

Section 4 Strengthening sector-specific strategies

In fields with growing potential to capture markets and fields where problem-solving can be combined with market development, ministries and agencies must work together to put in place systems that will facilitate the implementation of various measures based on an overarching strategy, by conducting sales promotion in conjunction with efforts to upgrade systems in counterpart countries.

This section examines examples of Japan's strategy for the future in (1) the medical sector, (2) the distribution sector, and (3) the food sector.

1. Medical sector

To ensure that Japanese-style medical centers become firmly established overseas, it will be necessary to put in place the requisite environment, by such means as system and human resource development, as well as overseas expansion that brings together medical services and medical equipment as a single package. More specifically, in the case of the early detection and treatment of cancer and lifestyle-related diseases (an area in which Japan's strengths lie), the government will support overseas expansion integrated with efforts to develop health check-up systems and private medical insurance systems. In addition, it is vital to combine expansion with support in such areas as human resource development and ODA. For example, the government will support efforts to ensure that Japanese medical technology and services spread overseas, through the training of physicians and technicians from each counterpart country, as they play a crucial role in the procurement of medical equipment.

2. Distribution sector

Currently, some Asian countries that are major targets for expansion by Japanese distribution companies have restrictions preventing investment or the establishment of branches by foreign enterprises; other challenges include securing and cultivating personnel capable of becoming managers. Accordingly, the government will back efforts by Japanese-affiliated distribution companies to expand overseas and modernize the local distribution industry in each country. To this end, it will pursue a combination of economic partnership negotiations, bilateral dialogue, and support for human resource development in order to tackle these issues. More specifically, in economic partnership negotiations such as those focused on TPP, the RCEP, and the AJCEP, the government will request that Asian countries make a high-standard commitment to liberalization[M3]. In addition, to strengthen cooperative relationships in the distribution sector with Indonesia and Vietnam, where there is a particular need for expansion, the government will continue to engage in dialogue at the director general level with the bureaus in charge of distribution policy in both countries, and invite personnel from those countries to participate in training courses aimed at modernizing the local distribution industry. In addition, it will consider extending the range of counterpart countries, taking into account needs among business operators.

3. Food sector

There are many fans of Japanese cuisine overseas, but in order to sell Japanese foodstuffs, it is necessary to deal with quarantine restrictions and obtain certification concerning the international standards demanded by buyers and the countries to which these products are exported. Accordingly, while striving to disseminate Japanese culinary culture, the government will promote an integrated strategy focused on (1) promoting the use of Japanese foodstuffs in the culinary field worldwide (Made FROM Japan), (2) the overseas expansion of Japan's culinary culture and food industry (Made BY Japan), and (3) initiatives aimed at the export of Japanese agricultural, forestry, and fisheries produce and foods (Made IN Japan) (the FBI Strategy). Based on this, it will provide support in such areas as strategic negotiations regarding quarantine and certification relating to international standards for food safety. More specifically, based on the Comprehensive Export Strategy for Japanese Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products and Foods, which was published in August 2013, the government will discuss quarantine conditions with countries to which Japan exports foods and will seek to expand the range of items that can be exported, as well as offering support to food-related business operators in obtaining halal certification and certification under international standards such as HACCP and GLOBALG.A.P. Through this, it will aim to boost exports and promote overseas expansion.

Furthermore, with a view to boosting exports, the government will provide policy support to business operators aiming to undertake nationwide initiatives that will facilitate year-round supply.