

Africa NOW #127

Issued in February 2025, by Africa Japan Forum (AJF)

«Contents»

pp. 2-15 Special Topic: **Civil society initiatives towards TICAD 9, 2025**

The 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) will be held in Yokohama in August 2025. In August 2024, the TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in preparation for the TICAD 9, with the participation of delegations from 47 African countries, the Civic Commission for Africa (CCfA) from the African civil societies, and the JAPAN NGO Liaison Group for TICAD from the Japanese civil society. Since the Tokyo Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, the Africa Japan Forum (AJF) has consistently worked to link the civil societies in Japan and in Africa to the TICAD and currently serves as the secretariat of the JAPAN NGO Liaison Group for TICAD. However, civil societies were not allowed to participate in the TICAD 8, which took place in August 2022 in the Tunisian capital, Tunis. This issue of “Africa NOW” presents a special feature titled ‘Civil society initiatives towards TICAD 9, 2025’, focusing on strengthening civil society’s participation in the TICAD 9.

pp. 3-9 **Round table discussion: TICAD Ministerial Meeting towards TICAD 9 Reviewed by Inaba Masaki, Takahashi Kaoru, Mera Akiko, Tamai Takashi**

This article reports the content of the round table discussion to review the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in August 2024 and to wrap up issues for the TICAD 9, scheduled to be held in Yokohama in August 2025. In this roundtable discussion, Tamai Takashi (co-chair of the AJF) served as facilitator, and three speakers who are in charge of operations in the JAPAN NGO Liaison Group for TICAD - Inaba Masaki (co-chair of the AJF), Takahashi Kaoru (executive director of the Water Aid Japan) and Mera Akiko (executive director of the Médecins du Monde), - expressed their opinions. They discussed the invitation of African civil society members to the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, the evaluation of the TICAD Ministerial plenary session and the thematic events, the participation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara), the response of Japanese civil society organizations, and the issues to consider for the TICAD 9 initiative.

pp. 10-11 **Civil Society positions and initiatives for TICAD by Maungo Mooki**

Speech by Maungo Mooki (char of the CCfA) at the TICAD Ministerial Thematic Event ‘Overcoming Complex Crises, Towards a 2030 Year of Hope’ on ‘Civil society positions and initiatives towards TICAD’. Mooki pointed out that although there are only six years to go until the 2030 deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the current situation of the world is far from achieving them. Maungo raises requests to the Japanese Government, the TICAD co-organizers and the African governments to achieve the SDGs

pp. 12-15 **What is ECOSOCC, an AU advisory organ for civil society by Tonegawa Yoshiko**

Tonegawa Yoshiko, who has researched the education sector and NGOs in Ethiopia and other African countries, examines the role, possibilities and limits of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), which comprises civil societies in the African Union (AU) member states. One of the AU’s advisory bodies, the ECOSOCC, was established in July 2004 aiming to build strong partnerships between governments and African civil societies. Its role of has also been highlighted in the AU’s ‘Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want’, a set of integration goals for Africa to be achieved over the next 50 years. On the other hand, the limited number of NGOs participating in the ECOSOCC and the lack of budgetary and human resources have led to the criticism that the interests of national governments currently take precedence over the links with the civil society that ECOSOCC is expected to establish.

p. 16 Updated information on Mpox in Africa by Inaba Masaki

In Africa, Mpox spread rapidly in 2024, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and in August 2024, the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (African CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared respectively the ‘Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)’. Based on information from the WHO report “Global Trends”, Inaba Masaki, co-chair and program director for global health of the AJF, reported that highly contagious and symptomatic Mpox type infections (Clade 1a and Clade 1b) are spreading in Africa, with a total of 18,154 infections confirmed and 64 deaths in 2024, according to the report. Inaba also notes that the ‘Mpox Continental Preparedness and Response Plan for Africa’ is being implemented over a six-month period from September 2024 to February 2025, dividing the African continent into four categories, with approximately USD 600 million needed to fund vaccines over this period.

p. 17 Overview of Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries in Africa, 2024 by Shiratori Kiyoshi

This is the fourth installment of ‘The World Seen through Food’. In this issue, Shiratori Kiyoshi, a board member of the AJF and a member of the study group on reading FAO reports, summarizes the outlook for African Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDCs) in 2024, based on the FAO’s “Crop Prospects and Food Situation” published in 2024. Grain production in the LIFDC countries in 2024 is projected to be 109.2 million tons, slightly above the average of the previous five years, but with significant regional differences. By late October 2024, 33 countries needed external food aid, especially Sudan (21.1 million), Ethiopia (15.8 million), and South Sudan (7.1 million). Food shortages are exacerbated by the large number of refugees from the conflict in Sudan, widespread drought in southern Africa and flooding in Chad, Niger, Nigeria and elsewhere, and rising food prices due to currency devaluations and other factors.

p. 18 Book Review: Tateyama Meiko, Hanai Kazuyo, Yagi Akiko (2024) *Dr Mukwege, the struggle for peace: ‘The world’s worst place for women’ and us* by Ohira Wakiko

Ohira Wakiko’s book review of Tateyama Meiko, Hanai Kazuyo, Yagi Akiko (2024) *Dr Mukwege, The struggle for peace: ‘The world’s worst place for women’ and us* (*Mukwege Isbi, Heiwa eno Tatakai: ‘Josei ni totte Sekkai Saiaku no Basbo to Watashitachi* in Japanese). The reviewer, Ohira, introduces the book after mentioning how Dr Mukwege, who has been fighting against sexual violence in the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018, became known in Japan. Chapters 1 and 2 of the book describe the author’s encounters with female victims of sexual violence at the Panzi Hospital, founded by Dr Mukwege, and Dr Mukwege’s work. Chapter 3 looks at the historical background to the conflict in eastern Congo, Chapter 4 discusses why sexual violence in the conflict has not ended, and Chapter 5 looks at the links between the conflict in eastern Congo and us living in Japan. Chapter 6 goes on to list specific things that the readers can do once they are aware of the problems in Congo.

p. 19 In memory of Fukao Kouji by Tamai Takashi, Mozumi Mamoru

A memorial to the former board member of the AJF Fukao Kouji, who passed away on October 6, 2024. Fukao lived in Kaduna, a city in northern Nigeria, from 1980 to 1983 as vice president of Arewa Textiles Ltd., an African printing company. Tamai Takashi, co-chair of AJF, who has been conducting research in Nigeria since 2011, heard Fukao’s story about his time in Nigeria and thought, ‘It’s hard to imagine what he told me given the current situation in Nigeria,’ and asked, ‘Why is Nigeria the way it is now?’ Tamai says our challenge is to reflect on this question. In addition, Mozumi Mamoru, a board member of the AJF, presents four books written by Fukao that reflect his life and experiences in Africa and other parts of the world, as well as the activities of the NGO SESCO, and articles published in “Africa NOW”.

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