

ENSURING HUMAN SECURITY

“Human Security” is a key concept in Japan’s international cooperation, and has been a priority of the TICAD process since the first conference in 1993. Support for Human Security aims to help countries to respond to diverse and inter-connected threats, including poverty, environmental degradation, and infectious diseases. Japan has contributed US\$33.5 billion to the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) established in 1999 and supported approximately 180 projects implemented by UN agencies, including more than 50 projects in Africa.

Millennium Villages

The Millennium Villages project, financed partly by the UNHSTF, offers a bold, innovative model for helping rural African communities lift themselves out of extreme poverty. Simple solutions like providing high-yield seeds, fertilizers, medicines, drinking wells and materials to build school rooms and clinics are effectively ushering communities into a new age of health and opportunity. Improved science and technology such as agro-forestry, insecticide-treated bed nets, antiretroviral drugs, the Internet, remote sensing and geographic information systems enrich this progress.

To date, the project has reached nearly 400,000 people in 79 villages. Clustered into 12 groups across 10 African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda) the villages, comprising approximately 5,000 people per village, are located in different agro-ecological zones that reflect the range of farming, water, and disease challenges facing the continent. The Government of Japan, through the UNHSTF, has contributed to the financing of villages in these countries (except Ethiopia) through a project managed by UNDP.

African Village Initiative

The Japanese Government has also developed an African Village Initiative (AVI) based on the “Human Security” concept to support self-sustained community livelihoods. AVI aims at supporting rural community development so that communities can stand on their own by such means as infrastructure development, local capacity building, and ensuring food security by introducing suitable agricultural methods. Project models range from building schools in rural areas to building wells or water facilities on school campuses and distributing free school meals.

Achieving the MDGs

The TICAD process creates significant opportunities for achieving progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were agreed on at the United Nations Millennium Summit held in 2000. The objectives and the specific targets set by the Tokyo Agenda for Action for key development areas broadly coincide with the MDGs. The MDGs, which comprise clear, time-bound targets on key development priorities -- ranging from halving extreme poverty and hunger to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS -- are to be achieved by 2015.

TICAD Co-organizers support efforts by the United Nations MDG Africa Steering Group chaired by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with the membership of leaders of the major multilateral and inter-governmental organizations working for development in Africa. The aim is to follow through on existing MDG commitments and address three challenges to support development in



Africa. These are to: identify effective mechanisms for implementing commitments in the areas of health, education, agriculture and food security, infrastructure, and statistical systems; improve aid predictability following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; and strengthen joint efforts at the country level in support of the MDGs.

Education

Japan plays an active role in Africa's efforts to achieve access to primary education. For example, a project to improve school management through community participation in Niger aims at making community members the central actors in school management by giving them responsibility in planning, provision of text books, and raising awareness. Based on the successful outcome of this pilot project, the Ministry of Education of Niger now plans to scale it up throughout the country with financial support from the World Bank.

Japan has announced that over the five years it will bolster education in Africa by providing assistance to construct approximately 1,000 schools with some 5,500 classrooms, train about 100,000 teachers through a project to strengthen mathematics and science education, and help improve school management in 10,000 schools.

Empowering Rural Women

Established by the Government of Japan in 1995, the UNDP/Japan Women in Development Fund (JWIDF) supports efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in developing countries. Its purpose is to build women's capacities through innovative initiatives. It has funded numerous projects in the amount of US\$4.5 million in 14 African countries. Two high-impact projects feature one aiming at empowering rural women involved in shea butter production in northern Ghana, and the other one targeting women in the counties of Nimba and Bong in Liberia through a micro-loan programme.

Health

Programmes focusing on mitigating the spread of malaria, measles and HIV/AIDS transmission from mother to child have proven very effective for the past few years in many African countries. These efforts are helping reduce child deaths and are important steps towards achieving the MDGs and improving public health in countries plagued by extreme poverty. Scaling-up interventions that have proven successful poses a great challenge. In this context, Japan has provided anti-malaria bed-nets in rural communities and millions of long-lasting insecticidal-treated nets. Support has also gone especially to maternal and child health programmes; family planning; information, education and communications as well as the empowerment of women and the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other diseases.

Consolidation of Peace and Democratization

Armed conflicts in Africa have resulted in great human suffering, and disrupted economic activities and civilian life. In recent years, however, a number of long-running conflicts have been brought to an end. This positive trend is due to Africa's own enhanced efforts to resolve and manage its conflicts through various initiatives by the African Union (AU) and regional organizations, supported through partnerships with the international community. However, several conflicts remain unresolved and instability poses risks in other areas. Conflict prevention, peace consolidation and strengthening democratic institutions are therefore important priorities for ensuring human security.

In reconstruction of war-affected communities, it is necessary to provide basic human needs including safe water and sanitation, and to rebuild basic infrastructure such as schools and hospitals, as well as to empower local communities. Community-based, small-scale projects in such areas as micro-finance or agriculture (such as Japan's African Village Initiative) are effective means to empower people and promote self-sustained development. They also contribute to the reconciliation process through income generation and youth employment.

Electoral systems and democratic institutions that promote political inclusion and good governance are the key foundation for sustainable peace. The protection and promotion of human rights contributes to facilitating reconciliation and encourages tolerance.

The TICAD process has provided support to a wide range of initiatives, including assistance to refugees and internally displaced people; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants; land mine clearance; collection, destruction of small arms and other light weapons, and crisis prevention. Japan also supports electoral processes in countries recovering from conflict to strengthen democratic governance.

In recent years, support for peace-building efforts has become a new pillar of Japan's international cooperation with the recognition of the need for peace and stability as a pre-requisite for sustainable development in Africa. Responding to several peace processes underway in Africa, Japan has for the past four years, disbursed more than US\$550 million in assistance to peace consolidation, including emergency humanitarian aid, DDR, and community rehabilitation. Assistance has gone to projects in Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Tanzania. Assistance for elections has been provided to Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritania, and Sierra Leone.

On the multilateral front, Japan bears 17 per cent of the total cost of global UN peacekeeping operations and the same proportion in Africa.

Japan announced a new initiative at the TICAD Ministerial Conference on Consolidation of Peace in Africa held in February 2006 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The initiative assists three strategic areas of peace consolidation: security, political governance and transition, and community reconstruction and socio-economic development. The Conference drew more than 400 participants from 73 countries, and Japan pledged US\$60 million in new assistance for peace consolidation in Africa.

