



International Cooperation

For people, for life, for the future

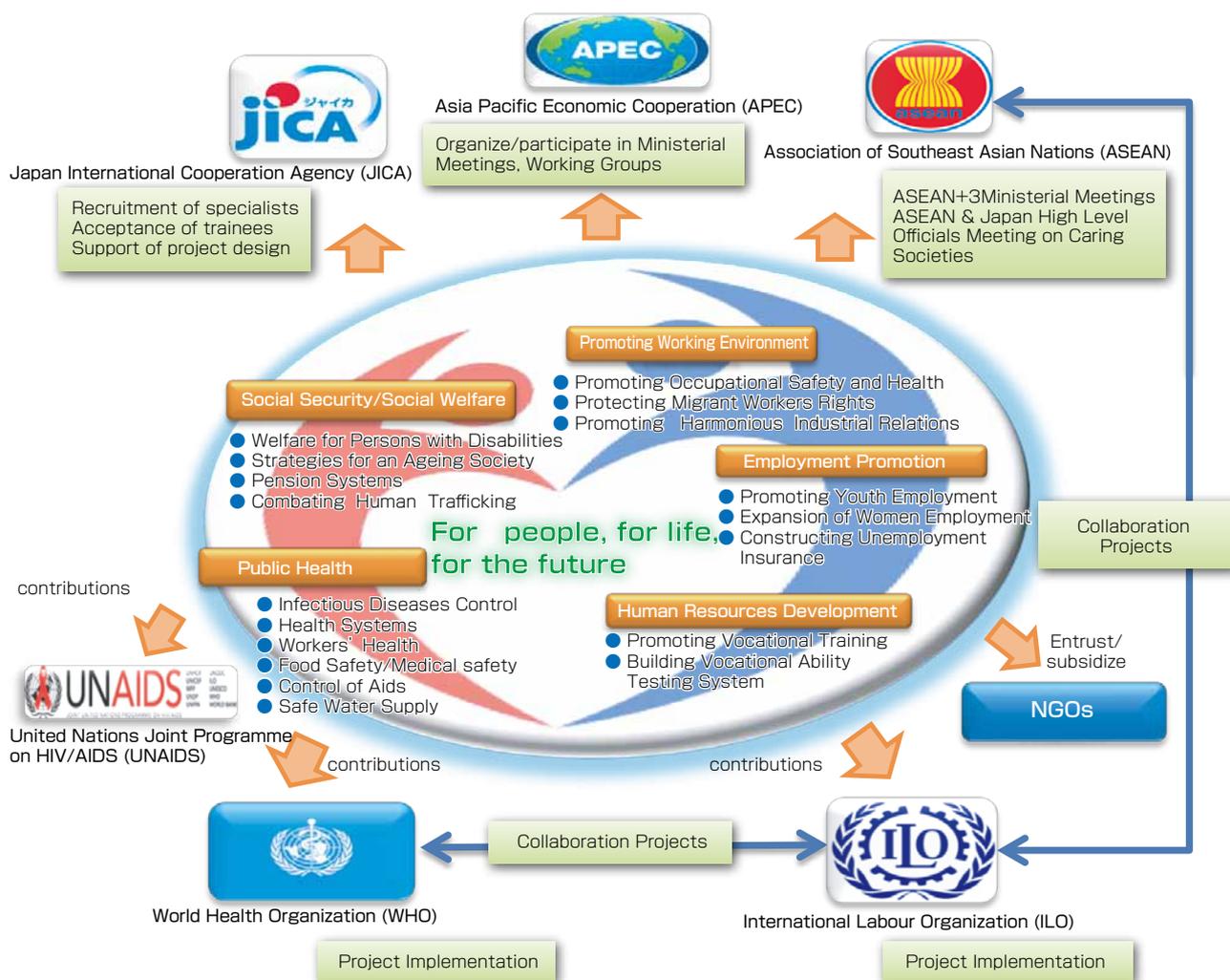


Office of International Cooperation
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan

Overview of International Cooperation

For people, for life, for the future

- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan is responsible for a diverse range of areas including “social security,” “social welfare,” “public health (health policy and medical services and water supply administration),” “improvement of working environment,” “promotion of employment,” and “human resources development.” Making the most of the expertise in those areas, MHLW implements technical cooperation projects for developing countries in an integrated and systematic manner.
- MHLW provides technical cooperation through various channels, which includes recruiting professionals and accepting trainees for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); subsidizing projects carried out by NGOs; and funding projects implemented by international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Labour Organization (ILO).
- MHLW closely works with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), facilitates meetings at the ministerial level, and organizes collaboration projects with ASEAN. We also implement projects through the scheme of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).



WHO

World Health Organization (WHO) is the UN specialized agency, established in 1948 with a purpose "to reach the highest possible level of health for all people". Since its establishment, WHO has been conducting a wide range of activities, including infectious diseases prevention, food and drug safety and health promotion for the protection of people's health.

ILO

International Labour Organization (ILO), a unique UN agency which employs tripartite system, has established in 1919 for pursuing universal and lasting peace based upon social justice; improving conditions of labour, for example, by the prevention of unemployment and recognition of the principle of freedom of association; and ensuring social security. ILO is actively engaged in technical cooperation with a purpose to realize "decent work" for all.

Social Security/Social Welfare

★ASEAN-JAPAN High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Society★

The Government of Japan advocated the “World Welfare Plan” at the Lyon Summit, France, in 1996, and the concept was widely accepted by the heads of states. Based on the aforementioned concept, MHLW has been working on improving social security as a broad definition including public health and medical insurance for more than 15 years in the ASEAN region. To do so, MHLW has provided support for sharing knowledge, experiences and good practices, and development of systems and human resources, which would be vital to economic development.



[Plenary Session of the 7th High Level Officials Meeting in 2009]



[Site Visit, as a part of the 7th High Level Meeting in 2009]

MHLW, since 2003, has also hosted the ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies in Tokyo and has invited high level officials who are in charge of health and social welfare policy in ASEAN countries, which aims to strengthen development of human resources and promote further collaborative relationships between ASEAN countries and Japan.

For the purpose of strengthening the cooperation among Japan, China, and South Korea in the field of health and welfare, the ASEAN+3 Health Ministers Meeting and the ASEAN+3 Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare have been instituted since 2004. The results of the ASEAN/Japan High Level Officials Meeting have been reported in the ministerial meetings and highly commended. The High Level Meeting strives to promote better social security policy in collaboration with the ministerial meetings.

The themes of the High Level Meeting are determined based on the situation of ASEAN countries, proposals from the ASEAN secretariat as well as social security policies of Japan. With a focus on the collaboration between welfare and health services provided to the vulnerable such as the elderly, mothers and children, and people with disabilities, the Meeting has had discussions on linkage between central and local governments, responsibility demarcation between public and private sectors, and better use of community services.



[Facility visit, as part of the 7th High Level Meeting in 2009]



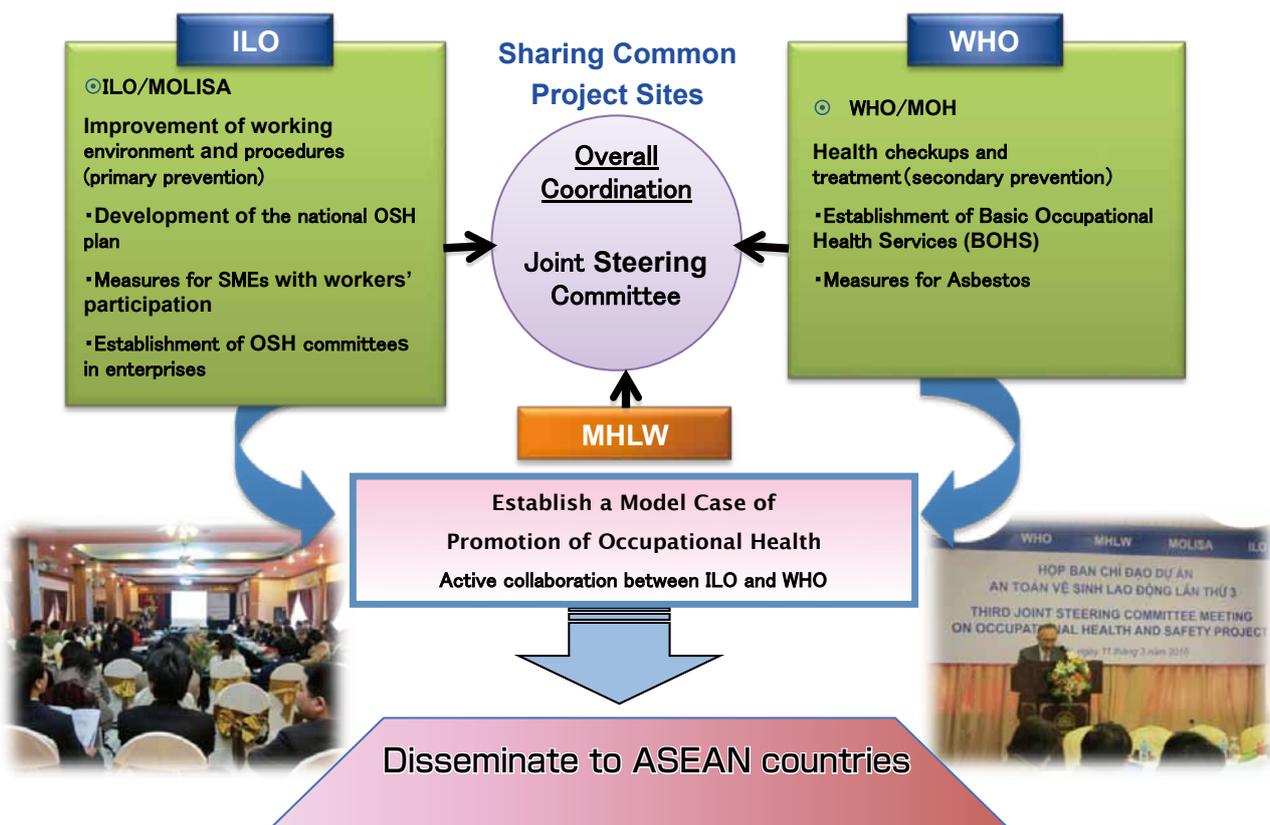
[Photo: Group discussion, in the 7th High Level Meeting in 2009]

Thus far, approximately 240 officials from the ASEAN countries participated and thorough discussions took place in the meetings. The meeting has provided the ASEAN countries with ice-breaking opportunities for further and dynamic cooperation between different sectors such as health and social welfare. Considering the positive results brought about by the meetings, MHLW is willing to regularly organize the ASEAN-JAPAN High Level Officials Meeting to strengthen the relationship between ASEAN and Japan in the field of social security.

Health Policy and Medical Services/Occupational Safety and Health

★ILO / WHO Collaborative Project for Promoting Occupational Health in ASEAN (FY2008~FY2010) ★

Taking advantage of MHLW's wide range of responsibilities, which includes both health policy and occupational health, MHLW provides support to build the system to promote occupational health in Vietnam, in which occupational health has become an important issue recently by effective collaboration among the government of Vietnam, ILO, and WHO. The project includes activities for reduction of prevalence of diseases, improvement of occupational safety and health, and human resource development in the health sector, and ultimately promote occupational health in the entire ASEAN region.



Working Environment Improvement / Employment Support / Human Resource Development

Men have to work for a living, but labour is not a commodity. From this point of view, Japan has cooperated with Asian countries in the area of “Working Environment Improvement,” “Employment Support,” and “Human Resource Development” through the voluntary contribution of Japanese fund to the ILO.

○ Multi-bilateral Technical Cooperation Scheme

Japan is proud to be a founding member of the ILO and has been implementing cooperation projects for 36 years since the first multi-bilateral program in 1974, “Asia Regional Women’s Labour Administration Seminar .” For the implementation of cooperation projects, Japan has specified a general plan and overall goals of the projects and contributed the fund to the ILO, which has developed work plans and implemented the projects in recipient countries.



○ Overview of the Projects in 2009

1. ASEAN-ILO/Japan Industrial Relations Project

The project aims at contributing to improve industrial relations in the ASEAN region. Activities are conducted in close cooperation with ASEAN secretariat, aiming to build harmonious industrial relations in the region. In 2009, the project held the regional seminar in Malaysia with ASEAN member states and has shared good practices in the region, which are expected to be used to promote harmonious industrial relations in each country.



2. Promoting Youth Employment in South Asia

Unemployment seriously affects youth, who are mostly Tamils, in plantations in Sri Lanka because of language barriers, limited education, and limited access to labour market services. The project offers career guidance, vocational skills, and entrepreneurship to youth in some model provinces, and disseminates the development model over the country.



3. Managing Migrant Workers in ASEAN region

Migration of workers from Laos, Cambodia, and Indonesia to Thailand has been taking place for many years, and informal migrations are growing recently. Those workers are unlikely to be protected legally and are easy targets of exploitation. The project aims to establish means of regulating the cross-border flow by enlightening on the rights of migrants and to provide opportunities of employment support in sending countries.



4. Promoting Green Jobs in the Asian Region

The environmental threat to development in the Asian region, compounded by climate change, is leading to major transformations in labour markets. The project aims to promote environmental friendly employment in middle income countries in the Asian region. Japan hosted the expert meeting with representatives from Philippines and Thailand, in which pilot projects were undertaken, the ILO, and Japanese social partners in February 2010. The ILO is expected to implement the project with respect to Japanese “KAIZEN,” a voluntarily improvement activity of workers.

The closing session of the expert meeting included Mr. Hosokawa, Senior Vice Minister of MHLW, and Mr. Nagumo, Secretary-General of Japan Trade Union Confederation, and Mr. Kawamoto, Japan Business Federation’s board of director, and Ms. Yamamoto, Director of ILO’s Regional office of Asia and the Pacific.

○ Major Outcomes of Completed Multi-bilateral Technical Cooperation Projects

1. Promoting Employment in China(FY 2001 ~ 2004)

• The project offered employment support to the unemployed in six cities of China, which includes entrepreneurship training, micro finance by credit guarantee, and business administration consulting.

★ Outcome

Entrepreneurship Training (person)	Credit guarantee and Loan		Start new business (person)	Created Employment (person)
	Applicants (person)	Total amount (yuan)		
14,794	670	27,650,000	4,821	20,913

※ Government of China recognized the effectiveness of the project, disseminated entrepreneurship training programmes in 100 cities, and carried out credit guarantee programmes in 327 cities.



2. Expansion of Employment Opportunities for Women (FY2001 ~ 2005)

• Despite recent progress, women are still at a considerable disadvantage in the labour market due to disparities in terms of access and opportunities. The project had provided assistance to Cambodian and Vietnamese women including entrepreneurship, job training on the purpose of poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment of women, and gender equality in the world of work.

★ Outcome

	New Employee (person)	Income increased by Job Training (person)	Loaned by government (person)	Training for equal employment opportunity (person)	Government officials trained for equal employment opportunity 1,520 person Government officials certified as trainer. 210 persons
Vietnam	824	1,342	671	4,484	
Cambodia	219	1,703	648	1,074	

※ Government of Vietnam, learned by lessons of this project, has started to provide job training by themselves in the use of materials developed in the project.



○ As shown above, the ILO/Japan Multi-bilateral technical cooperation program has contributed to resolve a wide range of labour issues in Asia-pacific region, which are difficult to be covered by bilateral cooperation scheme. The program has been making the most of ILO's expertise and network, as well as mutual cooperation between its member states with active participation of workers' and employers' organizations.

○ Cooperation Programmes through NGOs

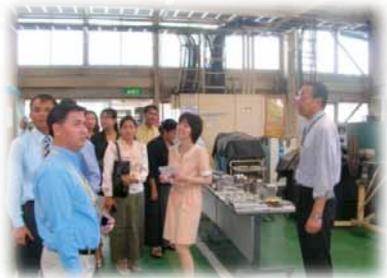
Apart from the program through ILO, MHLW has subsidized/entrusted international cooperation programs as follows:

• International Industrial Relations Project

The project aims to disseminate Japanese style harmonious industrial relations and build a better relationship with foreign countries by giving better understanding of Japan's labor law and labour situations, by organizing seminars which invites trade unions and employer's organization in other countries.

• Human Resource Development Project in Asian and the Pacific

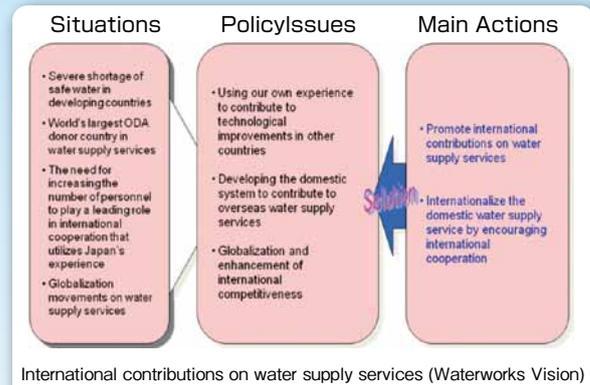
The project provided training that aims at promoting human resource development in CLMV countries and organized workshops for skills development of rural workers in APEC area.



Public Health (Water Supply)

Water supply is the essential social infrastructure to improve public health and living environment. However, there still remain 884 million people who do not have access to safe drinking water as of 2008. The Millennium Development Goal includes the target to halve the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water until 2015.

Therefore, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) promotes the international contribution and harmonization in water supply sector as one of the five important issues under "Waterworks Vision." This vision was developed in 2004 to share the understanding of future goals among stakeholders.



1. International cooperation in water supply sector

Japan emphasizes the importance of capacity development, such as the development of the organizations, policies, systems, information and data, and human resources of the governments of developing countries as well as water supply utilities, for proper operation and maintenance and management, under the "Water and sanitation broad partnership initiative (WASABI) (2006)," the Japanese policy of Official Development Assistance (ODA) on water and sanitation sector. Technical cooperation including the dispatch of technical experts and trainings of staff is the measure to realize the above policy.

1) Dispatch of technical experts

To supply safe and high quality water continuously, both water supply facilities appropriate for each natural and social condition and human resources capable of operation and maintenance of their system, are highly important.

MHLW recommends staff of Japanese water supply utilities and related organizations as technical experts to JICA and sends them to developing countries in order to contribute to enhance central and local human capacity for the better management and administration of water supply services.

2) Training of staff in the water supply sector

ODA supports self-help efforts of developing countries. Further, the contributions of human resource development help strengthen friendship between Japan and those countries.



Photo : The project for Capacity Development on Non Revenue Water Control for SABESP (BRAZIL)

MHLW cooperates with JICA for group training programs and individual training programs on water supply sector, together with water supply utilities and related organizations.

In addition to technical cooperation, the development of water supply facilities is supported by grant-aid or government loan in many countries as part of ODA.

2. Study of international cooperation and project formation program in the water supply sector

The study to analyze the current situation of developing countries and need for international cooperation is being conducted to find the best way of international cooperation together with the Japanese government, water supply utilities, and private companies.

MHLW conducts project formation program to improve the capacity of project formation of developing countries. This program technically reviews a potential program or plan in developing countries, provides appropriate guidance and advice, and transfers the technical expertise of Japan, in order for those countries to become able to form a carefully designed good project.

3. Promotion of the contributions of water supply industry

In addition to ODA, the contributions of the Japanese water supply industry are necessary for safe drinking water supply in developing countries. MHLW conducts a study to support these contributions by utilizing Japanese know-how stored in both public and private sector by focusing on Asian countries.

4. Cooperation with international organizations

MHLW establishes a strong international network with international organizations and provides knowledge and information to other countries through organizations such as World Health Organization and International Water Association.



Photo : Project formation program (LAO PDR), 2009

Related Web-based Information

◇The official website of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/index.html>

- International Affairs Division

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/affairs/index.html>

(Related Information)

○Information of “ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies”

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/affairs/asean/index.html>

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

<http://www.aseansec.org/>

○Information Related to WHO

- World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/en/>

- WHO Regional Office for Western Pacific (WPRO)

<http://www.wpro.who.int/home.htm>

○Information Related to Water Supply

- Water Supply in Japan

http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health/water_supply/menu.html

- Operation & Maintenance Network

<http://www.operationandmaintenance.net/>

○Information Related to ILO

- International Labour Organization

<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>

- ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)

http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/projects/lang--en/WCMS_099193/index.htm

- ILO Office in Japan (ILO-Tokyo)

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/tokyo/index.htm>

○Other Related Information

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/index.html>

- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

<http://www.jica.go.jp/english/index.html>

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