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Japan is Set for a New Dimension of International Cooperation Response

This article is all about Japan's actions and contributions toward cooperation in the international community. A key part of the reasoning behind the need for Japan to have a well-established foothold in international cooperation is that if Japan is beloved by many nations, that lowers the risk of those nations attacking Japan. For example, Japan assisted many East Asian countries develop their economic and political stability, largely on a local level due to cooperation with local citizens. This method of mutual, interactive efforts is an excellent peace-promoting strategy, and because Japan uses this method, it also promotes Japan's presence as an important figure in international cooperation.

This article also covers the perception of Japan's international cooperation efforts as seen by Japanese citizens and the global community. Japan was once the highest ODA spender in the world, but has decreased its budget due to economic reasons and public criticism. In reality, Japan's ODA contribution accounts for about half a percent of Japan's general budget and 0.2% of Japan's GNI, which is low in comparison to other countries. In the eyes of the international community, Japan's style of international cooperation is seen somewhat as "taking orders" for the countries they provide assistance to, but that is not the full picture. Japan spends time working on the dialogue between the two countries and the path toward a solution that best suits the scenario, rather than providing everything. This method is beneficial on both ends because it fosters skills in the country receiving assistance that will help them become self-sufficient and creates lasting partnerships between both parties. Overall, this is a reflection of Japan's focus on quality rather than quantity when it comes to international cooperation.

All in all, this article presents the view that Japan has been active in the realm of international cooperation for a long time and that these efforts are part of Japan's contribution toward world peace. Recently, the number of participants has decreased due to more opportunities in the job market and the fact that there is a poor perception of volunteers that work abroad. However, the authors think that experience gained abroad is invaluable and would probably help erode the closed-nation mentality that remains in Japanese people

I think that Japan's approach to international cooperation is probably one of the best, at least how it is presented in this article. Even though Japan's method may be time-consuming, I think the *process* is more important than the *speed* of the outcome. Instead of providing a quick-fix or selfishly having everything done by the country providing the help, Japan's style of working together and fostering self-reliance not only builds mutual relationships, but also builds a stronger foundation for the country receiving the help. In the long-run, I think Japan's style is more effective overall for both ends of the deal—mutual cooperation and assistance.