

## Press Release

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### **JICA SPONSORS 8 YOUNG GHANAIS TO JAPAN FOR SMEs DEVELOPMENT**

The Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA, has sponsored eight (8) young Ghanaian leaders for a training programme on economic development (Small Medium Enterprises, -SMEs-promotion) in Japan. The programme is under a technical cooperation scheme for African countries with a view of promoting human resource development. The programme will be conducted in JICA Sapporo Centre and Takikawa City in Japan. It will last 18 days.

The aim of the programme is to provide young leaders, who will become nation-building leaders in the future, the opportunities to develop their specialties through experiencing and learning technologies and skills in Japan. This eventually will increase their willingness and capacity to resolve economic issues on their own in more effective and efficient ways and in the end, lead to an improvement in their organizational output.

The Ghanaian participants will be joined by their counterparts from Zambia, Angola, Kenya, Mauritius and Nigeria. In Ghana, JICA is conducting the programme with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

The young Ghanaian leaders were selected from organizations such as the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), Ministry of Trade, Industry, PSI & PSD (MOTI), Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC), JICA Ghana and New Juaben Municipal Assembly, Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development (Eastern Region).

In their submissions, the young leaders expressed their expectations in line with the outlined model schedule for the programme. Issac Oppong (NBSSI), indicated his readiness to learn the collaboration between the Government of Japan and SMEs in Japan. Gladys Quarshie (NBSSI), said, 'I intend to learn the way SMEs utilize local resources in Japan'.

Other participants namely; Enoch Kwakye (MOTI), Aikins Agyepong (NBSSI, Ashanti Region), Stella Panwum (New Juaben Municipal Assembly), Kyeremeh Yeboah (MOTI), Catherine Gordor (GEPC), Nana Adwoa Asiam (JICA Ghana), indicated they would learn the roles Japanese banks and chamber of commerce and industry play in SMEs development, human resource development for SMEs in Japan, current situation of SMEs in Hokkaido, Japan and the development process of SMEs in Japan.

Mr. Kunihiro Yamauchi, Chief Representative, JICA Ghana, in his farewell interaction, advised the young leaders to ensure that they learn practical lessons that could be replicated to develop SMEs in Ghana. He admonished them to learn about Japanese culture as part of their orientation.

The participants are expected back in Accra by 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.

JICA Ghana supports human resource development, capacity building, policy and institutional improvement, and provision of social and economic infrastructure, thereby pursuing sustained poverty reduction through equitable growth. It serves as a bridge to advance international cooperation through sharing of knowledge and experience and working to build a more peaceful and prosperous world.