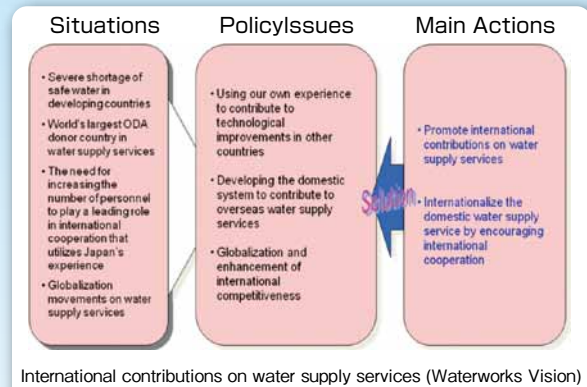


Public Health (Water Supply)

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