The support includes the reconstruction of schools and medical facilities immediately after the earthquake, as well as the formulation of reconstruction and rehabilitation plans for Muzaffarabad City (administrative and commercial center of Kashmir) (See p. 11).

For the catastrophic damage in Sri Lanka and Maldives caused by the Great Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster in December 2004, Japan has provided seamless assistance from emergency relief to reconstruction and devel-

Front Line Pakistan

The Support Project for the National Institute for Handicapped

Activities in the Affected Areas Utilizing the Strength of JOCV

Support for handicapped people

The earthquake that hit the northern part of Pakistan on October 8, 2005 claimed an estimated 7,300 lives and many people became handicapped due to injuries to limbs and spines. For five months starting in February 2006, JICA Pakistan Office implemented a post-disaster reconstruction assistance project, in which a JOCV team and field coordinators carried out activities based at the National Institute for Handicapped.

Many spinal-cord-injury victims whose lives were saved thanks to the activities of various organizations were placed in three national hospitals located near Islamabad (capital of Pakistan). Among them, the National Institute for Handicapped played a central role. Since many affected people were forced to use wheelchairs, hospitals needed a large number of physical therapists, occupational therapists, and nurses.

Rehabilitation for patients and their families

Since many organizations started relief activities immediately after the disaster, human and material support had

already made significant progress when JICA started cooperation. Thus, JICA set an aim to provide need-based cooperation by making use of JOCVs' strength in understanding the social and cultural background and being able to communicate in the local language.

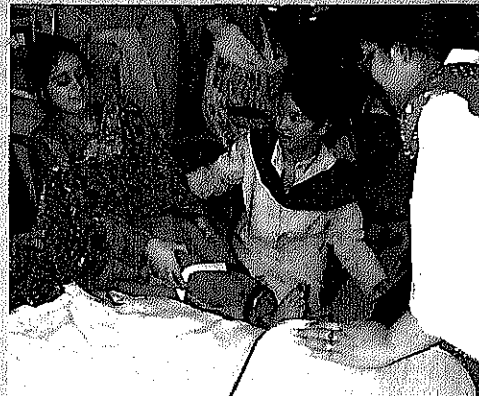
The project focused on the patients and their families. In view of in-hospital life and village life after discharge, not only medical therapy but also daily life-related support activities including shopping, cooking, and playing sports and

games were carried out, bringing smiles to their faces. Even though some time has passed since the earthquake, the psychological wounds suffered by patients and families are deep. The rehabilitation offered was so fun that they can almost forget their painful memories. Hospital staff and patients' families were always involved in these activities so that support for patients will continue to be provided even after the project terminates.

(JICA Pakistan Office)



Outdoor cooking attended by patients with hand paralysis

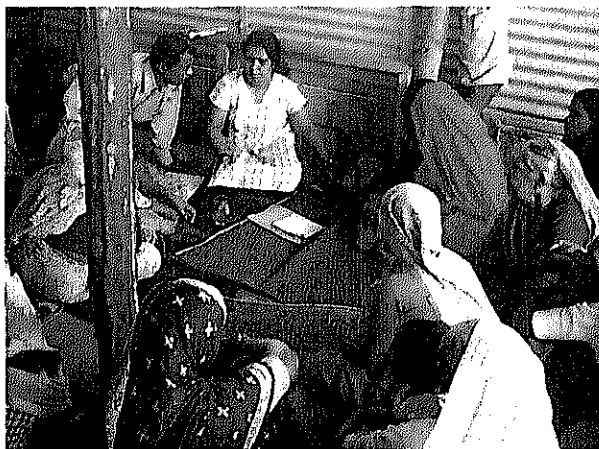


Virtual experience of being handicapped to help the families of patients understand the handicapped

opment by comprehensively combining various assistance schemes, including grant aid, yen loans, and technical cooperation. Among these activities, JICA conducts activities such as feasibility studies and project design, which are necessary to implement prompt financial cooperation, provides support for model building for reconstruction assistance through communities, and offers cooperation through personal contacts including advice in relation to disaster prevention, thereby playing the role of lubricant for post-disaster reconstruction assistance under the All-Japan banner.

For instance, the government of Japan has been building the Japan-Sri Lanka Friendship Village with non-project grant aid. In support of this project, JICA primarily provides hardware assistance, such as study and design for housing, access roads, a community hall, etc., and at the same time provides some software assistance, including livelihood and community reconstruction activities. Since software support is essential for the Japan-Sri Lanka Friendship Village to effectively function, JICA will continue cooperation in the future to maintain and strengthen these activities.

In the area of disaster prevention, JICA provides support for measures against flood and cyclone related disasters in collaboration with financial assistance in Bangladesh and support for landslide disaster mitigation in Nepal. JICA will continue to provide integrated measures making use of technologies in Japan as an advanced nation in disaster prevention, and promote support focusing on strengthening the disaster response capacity of the local community.



Needs survey targeting tsunami-affected people who are scheduled to move to the Japan-Sri Lanka Friendship Village (Recovery, Rehabilitation and Development Project for Tsunami Affected Areas in Sri Lanka)

Peacebuilding

In Sri Lanka, a civil conflict that continued for the past 20 years has caused a great number of deaths, and internally displaced persons and many other refugees. However, in March 2002, an indefinite truce agreement was reached between Sri Lanka's government and the ethnic Tamil rebels called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). 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.

Since the conflict was suspended, JICA has continued to support war-affected people and refugees. JICA makes the utmost efforts in these projects to empower communities in the areas affected by the conflict. Together with direct support for residents, JICA provides training for administrators who deal with residents' groups to empower communities and municipalities so that they can resolve various problems and issues that they face through their own wisdom and power. Four years after the conflict was suspended, the peace talks between the government and the LTTE are in a static state; however, the life of the people in the conflict-affected areas is steadily improving. Desires not to restart the war and to improve the standard of living are steadily growing in the hearts and minds of the people. Meeting face-to-face with the people, JICA will actively continue to implement its projects to empower communities.

Also in Nepal, a project related to peacebuilding continues to be formulated carefully.

Economic Growth

In terms of economic growth, infrastructure development and promotion of investment and trade are common issues in the region. Infrastructure supports economic growth of the country or region, as well as the business environment that induces investment in the private sector. In addition to economic infrastructure, improving governance, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development, will lead to the improvement of an investment environment, investment promotion, and improvement of productivity, and thus to economic growth.

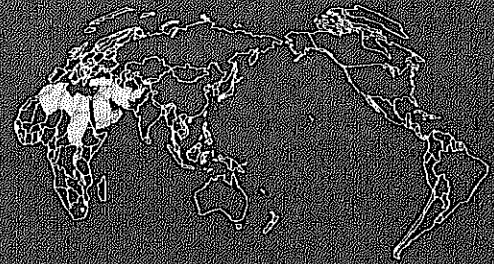
In particular, the transportation and traffic sector is the core of the development of economic infrastructure. However, an underdeveloped road network constitutes the largest common concern in Southwest Asia. Thus, JICA promotes technical cooperation to develop roads, including bridges, in combination with yen loans and grant aid assistance.

For example, India, which is experiencing rapid economic growth, has vast land areas with regional disparities. Therefore, the priority issue is the promotion of economic and social activities by improving the efficiency of domestic distribution systems and JICA is supporting the development and enhancement of major freight railways.

Demand for development of economic infrastructure that will facilitate economic growth is expected to increase further in the future, and JICA will thereby promote cooperation in collaboration with yen loans.

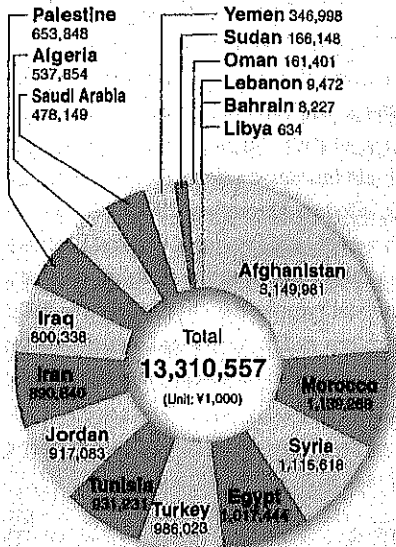
In recent years, the trend for democratization is accelerating in this region as well, and delegation of authority from the central to local governments is in progress. In support for governance improvement, JICA is implementing the Decentralization Support Program with citizen participation in Pakistan and Bhutan for the purpose of capacity building in local governments.

Middle East



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

■ Cooperation results by country in the Middle East (FY2005)



*This is the total amount of bilateral cooperation. The amount of cooperation provided to the Middle East including cooperation that covers a group of countries is 13,329,208 thousands of yen.

In the Middle East, many countries are wealthy in general, mainly oil-producing countries. On the other hand, they have factors of social instability; for example, overdependence on natural resources, increased unemployment due to population increase, widening income disparities, and restriction on individual freedom. These factors were exposed by the Afghanistan and Iraq issues, leading to the expansion of terrorism as a result. The longstanding Palestinian issue greatly affects the stability of the entire region and the realization of peace in the Middle East is vital to peace and stability not only within the region but also worldwide.

Placing the utmost priority on peacebuilding and reconstruction assistance for Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine as the key to stability of the Middle East, JICA strives to implement timely and effective cooperation. Since the governments and administrative bodies do not always function at the community level in these countries, JICA is promoting assistance that stresses the perspective of human security, including self-governance by residents and improved self-reliance capacity.

In addition, Iraq, Palestine, and the neighboring Arab countries are closely interrelated over a wide range of subjects, from politics and economics to culture and society. Therefore, with focus on collaboration with the neighboring Arab countries, JICA proactively promotes human development projects for Iraq and Palestine in cooperation with Egypt and Jordan.

Meanwhile, there is a wide range of needs in the Middle East, depending on the country's situation. In the fields of water resource management, industrial promotion, developing technicians, and environmental conservation, all of which are vital needs common to the region, JICA implements cooperation in line with these needs, including the Volunteer Program. Especially in Mediterranean countries, where trade liberalization with EU is in progress, securing industrial competitiveness and solving employment issues are major issues. JICA is therefore making efforts on cooperation for vocational training and technicians training programs to improve technical skills and expand employment for young people in those countries.

Current State of Development

In the Middle East, there are some high-income countries, which mostly produce oil, while there are also undeveloped countries, which are mainly non-oil producing countries. There are also diverse ethnicities and cultures comprising a complex social structure. Therefore, detailed cooperation in line with the actual conditions of each country is necessary. It is an unstable region that has seen much conflict since World War II, including four Middle East wars, the Lebanese conflict, the Iran-Iraq War, the Persian Gulf Crisis, the Yemen conflict, and the Iraq war. Unstable political conditions continue in Palestine and Iraq. Stability of the Middle East will have a tremendous impact on the international economy as well as worldwide peace and stability. Therefore, support for reconciliations among different ethnic groups, religions, and social classes leading to the regional stability are called for.

In the oil producing countries where finance is relatively adamant, infrastructure such as transportation and information network is developed at a high standard; however, domestic human resources development to strengthen industrial infrastructure is a big task. On the other hand, in relatively low-income countries without the blessings of resources, the priority tasks are

to address issues in health and education as well as poverty and the delay in rural development.

In the Middle East, where precipitation is generally limited, securing water resources is an important task not only for livelihood, agriculture, and industrial development but also politically. It is necessary to provide cooperation in a variety of areas such as understanding of the accurate amount of water resources, water management, water resources development in the areas that have available capacity for development, promotion of efficient water usage (use of sewage-treatment water, leak control, etc.), agricultural irrigation, and saving urban water.

Since the terrorist attacks in the US in September 2001, while the international situation has drastically changed, the call for modernization and democratization of the traditional Arab society has grown. At the same time, in response to the progress of globalization, a structural reform in the economy is required. Since support in the Middle East is closely connected to the international situation, it is important to provide cooperation in sectors and fields that will lead to the stability of each country and area while paying attention to such trends.

Addressing Priority Issues in JICA Programs

Efforts by Country

Palestine—Support for Middle East Peace

With the establishment of a new moderate Abbas administration in January 2005 and Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in September 2005, expectations for Middle East peace accelerated rapidly, and the international community started full-scale aid.

From the perspective of human security, considering support for Palestine to be urgent, JICA launched a development study, the Jericho Regional Development Study Project, in October 2005. In this project, development plans for primary industries such as agriculture and tourism are being formulated as medium- and long-term regional development plans for Jericho and the Jordan valley for self-sustaining economy. JICA has also implemented technical cooperation projects in three areas, local administration, maternal and child health, and waste control, for three years starting in August 2005, promoting the improvement of livelihood service quality as well as the enhancement of administrative capacity of local governments, including municipalities. In order to facilitate those projects, JICA utilizes the Fast Track System (see p.13), which enables prompt project implementation, and has opened two field offices in the West Bank in an attempt to strengthen support systems.

Also, in order to promote medium- and long-term regional development of Jericho and the Jordan valley, JICA plans to promote primary industries such as agriculture and tourism from the perspective of self-sustaining economy in addition to strengthening the administrative capacity and quality improvement of livelihood services that are currently being implemented.

Notable, however, is that after the victory of Islamic fundamentalist Hamas in the Palestinian parliamentary elections in January 2006, aid by the international community has been reexamined.

Afghanistan—Rural Development and Capacity Development for Peace Consolidation

Since Japan and the international community started support for rebuilding Afghanistan in 2002, reconstruction in various areas has progressed. As a part of the political process for the establishment of an official administration (Bonn Process: based on Bonn Agreement concluded in December 2001), the Lower House of the National Assembly and Provincial Council Elections were held in September 2005, following the establishment of a constitution and the national presidential election. As for DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration), which was the biggest concern regarding security improvement, disarmament for

Front Line Palestine

Activities of the Former Training Participants Alumni Association

Possibilities Expand through the Network

Support with a focus on human development

Aid sustainability does not mean that provided equipment continues to operate. It means that aid recipients who have acquired productivity improvement skills and management improvement skills using the provided equipment share that know-how with the local community in return.

Because Japanese activities in Palestine were restricted for security and other reasons, cooperation in Palestine was provided in the form of receiving training participants and support for activities of the alumni association of former training participants. The number of people who have received JICA training in Japan or third countries such as Jordan and Egypt has reached almost 1,000 in total. JICA Palestine Office works to build a network of these returned participants, positioning them as aid actors for local community development, and promotes their activities.

Expanding possibilities of alumni association

In fiscal 2006, an environment day

was set up and free medical treatment was provided as independent activities of the alumni association. On the environment day, a clean-up campaign of Gaza beach was held and volunteers including the former participants cleaned the beach. As for free medical treatment, doctors who are executive members of the alumni took initiatives to carry out activities with other volunteers at the refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, JICA commissioned a grant aid project follow-up survey as part of its operations for the alumni association for the first time. It was an original case to utilize an alumni association as JICA's in-house consultant. Also, in recent years JICA has been making full use of Follow-up Cooperation, which is highly valued because of the prompt implementa-

tion of necessary aid as a tool for the local materialization of training outcomes.

The alumni association has its own website (<http://www.jalap.org/>) to exchange and provide information actively. Currently the alumni association office is located in the Gaza Strip. JICA plans to further vitalize the alumni association activities as well as to build a network of former training participants in the West Bank in fiscal 2006.

(JICA Palestine Office)



Afforestation activity by the alumni association: their network is wide and strong.



Women learning earnestly in a literacy class; Adult literacy rate in Afghanistan is extremely low due to many conflicts. (Project for Strengthening Literacy Education)

approximately 63,000 combatants nationwide was completed by June 2005, and reintegration activities for those discharged combatants are still going on.

In the area of reconstruction, restoration of major trunk roads, reconstruction of approximately 13,000 primary and secondary schools (student enrollment that was approximately one million in 1999 increased to approximately five million in 2005), literacy education, and community development projects targeting approximately 10,000 villages have been implemented.

JICA has implemented cooperation projects worth about ¥9.9 billion in total for the past four years for the reconstruction of Afghanistan in coordination with such aid from the international community. At the emergency reconstruction stage, roads and public facilities including schools in Kabul, Kandahar, and Mazari Sharif were restored. In the education sector, the Strengthening Teacher Education Program, which aims to train approximately 10,000 teachers nationwide to respond to the drastic increase of students enrolled in school, as well as non-formal education, was implemented. In the health sector, taking into account an extremely high maternal death rate and tuberculosis occupying a large portion of the death statistics, medical human resources development was carried out to promote reproductive health and tuberculosis control. Other cooperation includes support for reintegration of ex-combatants discharged by DDR through vocational training, support for the settlement of returnees through community development, and support for women.

Following the completion of the Bonn Process marked by the holding of a national assembly in December 2005, as a new cooperation framework between Afghanistan and the international community, Afghanistan Compact was adopted and the Interim-Afghanistan National Development Strategy, a five-year plan by the Afghan government, was announced at the international conference held in London in January 2006. At the conference, major donor countries and international agencies pledged a total of US\$10.5 billion in support of this strategy, including US\$450 million of support from the Japanese government, and continuous support for Afghanistan was confirmed.

In order to increase outcomes and sustainability of assistance for priority issues, JICA will provide support in effective combination of different projects, with the focus on comprehensive rural development that will contribute to the promotion of agriculture

and the livelihood of residents in rural areas, the improvement of basic health services, development in the education sector, and social infrastructure.

Iraq—Peacebuilding and Postwar Reconstruction

Three years after the fall of the Hussein administration in 2003, attacks by armed forces continue, conflicts between different religious groups show no sign of decline, and tensions still remain in major cities. However, events such as establishment of an Iraq constitution in October 2005 and the implementation of a national election in December 2005 indicate that reconstruction led by the Iraq citizens is about to kick off.

At the International Donors' Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq held in October 2003, the Japanese government announced grant aid cooperation (US\$150 million) and yen loans (US\$350 million) as support for Iraq. In view of the consistency with the priority sectors in the Iraq national development strategy, JICA prioritizes support for governance, improvement in social services, development of living infrastructure, and economic development. For more effective implementation of Japan's financial cooperation, JICA promotes the organizational enhancement of Iraqi-related organizations and development of human resources through training programs in neighboring countries and Japan. In fiscal 2005, a total of approximately 570 Iraqi people were trained (166 were trained in Japan, 212 in Jordan, 146 in Egypt, 33 in Syria, 9 in Malaysia and 1 in Singapore) in a variety of areas such as power, water supply, health, and irrigation. Approximately 1,300 Iraqi people have received training since fiscal 2004. Because these former training participants are expected to become partners in Japan's support for Iraq, JICA will establish an alumni association for them in support for activities to strengthen the cooperative relationships between Japan and Iraq.

South-South Cooperation

Countries in the Middle East are not only deeply connected politically and culturally but they also share many development issues within the region. Regional cooperation in which countries in the region work to solve problems together is effective for solving these issues, leading to stability for the whole region. Collaboration with Arab countries is critical for the Middle East peace process and support for Iraq as well. JICA conducts many training courses for Iraq and Palestine in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria (third-country training), promoting South-South cooperation as the embodiment of peacebuilding and regional cooperation.



Training to improve the clinical skills of Iraqi medical technicians provided at Specialized Pediatric Hospital, Cairo University in Egypt

As for South-South cooperation for Africa, JICA's support is based on the partnership agreements with Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. JICA utilizes the outcomes of Japan's past cooperation and incorporates the perspective of support for the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) in promoting cooperation reflecting the needs of NEPAD member countries and characteristics of the host country.

Human Development and Vocational Training ...

In many countries in the Middle East, in accordance with the rapid increase in population, unemployment among young potential workers has become a social issue. Amid the advanced trade liberalization and intensified international competition, industry development and expansion of employment require improvements in technical skills of workers.

JICA has actively provided support in relation to human development and vocational training in the Middle East region. As part of Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative, a vocational training workshop was co-hosted by the Jordanian and Japanese governments in Jordan in cooperation with JICA in September 2005. G8 countries and BMENA (Broader Middle

East and North Africa) member countries participated in this workshop, shared the current situations and issues regarding employment and vocational training, and agreed that a sustainable system for technical education and vocational training to meet local needs shall be established in cooperation between the public and private sectors as a regional mechanism.

Water Resources Control and Environmental Conservation

In the Middle East where most of the land is arid, according to population growth and progress of industrialization, lack of water resources has become a serious issue. Also, recent economic development and rapid urbanization and industrialization have exacerbated environmental problems such as water contamination, solid waste, and air pollution.

JICA is providing cooperation to enhance the technical skills of the human resources that will lead respective sectors; for example, strengthening of environmental monitoring capacity and environmental administration in the environment sector, and water resources information management, leak control, and water management in the water sector.

Front Line Syria

Project on Efficient Irrigation Development and Extension in Syria

Aiming at Effective Use of Water Resources by Extending Techniques and Awareness

Enhancing the promotion of water-saving in agriculture

Water shortages are a serious issue in Syria. In particular, agricultural water accounts for approximately 80% of the national water consumption, and the government has been addressing the issue in various ways. For example, the government announced a large-scale policy to replace all traditional irrigation with modern water-saving forms in five years between 2000 and 2004. However, institution-building and activities for promoting the implementation of the policy were not functional enough and the policy was not achieved.

Meanwhile, JICA has implemented various projects, placing the effective use of water resources as its primary issue for aid to Syria. Promotion of agricultural water-saving conforms to JICA's aid policy for Syria. In response to a request from the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, this technical cooperation project started in 2005. The pro-

ject aims at the use of appropriate amount of irrigation water at the project sites by training irrigation technicians and enhancing extension activities to farmers.

Consolidation of water-saving awareness

Although studies and research regarding water-saving irrigation have been conducted for a long time in Syria, collecting sufficient data for project implementation is not easy owing to the fact that Syria is a developing country. Accordingly, the project began with a baseline study in the first year. At the same time, in order to provide better extending and training activities, past efforts were analyzed. Currently, pilot plans are being tried out at the project sites and technical training for extension workers is being implemented.

The biggest obstacle in the project is that people in Syria are not conscious about water-saving. In addition, water

fares are so low that restriction in terms of cost is also hard to impose. Fortunately, a new national policy to promote water-saving irrigated agriculture is being implemented starting in 2006. While coordinating with this institution-building of the Syrian government, the project will further promote water-saving irrigated agriculture by demonstrating to farmers the benefits of water-saving irrigation as well as consolidating water-saving awareness.

(JICA Syria Office)



Baseline survey at the vineyard of a grape grower