

Chapter 5 Global Efforts

Measures Related to International Cooperation in Accordance with Japan's International Position

1. Global efforts for persons with disabilities

(1) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as “CRPD”) was adopted at the 61st General Assembly of the United Nations in December 2006, with a view to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. It entered into force in May 2008. As of March 31, 2020, the number of States and Organizations Parties to the CRPD is 181.

Japan has actively participated in the process of drafting the CRPD and signed it in September, 2007. Subsequently, various laws and systems have been streamlined in Japan such as the revision of the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities, etc. Japan deposited its Instrument of Ratification of the CRPD to the United Nations in January, 2014 and it entered into force in February, 2014.

According to the CRPD, each State Party shall submit “a comprehensive report on measures taken to give effect to its obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard” to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Particularly, the first report needs to be submitted within two years of this convention coming into effect.

Japan has prepared the State Party report based on the discussions at the Commission on Policy for Persons with Disabilities and public comments, and submitted the first State Party report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in June, 2016. The report is scheduled to be reviewed by the Committee. After adopting the Committee’s concluding observations including its suggestions and recommendations, it is to be released as a UN document.

(2) ESCAP Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities

In order to raise awareness about persons with disabilities and improve the regional policy levels for them in the Asia-Pacific region, as a replacement for the UN Decade of Disabled Persons, Japan and China advocated the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities in 1992, which was then approved at the general assembly of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and extended for a further ten years by the general assembly in its final year, 2002.

Subsequently, in 2012, the general assembly of the ESCAP approved the ESCAP Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 which was co-sponsored by Japan. In the same year, at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, the Incheon Strategy, an action plan of the ESCAP Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, was approved. The Incheon Strategy specifies 10 goals and 27 targets that need to be achieved within the given period, and 62 indicators to confirm the progress of policies for persons with disabilities, such as “to reduce poverty and enhance work and employment prospects,” and “to promote participation in the political process and deciding policies.”

(3) Information provision and collection

In order to provide information related to the Japan’s policies for persons with disabilities, the Cabinet has prepared the English-version Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities and Annual Report on Government Measures for Persons with Disabilities (Summary), which is accessible at the Cabinet Office website (English). Furthermore, through the implementation etc. of the 2019 Survey on the State of Domestic and Overseas Initiatives to Promote the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, information has been collected on trends in domestic and overseas measures for those with disabilities. This

information is the state of policies and initiative models concerning the provision of reasonable accommodation and development of facilities, and the state of initiatives taken by local public entities regarding the promotion of elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities.

2. Promotion of international cooperation

(1) Basic policy of international cooperation

It is of the uttermost effectiveness and importance that Japan makes good use, in measures for persons with disabilities in developing countries, of all the techniques and experience it has built up in welfare, health/medical care, education, employment and a wide range of areas through, Official Development Assistance (ODA) and other measures. Based on Article 32 on International Cooperation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Japan makes efforts to conduct cooperation activities which can be agreed both by targeted countries and Japan. Moreover, through cooperation with NGOs utilizing the Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) and the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and the dispatch of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers etc., it is implementing cooperation that goes directly to grassroots level in developing countries and responding meticulously to local needs.

(2) ODA loans

ODA Loans are formulated by considering the use of facilities by persons with disabilities including through seeking barrier-free planning for railway and airport projects, etc.

(3) Grant aid

Due consideration is given for the use by persons with disabilities in Grant Aids. Every year many projects such as construction of rehabilitation and vocational training facilities for them, and provision of minibuses for their transportation, are implemented.

(4) Technical cooperation

In addition to initiatives aimed at persons with disabilities, Japan has also been accepting trainees and dispatching experts and JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers in order to support the participation of persons with disabilities in all fields of the development process through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

(5) Cooperation through international organizations

From FY1988 to FY2015 Japan has been continuously contributing to the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability. With regards to cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region, Japan has been supporting the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) through the Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund (JECF).