

Better Infrastructure Equals Improvement of Livelihood

‘Unless infrastructure exists, commodities won’t be exchanged and the economy will not develop’

After the latest international review of development assistance to Africa, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has resolved to concentrate its assistance on six main areas which range from improving the continent’s infrastructure and trade terms to tackling climate change.

There has been a growing consensus following TICAD IV that building better highways or ports is vital to improving the overall economic performance of a country or region which in turn helps to improve social conditions in such areas as health and education. “Unless infrastructure exists, commodities won’t be exchanged and the economy will not develop,” says Madam Ogata, JICA’s President. This is reflected in JICA’s commitment to enhanced infrastructure targets.

An increase in JICA’s funding towards major infrastructural projects is evident in Kenya. These range from road construction, energy projects and port development.

Figures on JICA’s Operations in Kenya

Type of Aid	Japanese Fiscal Year (April - March)		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Technical Cooperation (Unit: Million Japanese Yen)	2,396	2,191	1,655
JICA’s ODA Loan (Unit: Million Japanese Yen)	4,121	1,692	1,492
JICA’s Grant Aid (Unit: Million Japanese Yen)	-	1,775*	2,078
Training Participants (New) (Unit: Persons)	293	304	401
Experts (New) (Unit: Persons)	105	75	100
JICA’s Volunteers (New) (Unit: Persons)	28	27	71

(Note) JICA’s ODA Loan is based on the amount of disbursement.
 JICA’s Grant Aid is based on the amount of disbursement (*amount of signed Grant Agreement).
 JICA’s Volunteers include Senior Volunteers in addition to JOCV.”
 Currency Conversion Rate as of March 2011
 Ksh 1 = Japanese Yen 1.00720 US Dollar 1 = Japanese Yen 82.87



The New Nyali Bridge in Mombasa was built through Japanese Grant Aid. Area residents appreciate the various benefits of the bridge which include reduced fuel costs and other transportation expenses, shorter travel time, more variety of products offered at the market and better access to schools and hospitals.

Training and the Community: Skills Gained from Japan Trickle to the Grassroot

'Health is intertwined with every aspect of our lives and livelihoods and that's why we must train our communities on handling not only their health but also diverse issues that affect them.'

They Have Been Trained and Now They are Training Others

“Health is intertwined with every aspect of our lives and livelihoods and that's why we must train our communities on handling not only their health but also diverse issues that affect them”, says Ms. Miriam Mwakio, a Community Health Strategy (CHS) coordinator in the larger Taita and a beneficiary of JICA's training in Japan.

Miriam is part of a team that is helping to form community health units and to train Community Health Workers (CHW) in Taita. In Japan, Ms.

Mwakio attended a two-month training course on Rural Community Development by Livelihood Improvement.

After her training, she introduced the Livelihood Improvement Program (LIP) approach into the CHS which, apart from advocating for change in health, also advocates for livelihood improvement initiatives. She therefore trains workers not only on health related matters but also on livelihood improvement projects. This involves stimulating her target group on coming up with income generating activities. Her gospel to them is starting small with whatever is locally and readily available. She says through self-help efforts, most



Ms. Miriam Mwakio guides members of her community to develop their action plan on community nutrition, water and sanitation.