

Around Africa

EGYPT

Supporting Democratization in the Wake of the “Arab Spring”



Two years have passed since the mass democratization movement known as the “Arab Spring” swept through North Africa. As Egypt goes through a transitional phase, people are focusing their energy and ambition on building a new state. In its search for a model of state-building, Egypt has turned its eyes to Asia, where many countries have achieved economic growth and embraced western values without losing touch with their individual cultures and traditions.

Since the change of government in Egypt in February 2011, JICA has provided support in drafting the “National Development Master Plan” (July 2012–June 2022), a roadmap for the creation of a new state. This is the first time in 40 years that Egypt has looked outside its borders for help in creating a development plan

A man casts his vote at an Egyptian polling booth. (Photo by Shin'ichi Kuno)



concerning the nation's core interests. In June 2013, JICA will launch a new technical support project that will help to improve the mechanisms necessary for implementing this plan. JICA will also help to develop the skills of personnel in the Egyptian Ministries of Planning and International Cooperation.

Egypt has also turned to Japan and the Japanese electoral system as it sets its sights on fair and democratic elections. From September 4 to 12, 2012, JICA welcomed to Japan Hatem Bagato, the General Secretary of Egypt's Supreme Presidential Electoral Commission. Secretary Bagato learned about the Japanese election system, participating in JICA informational programs and conversations with relevant stakeholders.

In the past, Egypt has not had a permanent Electoral Commission. Instead, ad hoc committees have been set up and then dissolved after each election. This has made it difficult for the commission to build on its own experience, leading to concerns about efficiency and fairness. As part of Egypt's drive toward a fully democratized society, this system was discontinued and a standing Electoral Commission established through a constitutional amendment passed in fall 2012.

MOROCCO

“South-South Cooperation” for Road Maintenance and Construction



Japan's cooperation in Morocco has centered on the agricultural and fishery industries and marine resources. Assistance in these fields has brought significant results, particularly in terms of human resource development and technology transfers.

Morocco has been a leading participant in “south-south cooperation,” a movement that encourages countries receiving development assistance to provide mutual cooperation in other developing countries at the same time. Morocco has been involved in this kind of cooperation since 1998, primarily by hosting technical trainees.

JICA supports “third-country group training” in Morocco for road maintenance and construction. One such initiative got underway in July 1993, with the establishment of the Institute of Training on Road Maintenance and

Training with machinery from Japan's Komatsu (Photo by Shin'ichi Kuno)



Construction Equipment (IFEER), a project that provides training for the technicians needed for road building and maintenance. The institute was established with grant aid provided by Japan. The establishment of IFEER coincided with the launch of a five-year technical cooperation project aimed at training personnel, as well as technical assistance to set up and operate training courses.

IFEER has provided third-country group training to other French-speaking countries in Africa to assist road maintenance and construction since 1999. The project is currently in its fourth phase (fiscal 2012 to 2014). So far, the project has provided assistance to 10 countries.

The institute has developed into a major center for skills training in road construction and maintenance in Francophone Africa. Over the years, technical cooperation projects funded through Japan's grant aid have turned Morocco into a base for transmitting know-how to other countries with which it shares cultural affinities and a similar level of technical development. The training at the institute makes use of machinery provided by the Japanese firm Komatsu, which also dispatches senior volunteers to Morocco to serve as technical advisors.

JICA and its teams of volunteers and experts provide wide-ranging development assistance in countries throughout Africa. These efforts include support for democratization and nation-building as well as micro-level projects that aim to promote community-based grass-roots development.

MALAWI

Introducing the “One Village, One Product” Movement from Japan

Malawi is one of the first countries in Africa to implement the “One Village, One Product” movement, which was originally pioneered in Oita Prefecture in Japan. The idea behind the concept is that each municipality should have at least one competitive product that is distinctively its own to offer to the market. Since 2003, Malawi has promoted the initiative as part of its official government programs for economic development in cooperation with JICA.

Malawi is a predominantly agricultural country. Its main agricultural products include tobacco, sugarcane, and tea, along with a variety of fruit and vegetables. The country also has a modest fishing industry, centered on Lake Malawi, and dairy farming in the highland regions. In spite of these resources, the country has limited capabilities when it comes to food processing and marketing. It is necessary for Malawi to cultivate the technology and know-how necessary to add value to products and make them marketable.

One of the most popular items to come out of Malawi's “One Village, One Product” initiative is *moringa* powder. Made from the leaves of the highly nutritious *moringa* tree, the powder is said to contain twice as much protein as yogurt, vita-

min C levels seven times the amount of oranges, and four times as much calcium as milk. The powder can be boiled and then applied to the body as a medicine, drunk as tea, or added to food. Another Malawian product is the 100% natural *mapanga* honey, which comes from the nectar of mango flowers in the south of the country.

Another noteworthy example is the growing lineup of products made from the baobab tree. In Malawi, oil extracted from the fruit of the baobab tree is commonly used as a cooking ingredient. In Japan, the vitamin-rich oil is popularly used as a moisturizing ingredient in cosmetics. A sweet-and-sour jam made from the fruit is also popular.

A JOCV* gives her support to peanut oil producers. (Photo by Katsumi Yoshida)

*JOCV: Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer



MOZAMBIQUE

Upgrading the Nacala Port to Boost Imports and Exports

In March 2013, JICA announced that it will provide Mozambique with a loan worth up to ¥7.89 billion to develop the port of Nacala as an import-export hub in the north of the country. The aim is to improve the performance and capacity of the port, and thus contribute to the economic development of the whole country. It is also hoped that the project will stimulate the economy and alleviate poverty in the Nacala Development Corridor, which encompasses parts of Malawi and Zambia as well as the north of Mozambique.

Nacala is an excellent natural harbor, and it is hoped that the port will serve as a gateway to the Nacala Development Corridor. Once the improvements to the port have been completed, economic activity in the corridor should expand rapidly as the amount of cargo handled increases, given the area's rich agricultural potential and the mineral deposits that have been discovered there. According to some forecasts, the volume of goods handled by the port will increase tenfold by 2030. Rehabilitating and upgrading the aging port and increasing its operational efficiency are therefore urgent priorities.

Along with loans to fund these facility upgrades, efforts are moving forward to train the

human resources necessary to ensure that the port functions effectively. The Overseas Coastal Area Development Institute of Japan invited personnel from Mozambique to attend a training course from August 21 to September 1, 2012. The trainees visited cargo-handling facilities at the ports of Yokohama and Oita and learned about how port facilities are maintained and managed in Japan.

Nacala Port (Photo by Mika Tanimoto)



Around Africa

SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

Assisting Postwar Recovery and Development



Following the 2005 peace agreement that finally brought the long civil war in Sudan to an end, the independent Republic of South Sudan came into being in July 2011. JICA resumed assistance to both north and south shortly after the peace agreement was signed, and has since provided a cumulative total of ¥36 billion in assistance.

JICA has provided Sudan with assistance to foster peace-building and support Basic Human Needs (BHN) and agricultural development. JICA has also given assistance to South Sudan to support new nation-building (through improvements to infrastructure and governance), BHN, and food security.

These efforts include initiatives to improve government provision of services in such areas as in-



The lively port of Juba, in South Sudan

frastructure, agriculture, water supply, health, vocational training, and waste management.

JICA is helping the governments (especially the local governments) of both countries to formulate and monitor development plans, helping them to allocate budgetary and other resources and providing grant aid to improve facilities and equipment. Building on this work, JICA is also implementing a number of other projects in conflict-affected areas and assisting peace-building efforts.

As well as providing aid to both countries separately, JICA has also been engaged in cooperation projects to improve ties between North and South Sudan. For instance, in the summer of 2007 JICA carried out an emergency survey on basic infrastructure in the city and suburbs of Juba, and rehabilitated the Juba River Port. At present, strained relations between north and south have brought river trade to a halt, but the port will have an important role to play for both countries once relations improve.

In 2012, grant aid from the Japanese government also funded work on a 200-meter extension of the pier in Juba harbor. Infrastructure like this that links north and south benefits both countries and helps to develop their common interests.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Helping to Build a National Police Force



Japanese economic cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo dates back to the 1970s, when the country was still known as Zaire. Over the decades that followed, Japan extended vital support in building the country's infrastructure, including water supply, health services, and human resource development. Japan also extended its seismic expertise to the country's volcano monitoring projects. Unfortunately, these activities came to a halt in 1991 as a result of civil war. Following the presidential elections in 2006, Japan decided to resume full-scale bilateral assis-

tance to the DRC. Since then, JICA has provided reconstruction support in three main focus areas: human resource development aimed at developing a national police force to secure the peace, infrastructure construction and job training for economic development, and assistance to help develop adequate health services and a safe water supply, as well as improving access to social services.

Supporting training for the Congolese National Police is central to JICA's work in the country. Developing a viable police force is vital for consolidating the peace and is a prerequisite for sustainable economic development. Activities include refresher courses for police officers and long-term basic training for new recruits (including many enlisted from former armed insurgent groups). These programs are operated in partnership with the UN Police (which prepares the curriculum and dispatches instructors) and the UN Development Programme (which has handled logistics since 2009). These programs thus represent good examples of successful collaboration with UN agencies. To date some 18,000 police officers have received training, and the programs have been credited with substantially improving the attitude and morale of police officers.

Police officers in training (Photo by Shin'ichi Kuno)



SENEGAL

Securing Access to Safe Drinking Water

For over 20 years, JICA has been working to improve the rural water supply in Senegal and ensure a supply of safe drinking water to villages. JICA also provides training support to ensure that community members can maintain the water facilities on their own in the future.



One of the villages provided with a water supply system (Photo by Kenshiro Imamura)

In many Senegalese villages, residents traditionally had no choice but to walk long distances to fetch water from wells or rivers. Thanks to JICA's assistance, more than 300,000 people now have access to safe drinking water. As well as liberating women and children from the chore of hauling water, this has improved sanitation in the villages.

One concrete example of this progress can be seen in the village of Taiba Ndiaye. In the past, villagers depended on wells, but a water supply system constructed with JICA assistance now provides clean, safe water directly to households. Liberated from the need to fetch water, women now have time to learn how to read and pursue other activities.

RWANDA

JICA Volunteers Working on the Frontlines

Rwanda has set an ambitious economic goal of lifting per capita income from the 2000 level of US\$220 to US\$900 by 2020. JICA's assistance to Rwanda has four areas of focus: economic infrastructure, agricultural development, social service improvement, and human resource development.

In agricultural development, volunteers are working in Karangazi, three hours by car from Rwanda's capital, to transform local honey production into a profitable business. The aim of the project is to improve the livelihood of local farming communities by forming honey farming (apiculture) cooperatives and marketing the honey under the brand name "Akagera Honey."

The government of Rwanda has set a target of

providing fresh water to all areas of the country by 2017. Through grant aid, technical cooperation, and dispatching volunteers, JICA is providing comprehensive support for efforts to achieve this goal in the Eastern Province, which has the lowest rates of access to safe drinking water in the country.

At present, eight volunteers are working as part of the "Water Security Action Team (W-SAT)." Some members of the team are involved in repairing wells, and are working to establish a system for carrying out regular checks on abandoned wells before they become unusable. In many villages, people use muddy water from nearby rivers as their primary source of domestic water. One volunteer is carrying out a survey on sanitation conditions and in partnership with a local health center is working to eradicate illness among local children due to unsanitary water.

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers are also dispatched to these priority areas. The volunteers work on the frontlines of Japanese ODA and coordinate closely with grant aid assistance and technical cooperation projects.



A youth volunteer shows villagers how to check water containers for purity. (Photo by Kenshiro Imamura)

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JICA

Nibancho Center Bldg
5-25, Niban-cho
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-8012 JAPAN

TELEPHONE:

+81-3-5226-6660

FAX: +81-3-5226-6396

WEB:

www.jica.go.jp/english/

Comments: jicagap-opinion@jica.go.jp

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Photos on pages 2-3 by
Akio Iizuka and Kenshiro
Imamura



The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the world's largest bilateral development organization, operating in some 150 countries to help some of the globe's most vulnerable people.