

Country Development Cooperation Policy for Jamaica

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1. Purpose of Development Cooperation

(1) Relevance of Assistance to CARICOM (the Caribbean Community¹)

Jamaica is a member state of CARICOM, which is comprised of a number of Caribbean countries. These countries have commonalities with Japan, such as frequent natural disasters, like hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunamis. Another commonality the CARICOM has with Japan is its focus on promoting the sustainable use of living marine resources.

These CARICOM countries are vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters; they have small populations and economies; and, their economies are based on industries, which are susceptible to external factors, such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

To overcome common challenges faced in the Caribbean region, such as natural disasters, it is important that the CARICOM utilizes the experience and knowledge of Japan in overcoming natural disasters in order to promote socio-economic stability and sustainable growth across the region.

(2) Relevance of Assistance to Jamaica

Both Jamaica and Japan share similar values, such as democracy and rule of law, and Jamaica understands Japan's position in the international arena. Jamaica had grown steadily as a middle-income country, but it is still susceptible to external factors such as the global economy and natural disasters. Especially in the four years after the global economic crisis in 2008, Jamaica experienced negative growth and the low growth continues afterwards.

In addition to facing structural problems such as trade imbalance, Jamaica also encounters social problems such as high unemployment rate, the gap between the haves and the have-nots as well as security concerns. Utilization and preservation of sustainable resources, measures against natural disasters, as well as sustainable development of urban environment are also important issues.

Jamaica is one of the central countries of the Caribbean region reserving sizeable influence in that region and so it has a certain presence in the international arena. Japan's assistance for the efforts by Jamaica to overcome such problems in light of enhancing diplomatic relations.

¹ CARICOM (Caribbean Community) was formed by dissolving CARIFTA (Caribbean Free Trade Association) into a new organization for the purpose of economic integration of the Caribbean countries; coordination of foreign policy; the promotion of cooperation health-care and education, etc. in 1973. Its Secretariat is located in Georgetown, Guyana. Members are 14 States and 1 overseas territory.

2. Basic Policy of Assistance : Overcoming Vulnerability (common to all CARICOM member countries)

The Development Cooperation Charter stipulates that, with respect to small island countries and others that are faced with special vulnerabilities despite having attained a certain level of per capita income, Japan will extend necessary cooperation to countries based on their actual development needs and affordability.

On the basis of the Ministerial Joint Statement between Japan and CARICOM the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which was adopted in the Fourth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial Conference in November 2014, Japan will take advantage of its own technology and knowledge in order to provide assistance to realize the First Pillar "cooperation towards sustainable development including overcoming vulnerabilities particular to Small Island Developing States".

3. Priority Areas

(1) Environment and Disaster Risk Management

Jamaica is one of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and as such it is vulnerable to hurricanes, floods and drought. Likewise, the Government of Japan highly supports the promotion of adaptation and mitigation measures against natural disasters and also countermeasures against climate change to overcome the aforementioned vulnerabilities in Jamaica. Japan provides support for Jamaica to promote energy efficiency and conversion to renewable energy towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Government of Japan also supports waste management for sustainable development of the urban environment within Jamaica.

(2) Disparity Reduction

The rectification of disparities in income levels, unemployment and poverty reduction measures which are urgent on the agenda can, if left unaddressed, be a hindrance to sustainable and stable long-term economic growth. Within that context, The Government of Japan tries to expand human resource development and employment opportunities by providing the resources with a focus on the training area to support the improvement of SMEs' productivity and the expansion of vocational and skills training targeting also persons with disabilities or vulnerabilities. At that time, the opportunities are offered on the basis of gender equality.

4. Points to be considered

In its the national development plan "Vision 2030", the Government of Jamaica has stated issues such as sustainable resource conservation and utilization as well as adaptation and mitigation for natural disasters. Improvement of urban waste management system is also set as one of these issues based on the deterioration of the urban environment due to economic development. Another key area of emphasis is the promotion of energy efficiency and conversion to renewable energy from the viewpoint of aiming for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and securing electric power at the time of natural disasters.