

Africa NOW #121

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pp. 2-15 **Special Topic: TICAD 8: No presence of the civil society**

On 27-28 August 2022, the 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) was held in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, for the second time in Africa. Unlike TICAD in the past, TICAD 8 did not provide opportunities for civil society participation. Furthermore, the number of heads of state-level attendees at TICAD 8 has decreased sharply to 20 from 42 in TICAD 7, which was held in Yokohama in 2019. Almost 30 years after the first TICAD was held in Tokyo in 1993, its *raison d'être* (reason of being) is being questioned. In light of this situation, this issue of Africa NOW has a special feature titled 'TICAD 8: No presence of the civil society'.

pp .3-4 **TICAD 8 report from a press correspondent by Kikuchi Taisuke**

Kikuchi Taisuke, Kyodo News Nairobi bureau chief, covered TICAD 8 in Tunis. He has reported on the situation of TICAD 8, which failed to raise the interest of African governments and businesses in the region. He also calls to the Japanese people to maintain their interest in Africa, even if diplomatic relations between Japan and Africa have weakened.

pp.5-8 **TICAD 8 and civil society: only the unwelcomed see the truth by Inaba Masaki**

Inaba Masaki, AJF's Co-Chair and Program Director for Global Health, has reviewed the 30 years' history of TICAD and raised the question of how civil society has been involved in TICAD. He also has analysed the challenges posed to the Japanese government in TICAD 8: (1) the failure to invite civil society organisations and international organisations that had previously participated in TICAD, (2) the Japanese government's pledge to invest a total of USD 30 billion in Africa over three years, both public and private, ignores the reality of Japan's ODA and private investment in Africa, and (3) Japanese government's inappropriate handling of the issue of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic's (SADR) participation in TICAD 8.

pp .9-11 **The question of Western Sahara's participation in TICAD 8 by Matsuno Akihisa**

Matsuno Akihisa, Secretary of Friends of Western Sahara, which supports the right of Western Sahara to self-determination, has criticised the Japanese government's policy of excluding the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) from TICAD, contrary to the principle of participation of all members of the African Union (AU). The SADR's delegation was able to participate in TICAD 8 through a decision of the AU, but again the Japanese government tried to prevent the SADR from participating in TICAD by aligning itself with the Moroccan government. He examines these policies of the Japanese Government empirically and critically through statements by the Japanese Foreign Minister.

pp .12-13 **Is Community there? A proposal to better Japan's Development Assistance for Health in Africa by Koizumi Takakiyo**

AJF, in collaboration with African civil society organisations, conducted a survey from April to July 2022 on how much Japanese ODA in the health sector has reached out to local organisations working at the grassroots level. The results of this research were then used to develop a side event for TICAD 8, 'Is Community there? A proposal to better Japan's Development Assistance for Health in Africa', which was held online on 23 August 2022. Koizumi Takakiyo, AJF's Global Health Project Coordinator, has reported on the survey and the event.

pp .14-15 **Improving accessibility in Africa by Furihata Hiroaki**

'Improving accessibility in Africa', a side event of TICAD 8, organised by the Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI-Japan) on the challenges and efforts to improve access for people with disabilities in Africa, was held online on 28 September 2022. In response to comments made at the event by the African Disability Forum and persons with disabilities from Japan, Zambia and South Africa, Furihata Hiroaki, Board Member (International Programs) of DPI-Japan, has pointed out that (1) access improvement is weak in Africa as a whole due to competing policies,(2) in Zambia and South Africa, measures for access improvement are being taken, making a positive effect, and (3) in all countries, the participation of persons with disabilities in these measures is going on.

pp. 16-19 **Interview with El Hadji Massamba DIOUF: The Baobab Association, a bridge between Japan and Senegal**

Interview with El Hadji Massamba DIOUF, head of the Baobab Association, which has been helping to improve the educational environment for children in Senegal. DIOUF, born in Senegal, came to Japan in 1989. He set up the Baobab Association, and has introduced African and Senegalese culture and lifestyle to Japan, as well as supporting Senegalese children. The Baobab Association has supported 20 schools in Senegal including primary, secondary, nursery, deaf and Islamic ones for 23 years, but is expected to close this year. DIOUF is talking about how he started the Baobab Association, the message he has been passing on to Senegalese children and his thoughts on living in Japan.

pp. 20-21 **Hair and wellness by Aisha NajiNde**

This is the 14th installment in a series of 'Essay Relay - African Kids Club'. Aisha NajiNde, born to a Ghanaian father and Japanese mother, launched her digital magazine "TONEZ" in December 2021 to show the depth and fascination of Black hair, which is still unfamiliar in Japan. She links hair and wellness and describes the importance of hair and hair care for black people, as well as African and African American cultures.

pp. 22-23 **From the 'International health and COVID-19' blog post by Inaba Masaki**

Copy from the blog post on 'International Health and COVID-19' on the AJF's website. Inaba Masaki, AJF's Co-Chair and Program Director for Global Health, provides updates on COVID-19 and related global health issues.

pp. 22-23 **ACT Accelerator External Evaluation Report: Stronger coordination and cooperation at all levels**

The ACT Accelerator (Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator), which was responsible for the development and supply of vaccines and health systems for COVID-19, published a research report on its activities in October 2020, which was entrusted to an external organisation by the ACT Accelerator. While the report puts a high valuation on the role played by the ACT Accelerator, it points to external factors that negatively affected the role of the ACT Accelerator, such as the lack of vaccine production capacity in many developing countries that needed vaccines and the rush by high-income countries to buy up vaccines.

Back cover **Afterword ('Hitotsu no musubime to shite' in Japanese) and a record of AJF's activities**