

## Background and Objectives

Achieving quality basic education universally is a common goal of paramount importance throughout the world. Japan has been leading the international community through the occasions of G8 Summits and TICAD in an attempt to realize Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015. The Government of Japan launched its new education cooperation policy at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the review of the MDGs, proposing a basic education assistance model called “School for All”. Over the next five years starting in 2011, Japan will support the education sector comprehensively under the concept of human security. To achieve these objectives, Japan has been assisting the self-reliance efforts of its partner countries and striving for aid effectiveness.

The target year 2015 for achieving EFA goals and MDGs is drawing nearer. While aid modality employing financial support and policy/program assistance covering the whole education sector has permeated, we are facing significant challenges that need to be addressed: Issues of school management, quality of teachers, instruction and learning process, as well as reaching the marginalized children. In the meantime, Japan’s educational cooperation has conventionally focused on assisting specific improvements on the ground and has provided assistance that is responsive to various needs of the partner countries. International cooperation for education stands at the crossroad. What issues should we address and how? Which direction are we heading? These are the vital issues worth our attention.

The 9<sup>th</sup> JEF features the theme of “Aid Effectiveness and Responsibility of International Cooperation in Education”. With prominent practitioners in educational aid invited from international and bilateral development institutions as well as noted scholars specializing in educational development, we will discuss “Aid Effectiveness” and international cooperation in education, anticipating post-EFA. How could Japan’s abundant field-based experiences contribute to the development of education in accordance with policy-oriented trends? We warmly welcome all participants to actively join this discussion.

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The Japan Education Forum (JEF) is an annual international forum established in March 2004 through governmental and academic collaboration regarding Japan’s educational cooperation. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for open and frank exchanges of opinions and ideas by officials in the public sector, practitioners of international development and NGOs, and scholars, on ways of promoting self-efforts of developing countries toward sustainable educational development, and of effective international cooperation in education. The forum also offers an opportunity to present Japan’s own experiences in educational development and its international cooperation in practice.