

Official Development Assistance (ODA)

1. Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter

Cabinet Decisions
June 30, 1992

In order to garner broader support for Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) through better understanding both at home and abroad and to implement it more effectively and efficiently, the government of Japan has established the following Charter for its ODA.

1. Basic Philosophy

Many people are still suffering from famine and poverty in the developing countries, which constitute a great majority among countries in the world. From a humanitarian viewpoint, the international community can ill afford to ignore this fact.

The world is now striving to build a society where freedom, human rights, democracy and other values are ensured in peace and prosperity. We must recognize the fact of interdependence among nations of the international community and that stability and the further development of the developing world is indispensable to the peace and prosperity of the entire world.

Environmental conservation is also a task for all humankind, which all countries, developed and developing alike, must work together to tackle.

It is an important mission for Japan, as a peace-loving nation, to play a role commensurate with its position in the world to maintain world peace and ensure global prosperity.

Bearing these points in mind, Japan attaches central importance to the support for the self-help efforts of developing countries towards economic take-off. It will therefore implement its ODA to help ensure the efficient and fair distribution of resources and "good governance" in developing countries through developing a wide range of human resources and socioeconomic infrastructure, including domestic systems, and through meeting the basic human needs (BHN), thereby promoting the sound economic development of the recipient countries. In so doing, Japan will work for globally sustainable development while meeting the requirements of environmental conservation.

Such assistance is expected to further promote the existing friendly relations between Japan and all other countries, especially those in the developing world.

2. Principles

Taking into account comprehensively each recipient country's request, its socioeconomic conditions, and Japan's bilateral relations with the recipient country, Japan's ODA will be provided in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter (especially those of sovereign equality and non-intervention in domestic matters), as well as the following four principles.

- (1) Environmental conservation and development should be pursued in tandem.
- (2) Any use of ODA for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts should be avoided.
- (3) Full attention should be paid to trends in recipient countries' military expenditures, their development and production of mass destruction weapons and missiles, their export and import of arms, etc., so as to maintain and strengthen international peace and stability, and from the viewpoint that developing countries should place appropriate priorities in the allocation of their resources in their own economic and social development.
- (4) Full attention should be paid to efforts for promoting democratization and introduction of a market-oriented economy, and the situation regarding the securing of basic human rights and freedoms in the recipient country.

3. Priority

(1) Regions

Historically, geographically, politically and economically, Asia is a region close to Japan. East Asian countries, especially member countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), constitute one of the most economically dynamic regions in the world, and it is important for the world economy as a whole to sustain and promote the economic development of these countries. There are, however, some Asian countries where large segments of the population still suffer from poverty. Asia, therefore, will continue to be a priority region for Japan's ODA.

It is also necessary to be mindful of the poverty and the economic difficulties in the world as a whole. Japan will therefore extend cooperation, befitting its position in the world, to Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Oceania. Due consideration will be paid in particular to Least among Less Developed Countries (LLDCs).

(2) Issues

(a) Approach to Global Problems

Recognizing that it is important for developed and developing countries to cooperate in tackling global problems such as the environment and population, Japan will support efforts being made by developing countries to overcome these problems.

(b) Basic Human Needs

To help people suffering from famine and poverty, refugees, and others, Japan will provide assistance to the BHN sector and emergency humanitarian aid.

(c) Human Resources Development, Research and Other Cooperation for Improvement and Dissemination of Technologies

A priority of Japan's ODA will be placed on assistance to human resources development which, in the long term, is the most significant element of self-help efforts towards socioeconomic development and is a basic factor for the nation-building of developing countries. Japan will also promote cooperation for the improvement and dissemination of technologies, such as research cooperation that will add to research and development as well as adaptive capabilities of developing countries.

(d) Infrastructure Improvement

Priority will be placed on assisting infrastructure improvement, which is a prerequisite to socioeconomic development.

(e) Structural Adjustment

Japan will provide support to structural adjustment, so that the entrepreneurship and the vitality of the private sector in recipient countries can be fully exerted in the market mechanisms, and to their efforts for a solution to the accumulated debt problem.

4. Measures for the Effective Implementation of Official Development Assistance

- (1) Japan will promote intensive policy dialogues with recipient countries, with a view to collecting and analyzing relevant information on these countries, and sharing with them basic perceptions on their development policies, taking into account their requests and ideas.
- (2) To respond to the various needs of developing countries in different stages of development, Japan's ODA will take advantage, to the maximum extent possible, of the merits of loans, grants, technical cooperation and other forms of assistance. All of these forms of assistance will be organically linked together and coordinated.

- (3) When called for, there will be appropriate communication and cooperation with aid agencies of other donor countries, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions, as well as Japanese local governments and private organizations such as labor and business organizations. In particular, efforts will be made to ensure that Japan's perspective on ODA is adequately reflected in the cooperation through international organizations, while taking full advantage of the expertise and political neutrality of these organizations. There will also be cooperation with and appropriate support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), while respecting their independence.
- (4) Japan's own development policies and experiences, as well as those of countries in East and Southeast Asia which have succeeded in economic take-off, will be put to practical use.
- (5) In implementing environmental ODA, Japan will make the best use of its technology and know-how, which it has acquired in the process of successfully making environmental conservation and economic development compatible.
- (6) In order to contribute to the transfer of technology suitable to the level of development of the recipient countries, Japan will promote the development of relevant technologies and will provide such assistance as will enable the adequate utilization of the knowledge and technologies possessed by other developing countries.
- (7) In transferring technology and know-how, Japan will make use of those possessed by the Japanese private sector as well as by the government, and provide support for technical cooperation by the private sector.
- (8) In order to cope with transnational regional problems, Japan will cooperate more closely with international organizations and other frameworks for regional cooperation such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).
- (9) A close relationship will be maintained between ODA, direct investment and trade, so that those three can promote the development of developing countries organically. For this purpose, ODA will be more closely linked to and be supportive of economic cooperation in the private sector through trade insurance and such organizations as the Export-Import Bank of Japan.
- (10) Cooperation and research to find and formulate adequate development projects will be enhanced. For the future improvement of its ODA, project evaluations, including third party evaluations and joint evaluations with recipients and other donors and organizations, will also be strengthened.
- (11) Regional studies of developing countries, studies of development policy, and comprehensive evaluation of ODA will be further promoted.
- (12) Full consideration will be given to the active participation of women in development, and to their obtaining benefits from development.

- (13) Full consideration will be given to the socially weak, such as the disadvantaged, children and the elderly.
- (14) Consideration will be given to redressing the gap between the rich and the poor and the gap among various regions in developing countries.
- (15) Japan's ODA activities will be conducted with full care to see that they do not lead to injustice or corruption in the recipient countries.

5. Measures to Promote Understanding and Support at Home and Abroad

The following measures will be adopted to ensure that ODA is implemented with public understanding both at home and abroad and to secure the participation of the Japanese people.

(1) Making ODA Information Public

While taking into account such matters as diplomatic relations with recipient countries, more information regarding the ODA activities will be made available to the Diet and to the public.

(2) Enhancement of Public Relations and Development Education

Organized public relations activities and educational programs on development assistance will be promoted.

6. ODA Implementation System

(1) Recruitment, Training and Utilization of Competent Aid Personnel

In order to recruit, train and utilize fully the talents of competent ODA personnel, training institutes of aid experts will be enhanced to foster more development experts, private enterprise consultants and others.

(2) Ensuring Effective and Efficient Mechanisms to Implement ODA

Communication and consultation between relevant ministries and agencies will be promoted for the effective and efficient implementation of ODA. In addition, cooperation between the two aid-implementing organizations, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) will be intensified. At the same time, the ODA implementation functions of these two organizations will be improved. In order to obtain further

cooperation from the private sector, efforts will be made to extend such support to this sector as will appropriately cover the related operating expenses.

(3) Ensuring the Safety of ODA Personnel Dispatched Overseas

Continued efforts will be made to safeguard the lives and personal safety of ODA personnel dispatched to developing areas, and to provide necessary assistance in the event of unexpected incidents.

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