

Impactful JICA's endeavours to Tanzania after independence

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The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is an agency, which implements Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries in more than 150 countries and with some 90 overseas offices. JICA is the world's largest bilateral aid agency.

In line with its vision of "Leading the world with trust", JICA supports the self-help initiatives of the partner countries in order to enhance the livelihoods of the people of those countries. As Tanzania gears up to mark its 60th independence anniversary of Tanganyika on December 9, 2021, JICA is proud to have been one of the contributors to the country's development.

JICA's activities in the country have covered many sectors including agriculture, industry, infrastructure (transport and energy), governance, health, water supply, etc.

The following paragraphs explain, albeit briefly, some of the activities that JICA has implemented in Tanzania since the country's independence.

Training

Commencing with a humble beginning of its activities, 59 years ago in 1962, just one year after Tanganyika's independence, by accepting a single Tanzanian for technical training in Japan, JICA activities in the country continued to grow and expand over the years, and now include not only technical cooperation but also the provision of grant aid and concessional loans to support various development projects in the country.

The Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP) is the major one among JICA training activities, which provides training opportunities in Japan and epitomizes horizontal learning between Japan and developing countries. So far, more than 6,500 Tanzanians (some of whom later became high-ranking officials in the Government) have participated in the JICA training programs. The program is divided into several courses such as group training participated by several countries jointly, or country specific training designed for a particular country. KCCP is implemented in collaboration with Japan's Ministries, Universities, Private Companies, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

In 2013, JICA introduced a special Master's Degree and Internship program called the Africa Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE Initiative) whereby 90 young Tanzanian trainees have already been dispatched to Japan to participate in this program.

While such various training programs have been implemented, two associations for JICA Alumni (i.e. ex-participants of JICA trainings) were established in Tanzania, namely



A pupil washes her hands as mechanism to protect herself from Covid-19.

JICA Alumni Association of Tanzania (JATA) in 1984 for all Alumni, and KAKEHASHI Tanzania in 2019 specifically for ABE participants. The two have been playing major role of mutual learning among Alumni even after JICA trainings and linking Tanzanian and Japanese people for the benefits of the two sides. As Tanzania celebrates its 60 years of independence of Tanganyika, JICA pledges to continue providing technical cooperation through various training programs.

Infrastructure

JICA has been supporting Tanzania to resolve transport challenges for over 40 years now through different projects. The projects include construction of Selander Bridge in 1980, rehabilitation of roads around Kariakoo in 1990s, construction of Kawa and Kilwa roads, improvement of Ali Hassan Mwinyi road, upgrading of Arusha-Namanga-Athi River Road, construction of Dodoma-Babati road, upgrading of Bonga-Mayamaya, Dodoma-Iringa, Masasi-Mangaka, and Dodoma-Babati roads, widening of New Bagamoyo Road, improvement of Tazara Intersection (Mfugale Flyover), construction of Rusumo International Bridge on the Tanzania-Rwanda border, and One Stop Border Post Facilities at Namanga on the Tanzania-Kenya border. The upgrading of Gerezani Bridge in Dar es Salaam is ongoing.

JICA's support has not only been limited to physical works, but has also covered various aspects such as capacity building on Labour Based Technology, development of Maintenance System for rural roads, development of Dar es Salaam Urban Transport Master Plan, the Improvement of Dar

es Salaam Transport, and provision of advisory services to the East African Community Secretariat on regional infrastructure.

The projects have saved travel times and transportation costs with safety and reduction of accidents as well as improving social and economic activities.

JICA promotes quality infrastructure in accordance, and its projects provide employment to locals while enhancing their skills and technology capacities. JICA vows to continue supporting Tanzania in promoting the social and economic development to the people.

Health and Handwashing

JICA supports the health sector through various programs including capacity building for Regional Referral Hospitals, and Handwashing programs.

As for handwashing, JICA has distributed over 300 banners to primary schools in three districts of Dar es Salaam (Ilala, Temeke and Kinondoni). The banners show the proper ways and importance of handwashing to school kids. It has also printed over 12,000 copies of 'manga' cartoon posters and distributed them to areas around JICA projects and public offices across the country.

In addition, JICA recently collaborated with an NGO Environment Conservation Community of Tanzania (ECCT) to run a project on improving sanitation and hygiene through handwashing in Kisarawe District.

The aim of the handwashing programs is to prevent the school kids from contracting COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. More than 6,000 school kids from 12 schools and

teachers were reached. With this in mind, JICA would like to appeal to the school kids with our slogan: "Let's get rid of diseases by washing our hands regularly," means "Tokomeza magonjwa kwa kunawa mikono mara kwa mara" in Swahili language.

Conclusion

Truth be told, JICA cares much about Tanzania and its people and the country has a restful welcoming attitude.

JICA also conducts volunteer program, namely, 'Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV)' that aims at providing technical assistance in developing countries. The first volunteer was dispatched to Tanzania in 1967. Working with counterparts in the local organization in which they are dispatched, the Volunteers provide expertise help on agriculture, forestry, fishery, civil engineering, architecture, manufacturing, maintenance, health, education, tourism, and sports to mention a few.

So far, a total of 1,700 Volunteers

have been dispatched in Tanzania since then, and 60 volunteers were forced to return to Japan last year before completing their assignment periods due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, as the country is blessed with huge fertile land and natural resources, JICA supports Tanzania in the agricultural and industrial sectors that are the major economic drivers.

In agriculture, JICA has been supporting rice farmers since 1974, when the Kilimanjaro Agricultural Development Project (KADP), which was followed by the Lower Moshi Irrigation Scheme development by ODA Loan, and later the Kilimanjaro Agricultural Training Center (KATC) supported by both Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation. More than 15,000 farmers have been trained and adopted improved rice cultivation technologies through Rice Industry Development Project (TANRICE2).

JICA also implements the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion Project (SHEP), an approach that realizes "Market Oriented Agriculture" and converts farmers' mindset from "Grow and sell" to "Grow to sell". Working with the government, the program has reached 56 farmers' groups in Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Tanga Regions, changing their traditional ways of producing and selling.

In addition to supporting the above sectors, JICA also helps the country to achieve its dream of becoming a semi-industrialized country by 2025 through the 'Project on Strengthening Manufacturing Enterprises through Quality and Productivity Improvement (KAIZEN)' in the industrial sector. Through this project, productivity improved significantly in the more than 100 Tanzanian companies that have embraced the "KAIZEN" philosophy with some doubling daily production and others reducing the defective rate by about 70%.

(Note: KAIZEN is originally a Japanese word meaning "improvement" and is now used worldwide as a concept for productivity improvement, quality assurance, and safety in the working environment through a participatory problem-solving process conducted by a work unit via 'teamwork'.)

As Tanzania braces up to celebrate its 60th independence anniversary of Tanganyika, JICA, as always, continues supporting the development of this country in various ways for the mutual benefit of the Tanzanian and the Japanese people.



Mfugale flyover built at the intersection of Nyerere and Mandela roads, Tazara area, in Dar es Salaam.