



Japan International
Cooperation Agency



Message from Chief Representative

There's an African proverb that says "When a bird builds its nest, it uses the feathers of other birds". It rings true for us humans too. We need "shelter" to protect our own, but we also need special skills to ensure that such shelter serves its purpose. As Japanese citizen, and working in the development community, I can relate to this proverb. In fact, it brings a smile to my face, knowing that we need each other. For me, JICA's activities are feathers in South Africa's many nests, and JICA's counterparts are birds weaving these nests.

The long-standing and admirable partnership between South Africa and Japan, is the tree securing these nests in its solid branches. JICA aims to complement the South African Government's initiatives, often helping to mobilise ideas into action, kick-starting processes. This could only be done through synergised thoughts and deeds.

The world has become increasingly smaller as people are reaching out and connecting, yet significantly larger given more exposure to opportunities for empowerment. Sadly, not everyone is feeling the impact of change, which defies even the smallest effort of those wishing to leave behind a noble legacy, whether a fellow citizen or a foreigner.

With South Africa aptly being "Alive with Possibilities", and with Japan having much experience on transforming possibilities into opportunities, this dynamic makes for a textbook partnership. Japan heeded South Africa's call for skills transfer as early as 1991 when the first batch of trainees underwent a journey which has today become renowned as "The Japan Experience". Since then, classrooms, boardrooms and wide open spaces have become places from where people from all walks of life, from those clinching deals to those planting seeds, are transformed into change agents.

So, whether our flag has two colours or five, whether we're proficient in one language or 12, whether we use "provinces" or "prefectures", it matters not. We laugh and we cry, and we heal when we're broken. We're resilient; we "overcome". Statistics, as shocking or impressive as they are, fade when dealing with the human spirit, which can be crushed or uplifted in an instant. Therefore, I believe that "the human connection" is the common thread in our global village, and that compassion is the bridge between a challenge and a solution. The more tolerance and perseverance we show, with much enthusiasm and some degree of risk, the greater the results.

Since our office turned the key in 1997, we've had seven chief representatives. Those who came before me, paved the way for what has become a substantial collection of milestones, both individually and collectively. I intend doing justice to this portfolio by identifying areas where JICA could add even more value, with special focus on economic transformation in South and Southern Africa. I am confident that, with your help, my tenure will be a memorable one.

It is my sincerest wish that all of us would comprehend the "job" at hand, namely to work hard and smart, together, whilst embracing and not necessarily overcoming differences. I'm also certain that, when looking at our "Partnership Tree", we'd be seeing beautifully-woven nests, telling remarkable youth-to-maturity stories, nests which withstand all elements.

関 智宏

Tomohiro Seki

Volunteers

For the past 15 years, Japanese nationals have been living and working in rural areas as JICA volunteers tasked with skills transfer and cultural exchange. Volunteers include both Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers aged 20 to 39, and Senior Volunteers aged 40 to 69, with dispatch periods ranging from a few months to two years. Volunteers are passionate about development and fostering lasting friendships. So far, JICA has dispatched 121 volunteers to South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland collectively in fields like Education, Science and Agriculture. This is one of the most unique programmes globally as volunteers are also expected to share their South African experience with their Japanese communities back home.

Training

Training remains one of JICA's largest and most effective programmes. The first batch of South Africans visited Japan in 1991, and ever since, scores more have been empowered and enriched. To date, more than 1,500 South Africans have benefited from this ongoing programme endorsed by National Treasury. JICA offers various types of training in Japan, namely "group training" to address issues of global significance, "region-focused training" to address common issues shared within the same region, "country-focused training" to address country-specific issues, and "young leaders' training" to nurture youth with potential. JICA also offers "third country training" in countries other than Japan or South Africa, those known for their good practices.



Agriculture

JICA is supporting the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to capacitate smallholder farmers in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga through the “Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP)” approach. This approach embodies market-oriented agriculture to ensure that smallholder farmers get better returns from their produce. SHEP farmers have said: “Through a participatory market survey, we can understand what market players really want” and “In the wake of SHEP, we can learn how to conduct a market survey, and we can finally find a new market for beans through a market survey conducted by ourselves”. Government officials said: “We are very pleased about SHEP given its interactive approach, which we encourage”.

Disability

Over one billion people, about 15% of today’s world population, are living with some form of disability. JICA has joined South Africa’s Department of Social Development in promoting initiatives like “Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Disability Mainstreaming” and “Capacity Building of Independent Living Centres through Creating Accessible Environments” in rural areas where poverty is more widespread. Through community-based activities, increasingly more individuals with disabilities are becoming empowered and are developing greater self-esteem. Such individuals are being encouraged to work hand-in-hand with fellows to create an inclusive society at all levels of government. Besides local efforts, JICA is also promoting the adoption of lessons learnt in other Southern African countries.

Economic Infrastructure

JICA, through three Japanese experts, is supporting Southern Africa’s economic infrastructure development. The first expert is hosted by the Southern African Development Community’s Development Finance Resource Centre (SADC-DFRC), based in Gaborone as Development Finance Advisor, assisting with value-chain training of development finance institutions (DFIs). The second expert is hosted by the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), based in Johannesburg and focusing on the Plan for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and NEPAD’s Infrastructure Strategic Business Unit (ISBU). The third expert is hosted by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), based in Johannesburg and functioning as the resident Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Advisor, promoting DBSA’s infrastructure projects.

Education

JICA’s seamless approach to human resource development in South Africa is targeting skills strengthening in Mathematics, Science and Technology from primary to tertiary education. JICA, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, is focusing on the improvement of Mathematics education at foundation level. Flagship initiatives with the Department of Higher Education and Training include the improvement of employability skills, as well as scholarships at Japanese universities and internships at Japanese enterprises under the African Business Education Initiative. The Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Pretoria is harmonising collaboration between South African and Japanese universities, promoting Japan, addressing academic issues, sharing culture, and encouraging the learning of Japanese.

Gender

The evolving role and influence of women in society highlights them as key players in the advancement of the global economy. JICA believes in promoting equal participation in economic activities for sustainable economic growth, and the creation of an enabling environment in which women could exert their capacities. JICA established its gender activities by supporting two alumni of the “Africa-Japan Business Women Exchange Seminar” in Japan. Local sessions for women from both the public and private sector promote Kaizen business principles, which originated in Japan. Moreover, these sessions build leadership and capacities of African women to start up and manage businesses, whilst promoting mutual understanding between African and Japanese women.

Global Environment

JICA is determined to protect the global environment for the survival of mankind and natural life on earth. To reduce negative environmental impacts, JICA is effectively utilizing environmental management systems. Of note, is training of forestry professionals for forest conservation and sustainable management of forest resources in Southern Africa, in partnership with the Southern Africa Development Community. On waste management, JICA, in partnership with the City of Cape Town, was involved in setting up the first-ever pyrolysis plant in South Africa, where plastics are now being recycled into cracked oil to fuel generators and heavy-duty machinery. JICA will keep promoting cooperation activities for the protection and improvement of the environment.



Governance

JICA relies on National Treasury to make informed decisions on maximising multisectoral technical assistance from Japan. As greater emphasis is being placed on service delivery at especially municipal level, it's vital for National Treasury to have a good understanding of Public Finance Management. Hence, JICA is supporting National Treasury in capacitating its own officers, with a JICA Advisor designing and implementing customised training for counterparts from various units. Since inception, more than 20 officers have met with peers in Japan on issues affecting both urban and local governance, industrialisation and infrastructure financing. JICA has roped in local and Japanese academia for research on these issues to add value to training.

Health

With the Department of Health striving for "a long and healthy life for all citizens", JICA is supporting South Africa with Technical Assistance on Health Financing for its National Health Insurance as flagship initiative towards achieving Universal Health Coverage, which will see all citizens, irrespective of demographics, accessing affordable quality healthcare. With Japan having introduced National Health Insurance in 1947, and achieving Universal Health Coverage in 1961, it has much to offer in terms of sharing good practices for potential localisation. JICA will continue exploring opportunities for health systems strengthening in especially districts, and empowering health cadres in improving healthcare delivery in areas such as health promotion and clinical engineering.

Natural Resources and Energy

The South African Government is planning on curbing air pollution caused by emissions from coal-generated thermal power plants to power stations to meet the National Environmental Management Air Quality Act (Act 39, 2004) Minimum Emission Standards. With Japan having experience of severe pollution of dioxide sulphur (SOX) and successfully ending its air pollution, JICA is cooperating with Eskom to introduce environmentally-friendly flue-gas desulfurization technology at the world's fourth-largest coal-fired thermal fire station, Medupi Power Plant, with its operations in Lephalale in Limpopo. JICA is also offering training for government officers tasked to design and implement energy policies and strategies. This training shares Japan's advance technology on high-efficiency thermal power generation.

Private Sector

South Africa's private sector is making a significant contribution to job creation and economic growth. Under its cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry, JICA is supporting the Automotive Industry Development Centre (AIDC) to enhance supplier development. JICA experts have trained AIDC trainers on Japanese-initiated methods on efficiency and continuous improvement, being "5S" and "Kaizen" respectively. Practising these has contributed to increased productivity and competitiveness of eight local suppliers. This cooperation has capacitated suppliers to substantially reduce working time and cost. In another area, JICA is supporting the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) in "Marketing and Community-Based Tourism", which enhances the role and influence of local communities.

Science and Technology

Planet Earth is facing increased threats like global warming, natural disasters and food insecurities, with the impact potentially manageable. JICA is supporting the Department of Science and Technology with the promotion of joint research on such threats. The "Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development" (SATREPS) is supplementing South Africa's ability to handle such threats. One such initiative aims at developing an early warning system on infectious diseases such as malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea through observation of weather patterns. JICA is also supporting the South African Space Agency with enhanced skills on data collection, extracted from Japanese earth observation satellites, and also increased quality of radar and remote sensing.

Water

JICA shares the Department of Water and Sanitation's sentiment in that access to safe water is an undeniable basic human need, and that capacity development on water resources management and water services are essential. This has been achieved through a series of meetings, workshops and conferences, and even counterpart training in Japan. JICA is now supplementing the training capacity on non-revenue water for the Department's Infrastructure Branch Training Centre, specifically focusing on developing its operations structure and strengthening its training management capacity. JICA has extended its hand in being a key player in ensuring that South Africa reaches its developmental goals of providing quality water and infrastructure to its citizens.



Overview

Through the Japanese Government's Official Development Assistance (ODA), JICA is working together with 138 countries across the globe to address their development challenges. JICA's Development Cooperation is guided by Japan's ODA Charter, the triennial Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Process, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.

Honouring its Mission, JICA aims to improve human security and quality growth. Its Vision is "Leading the world with trust", aiming to forge bonds globally, aspiring for a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can explore and develop their potential as architects of their own lives.

JICA's core business is Technical Cooperation, being people and institutional development, with activities including training in Japan and third countries, the dispatch of Japanese nationals as experts and volunteers working with counterparts in host countries, and projects comprising a mix of these.

The JICA South Africa Office, established in 1997 and located in Pretoria, is one of 91 branch offices. JICA's multisectoral initiatives are outlined in this brochure. To date, JICA has contributed more than R3 billion for projects on local soil, has sent over 1,500 South African participants to Japan for training and over 70 South African awardees to Japan for scholarships and internships under the African Business Education (ABE) Initiative, and has dispatched over 450 Japanese experts to South Africa's central and provincial governments, and over 100 Japanese volunteers to South Africa's communities.

Although JICA works with primarily government departments given its bilateral status, it encourages the South African Government to involve the private sector, civil society and the academia for a holistic approach to development challenges. JICA also considers perspectives from regional entities such as the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as development finance institutions (DFIs) such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

Training Participants



1,500

StudyTeam Members



850

Experts



450

JOCV

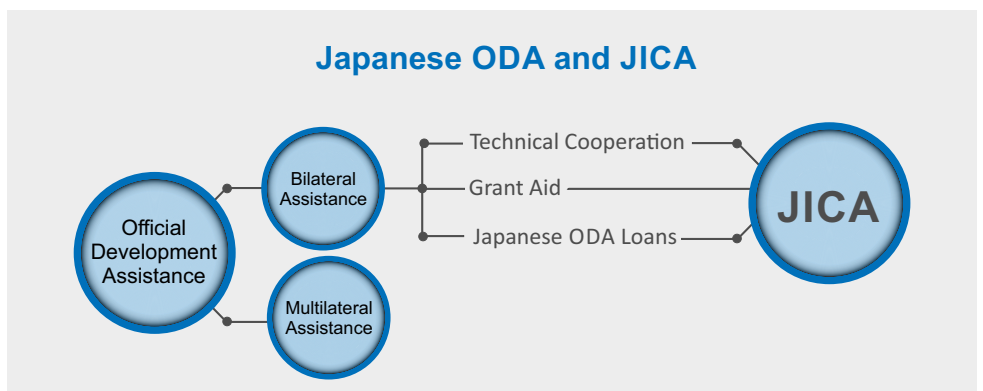


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