



9 Sept 2019

## Concept Note

# North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum 2019:

## *Reinventing Multilateral Cooperation and roles of Northeast Asian countries to achieve SDGs*

27-28 September 2019

JICA Research Institute

Tokyo, Japan

### Organized by

ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office, Japan Society for International Development (JASID) and JICA Research Institute

### In partnership with

China International Development Research Network (CIDRN), Korea Association of International Development and Cooperation (KAIDEC), and Russian Association of International Development Assistance Experts (RAIDAE)

### *Background of topic for the 2019 Forum*

In the first decade of this millennium, the integrity toward the multilateralism was taken for granted under the notion of aid coordination. In particular, this notion was shared among OECD/DAC donors. In the second decade, however, nationalism and unilateralism at various front grew so fast and widely that

the momentum towards multilateralism is frustrated. The United Nations and multilateral development banks alike face this challenge in their pursuit of global development agendas.

In the meantime, Northeast Asian countries emerge as solid contributors for traditional and emerging multilateral facilities. For instance, Republic of Korea has been allocating around a quarter to 30% of its gross ODA to the multilateral development system (core contribution) for the past decade. Amount of core contribution actually increased by more than threefold from 2007 to 2016, reflecting the increase of its contribution to the total ODA. Japan's use of the multilateral development system has increased by 66% from 2007 to 2016, accounting for one-fifth of gross ODA (for core contribution) in 2016. China has been newly recognized as a lead provider for infrastructure building in the world through its contribution to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the New Development Bank and the Belt and Road Initiative. Likewise, Japan has supported the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as the main sponsor for decades. Korea plays key roles in both AIIB and ADB, and enhances its presence as an OECD/DAC donor. Russia is also an active player of multilateral frameworks such as the Eurasian Economic Community and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Amid rises of unilateralism in many parts of the world, how can the global community achieve SDGs? On one hand, bilateral development cooperation in North-East Asian countries is facing the question of how to balance the national interests of individual states and universal goals such as poverty reduction and basic needs. On the other hand, multilateral framework established for specific groups or regions do not necessarily cater or are designed to cater to universal agenda such as SDGs.

How can each Northeast Asian donor (partner) country coordinate bilateral aid and its contribution to multilateral agencies to further progress in SDGs? Which concepts such as Silk Road, knowledge sharing, human security or universal health coverage are effective to appeal contribution of a Northeast Asian country as a driver for sustainable development of the world? In this context, multilateral development cooperation involves

- Development cooperation through multilateral programmes and platforms
- Bilateral development cooperation in alignment with universal goals (such as SDGs)
- Development cooperation involving multiple partners (both providers and recipients)
- Development cooperation through multilateral institutions

Those will be questions to be discussed in the forum.