

TICAD remains as important as ever

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Twenty years ago, Japan and a number of international partners founded the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to help boost human development across the continent.

Since that time, TICAD has played a critical role in raising global awareness of African development issues and providing strategic leadership on development assistance to Africa. Its 1998 Tokyo Agenda for Action proposed concrete human development targets.

In order to respond to Africa's needs more effectively, TICAD transformed itself from a forum for dialogue into a platform for action, launching a wide spectrum of programs to accelerate economic growth, human security and progress toward the Millennium Development Goals across Africa.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and TICAD are committed to principles of national leadership and ownership and international partnership.

TICAD partners mobilize valuable knowledge and technical know-how for development. The Japan-financed Africa



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investment in Africa reached \$6 billion.

Not only did Japan's aid, trade flows and commitment to Africa continue after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that devastated part of Japan, but it also shared its experience and expertise on disaster risk reduction. For example, in 2013, Japan approved an additional contribution to

jobs, education and social protection, and through political participation.

Sustainable development pathways are needed to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce social and economic inequality and exclusion.

TICAD co-organizers recognize both the progress made by Africa and the complex challenges that remain. Through this conference's theme, "Hand in Hand with a More Dynamic Africa," TICAD V will provide impetus to boost sustainable human development on the continent through promoting peace and justice, inclusive and resilient societies, and robust and sustainable economies.

Why Japan's support is important

Japanese stakeholders are in a strong position to support African development through their networks of knowledge, development experience and innovation.

In West Africa, Japan's private sector and civil society are working with local businesses and in collaboration with UNDP's African Facility for Inclusive Markets to develop value chains benefiting the poor, with a focus on sustainable agricultural development. In Cameroon, Sony worked with UNDP to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. In Mozambique, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is working with Brazil and local partners to develop agriculture. Triangular cooperation with emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil, all of which have been successful in reducing extreme poverty, presents opportunities in the future.

A strong and vibrant Africa contributes to a better world. TICAD remains relevant and Japan's support to Africa is as important as before.

In Yokohama, hand in hand with Japan, TICAD co-organizers, and all attendees, I look forward to seeing Africa's development promoted.

Helen Clark is the administrator of the United Nations Development Program and the former prime minister of New Zealand.

UNDP is a co-organizer of TICAD along with the government of Japan, the World Bank, the African Union (AU) and the U.N. Office of the Special Advisor on Africa (OSAA).

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Adaptation Program, a continent-wide scheme implemented by UNDP, is helping countries to integrate climate adaptation into their national development efforts. For example, farmers in Nigeria have been learning how to use automated weather stations, gathering year-round climate data, and making decisions on how and when to fertilize and irrigate their crops.

Japan's commitment to Africa has been key to the continued success of TICAD. Japan nearly doubled its official development assistance (ODA) to Africa from an average of \$900 million per year in 2003-2007 to \$1.8 billion per year in 2008-2012. In 2010, the country's foreign direct

reduce disaster risk in Ethiopia's most drought-prone areas, working with UNDP.

Challenges for development

Africa has changed tremendously since the first TICAD in 1993. Economic growth and human development have picked up in sub-Saharan Africa. More recently, transitions in North Africa have been accompanied by public demands for social justice, political accountability, and economic opportunity.

Much, however, remains to be done in development in Africa. A challenge is to ensure that growth translates into equal opportunity for all, including in access to