

Presentation by Mr. Jiro Usui
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At the Asia-Pacific Development Cooperation Forum
“Lessons learned from TICAD IV”
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Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to be granted this opportunity to make a presentation on behalf of the Government of Japan on this special occasion.

Today, “South-South and Triangular Development Cooperation” is widely recognized as an essential means of international development cooperation. Based on its own experience of having joined the ranks of donor countries half a century ago while still receiving development assistance itself, Japan recognizes the value of South-South Cooperation, and that is exactly why Japan assisted in organizing this regional workshop for the Development Cooperation Forum.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you Japan’s experience and lessons on this matter.

1. Japan’s ODA

In 1954, Japan made a decision to participate in the Colombo Plan, which was a turning point that led to the start of technical assistance such as acceptance of trainees and dispatch of experts.

At that time, Japan was still in the process of postwar reconstruction and was receiving financial assistance from overseas, including the World Bank loans in order to develop important infrastructure, such as the bullet train, which has become a basis for Japan’s subsequent economic development. When Japan started to provide assistance to others as a donor, it did so with the financial support from other donors for implementing aid. The situation was not different from what we call South-South Cooperation today. It was not until 1990 when Japan paid off its loan from the World Bank.

2. Advantages of South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Japan has recognized the effectiveness of South-South Cooperation for a long time through its own experiences and has vigorously supported this form of cooperation. Japan's "Official Development Assistance Charter", a document which sets forth the basic policy principles of Japan's ODA, also stipulates that Japan will actively promote South-South Cooperation.

In addition to the common development effect, South-South Cooperation can lead to the enhancement of capabilities and capacities of developing countries that provide aid, as they learn through supporting and guiding others countries.

Further more, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, it is necessary to mobilize every possible resource from all over the world and South-South Cooperation can make an important contribution to this global effort. Giving potential donors opportunities to provide aid and understand the challenges involved is beneficial to future development of the developing world.

3. South-South Cooperation in the context of TICAD

Now let me turn to South-South Cooperation in the context of African growth. Japan has been supporting African growth by engaging Asian development partners and applying the Asian development experiences to African countries. This is clearly reflected in the TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) process, which has served as a bridge between Africa and Japan and Asia as a whole, and as a Forum through which the Asian development experiences can be shared with Africa. TICAD IV, which took place this May, reconfirmed the importance of partnership among the international society as a whole including South-South Cooperation.

Yokohama Declaration, which was adopted at TICAD IV, acknowledged the importance of enhanced South-South Cooperation within the context of the TICAD process as well as the positive results of efforts to promote trade and investment flows between Asia and Africa as well as encourage intra-Africa trade.

Yokohama Action Plan, a road map based on Yokohama Declaration, particularly encourages South-South Cooperation including triangular cooperation for agricultural assistance. In addition, the Action Plan lays out specific measures as a way to promote Asia-Africa Cooperation, such as

- Effectively transferring skill and technique, sharing knowledge and experience, and

- promoting joint research within Africa and between Asia and Africa, and
- Promoting the exchange of people, trade and investment and services between Asia and Africa.

In this regard, what is worth mentioning here is that as Vietnam and Malaysia sent the Ministerial level official to the Conference, Asian countries engaged in TICAD IV at high political level. Moreover, Appendix of Yokoyama Action Plan, which lists specific actions to be taken by each country over the next 5 years, includes active cooperation to be provided by Asian countries. For example, Thailand and Vietnam would extend cooperation in the field of education and health including through high-level exchange and training. TICA (Thai International Development Cooperation Agency) also expressed its support to potential African countries for training in gem cutting and for capacity development in fishery and agricultural sector.

Japan on its part also actively facilitate South-South Cooperation by supporting development of small and medium enterprises, improvement in agricultural productivity, and facilitation of joint research activities among Asian and African research institutions and universities through network building. Ensuring follow-ups on such broad cooperation would be Japan's responsibility in the future.

Japan has worked on South-South Cooperation in various ways, and today I would like to introduce two good examples of Asian-African cooperation, namely, cooperation between Madagascar and Indonesia in improving rice production and cooperation between Zambia and Malaysia in infrastructure development for investment.

In Madagascar, enhancing rice productivity has been an important issue for the country. In 2000, Japan dispatched Indonesian experts to Madagascar to address the issue, who transferred agricultural technologies through introducing inexpensive agricultural equipment for cultivating and harvesting, calculating the appropriate amount of seeds required to enhance rice productivity, and spreading the use of compost. This cooperation succeeded very well, and in response to the positive evaluation received on the ground, additional experts on soil and livestock were dispatched in 2006.

Turning to Zambia, Zambia is growing at a rate higher than the African average thanks to the recent rise in international price of copper. For stable growth in the future, however, it is necessary to develop diversified industries and not to depend on copper. For that purpose, Japan dispatched Former Deputy Minister of Industry Development of Malaysia to Zambia as advisor to improve investment environment.

4. Japan's support for South-South Cooperation: Way forward

Japan hopes that such good practices of Asian-African cooperation would increase in the follow-up process of TICAD IV.

In addition to Asian-African cooperation, Japan attaches importance to diversifying our cooperative relationship with countries that have developed enough to graduate from ODA as well as middle-income countries. In order to foster effective partnership with these countries in supporting developing countries, Japan intends to facilitate dialogue over aid policies and support strengthening of implementing capacities.

Improvement of aid effectiveness is also important. In the process of triangular cooperation involving emerging donors as partners, Japan would like to strive for the better development outcomes by improving transparency of aid, debt sustainability, consideration of environment, social conditions, human rights and governance, in collaboration with such emerging donors. I would like to recall that the Accra High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Ghana this September encouraged all development actors to use the Paris Declaration principles in such cooperation.

In this regard, Japan believes that it is necessary to incorporate views of emerging donors in building aid frameworks and norms, so that such donors can engage in assistance by applying their characteristics. It is also important to promote South-South Cooperation at community level towards enhanced human security, for which cooperation with civil society such as NGOs is necessary.

5. Closing

South-South Cooperation and development cooperation by emerging donors will be one of the important agenda of the "Follow-up meeting of the International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus" to be held in Doha in November. Japan hopes that traditional and emerging donors cooperate with each other to build a partnership for better development outcome and in this context wishes to work in close collaboration with Asian countries that are preceding Africa in achieving MDGs.

Thank you.

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