

· TRENDS ·



United States of America

Discussing Structural Transformation in Africa



In April 2017 in New York City, JICA and the Japanese Mission to the United Nations hosted a conference to discuss how structural transformation could help achieve UN-identified Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. United Nations officials and representatives of diplomatic missions from various countries participated in the conference, which was a follow-up event to the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) held in Kenya in 2016. Participants at that development summit had discussed challenges facing the African economy and how the region should pursue industrialization in the years to come.

At the New York conference, Ambassador Koro Bessho of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN gave the opening remarks, and then Dr. Naohiro Kitano, Director of JICA Research Institute

Panel discussion

(JICA-RI) delivered the keynote speech. Dr. Kitano explained JICA's initiatives to assist in the structural transformation in Africa, including supporting industrial policies to help create a better business environment and providing assistance for science and math education to develop human resources needed for rapidly evolving businesses and industries.

In a panel discussion, the speakers exchanged views on how to achieve structural transformation in Africa and how to evaluate progress. Dr. Akio Hosono, Senior Research Advisor of JICA-RI, emphasized the importance of the learning capacity of a country, soft and hard infrastructure, and the capacity of institutions to achieve a country's structural transformation. The Nobel Laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University suggested that countries should focus more on the well-being of the society, which cannot be measured by GDP.



Mongolia

Tsetsii Wind Farm Project in Mongolia Wins Prize at the IJGlobal Awards 2016



In March 2017, the internationally renowned project finance magazine IJ Global headquartered in the UK held its award ceremony IJGlobal Awards 2016 in Singapore to honor excellent financing projects in the energy and infrastructure fields. Winning in the wind power development project division in the Asia Pacific region was the Tsetsii Wind Farm Project, which is being implemented in Mongolia with private sector investment financing support from JICA.

Tsetsii is the second wind farm project designed to promote the spread of renewable energy in Mongolia, a country that is facing a pressing demand for power. A special-purpose company, Clean Energy Asia LLC (CEA), was established in Mongolia by Mongolian-owned Newcom LLC and SB Energy Corp., a subsidiary of Japan's Softbank Group Corp., to construct and operate a 50-MW

Participants at the IJGlobal Awards Ceremony

wind power station. The wind farm is slated to begin operation in December 2017.

JICA and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) are contributing financing for CEA. This is the first time JICA has made a private-sector investment financing in the renewable energy field. The wind farm is expected to mitigate climate change and contribute to sustainable economic development in Mongolia. The project is consistent with the "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure" being promoted by the Japanese government with due consideration on life cycle costs, environmental and social sustainability.

IJGlobal awards are given annually to projects in 14 sectors including renewable energy resources such as thermal, solar, and wind power and infrastructure development such as airport and road construction. The projects must be of sufficient quality to serve as models for other countries and sectors.



Jamaica

Improving Jamaica's Disaster Emergency Communication System



In April 2017, JICA signed a grant agreement with the government of Jamaica to help the country develop its emergency communication system. The project's goal is to improve the digital radio communication system deployed throughout Jamaica to ensure prompt and stable transmission of information in an emergency. The system will alert relevant agencies and the public in order to reduce the risk of harm during a disaster.

Its position in the Atlantic Ocean hurricane belt makes Jamaica vulnerable to flooding and landslides caused by large-scale hurricanes and tropical rainstorms. Such disasters result in the loss of lives and widespread infrastructure damage. The government of Jamaica has established development goals of alleviating disaster risk and adapting to climate change. To achieve these goals, the

Finance Minister Audley Shaw (second from left) and JICA Resident Representative Kenji Tobita (third from left) at the signing ceremony

government has prioritized strengthening the country's capacity to respond to disasters. However, the existing radio communication system developed to reduce disaster risk is not being fully utilized due to its limited communication capacity and transmission range. As a result, disaster communications are limited primarily to e-mail and mobile telephony. When disasters have struck, the system has faced lags in transmitting warnings and delays in ascertaining and responding to disaster conditions.

The new system is expected not only to facilitate speedy, stable radio communications for disaster prevention, but also to reduce the impact of disasters by improving information exchange and collaboration among responding agencies. By strengthening Jamaica's capacity to respond to disasters, this project also aims to build a nationwide awareness of the potential to save lives and prevent economic damage when a disaster strikes.