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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Japan's National Economic Identity and African Development: What can Africa learn from Japan's development experiences? 1-12

By Howard P. Lehman

This article traces the history of the Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD) process since its inception in 1993 up to the latest TICAD IV which was held in Tokyo from 28-30 May 2008. Howard Lehman provide a critical analysis of the Japanese development strategy

TICAD Process: What is in it for Africa? 12-14

By Aulline H. Mabika

Editorial: The elusive quest for Africa's development: Will Japan deliver? 14-16

By Rangarirai Machedze

Next Issue will Focus on the Global Food Crisis

JAPAN'S NATIONAL ECONOMIC IDENTITY AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT: WHAT CAN AFRICA LEARN FROM JAPAN'S DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES?

Japan has emerged in recent years as a leading donor country with African countries. At one level, Japan's renewed assertiveness in providing foreign aid to Africa is on par with the more active approach by other donor countries. It might appear to some that Japan's motivations to lend capital and technical assistance to African countries are shared by all lending countries. However, I argue that Japan's Official Development Policy and, in particular, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process, seeks to break away from the acceptance of the Washington Consensus and to demonstrate its particular leadership position in the donor community. As one well regarded Japanese economist claimed recently, Japan has been "walking the splendid path of isolation."

Rather than to focus on domestic bureaucratic politics to explain Japanese ODA or on the specific targets of foreign aid, my analysis seeks to identify the basic features of Japanese national identity that explain its

aid policy to Africa. These features will be highlighted through an analysis of the TICAD process. Japan now has had nearly fifteen years of organizing global conferences on African development, scheduled for every five years in 1993, 1998, 2003 and the fourth one in May 2008. Given that Japan only provides about ten percent of its ODA funds to Africa (which the country announced at the 4th Conference that it will double in the next 5 years) and given the severe economic pressures with which the country was burdened for much of this period, the reasons for organizing these major development conferences are not self-evident. In fact, most studies only mention TICAD in passing, as it relates to other development issues. Despite the budgetary constraints and cutbacks in Japan's ODA in the last several years, Japan has remained consistent in scheduling these conferences. Rather than turn its attention away from Africa during this economic slump, Japan has moved forward with its aid policies toward Africa.

Japan's National Economic Identity: historical lessons

One underlying theme in Japanese foreign aid is its history towards economic development both within Japan and towards Asia. Some observers point to the 1868 Meiji Restoration and the experiences of post-WWII development as lessons for successful economic strategies. In both cases, the push for growth derived from importation of foreign technology, high productivity, low consumption, and a dualistic structure of the economy. The initial principle of Japanese economic growth at that time was production-oriented policies that led to rapid economic growth. The government at that time focused on basic industries, then the modernization of those industries, followed by the establishment of new industries, which led eventually to export promotion policies.

East Asian Experience

One of the more important aspects underlining Japan's ODA policy is its relationship to the "Asian economic model." Former Prime Minister Koizumi said in a speech at the 2005 G8 summit that "Asia's post-war experiences in economic development are valuable assets for us in assisting African development." He went on to argue that "in view of Asian experiences, the key to African economic development is to foster the private sector through the promotion of trade and investment."

The East Asian economic miracle was a powerful force in linking African and Asian societies. According to Japanese economists, "a key lesson from East Asia is that if aid is to be effective in the long run, it would have to lead to private capital formation, both domestic and foreign." Moreover, the East Asian experience has affected Japan's approach to development and aid in Africa. In particular, the main characteristics of Japan's ODA facilitate self-help and partnership through industrialization and trade. Experience has shown that Japan puts a high priority on economic infrastructure development with a heavy emphasis on loans.

As one Japanese economist noted in regards to Japanese policy to Ghana, "based on its own and

East Asian catch-up experiences, Japan considers it essential to address the structural problems of the Ghanaian economy and support its economic growth and attainment of self-reliant and sustainable economic development." Given its success in East Asia and its own economic history, Japan has increasingly shown assertiveness in the donor community. The organization and commitment to the TICAD process has been one important and visible affirmation of Japan's self-identity as a leading donor country.

Compared with the neoclassical orthodoxy that stresses macroeconomic stability and free markets, the emerging Japanese view is distinct in its primary pursuit of long-term real targets, acceptance of different economic policies for different conditions of development, and emphasis on the active role of government as an initiator of change. Japan has tried to carve out its own separate path of ODA policy. Two historic actors make Japan's aid and development vision so distinctive from those of other donors. Japan is the only non-Western country with a history of successful industrialization and its post-war decision to abandon military forces implies that ODA plays a special role in Japanese diplomacy. Japanese officials moreover have at times distanced themselves from the dominant policy prescriptions embedded in the Washington Consensus. The Washington Consensus has been widely criticized in Japan as being ineffective and unfair in its application to African countries. The typical structural adjustment program may be most effective in middle-income economies, but it is less effective in low income economies with underdeveloped markets. An influential Japanese economist has suggested that in such economies there is a need to build appropriate institutions. These country-specific institutions should be based on a "proper understanding of cultural values and social norms."

In this departure from the Washington Consensus framework, government officials in Japan also advanced poverty reduction, not as an immediate objective of development assistance, but as a consequence of economic growth. As Yujiro Hayami has noted, "If poverty reduction is considered an overarching objective, non-market instruments may have to be used to redistribute market produced income in favour of the poor." What this entails for Japanese aid agencies is a justification

of a “new paradigm which emphasized strengthening the voice and power of poor people (empowerment) and maximizing the initiative of aid-recipient communities (ownership) in the design of development assistance.” Japan’s ODA White Paper for 2005 asserts that poverty reduction should be carried out through economic growth. It highlights the experience of East Asia where development was based on economic growth which ultimately contributed to poverty reduction. Koizumi took the lead in this discussion in 2005 when he declared in a speech that “the Japanese government has been leading international discussion on African development by advocating the importance of ownership of Africa and partnership with the international community.”

My argument builds on the research conducted by a number of Japanese scholars who interpret Japanese foreign aid policy as providing a useful and important alternative to that of the World Bank. Japan’s ODA policies have reflected its emphasis on self-help. The basic position of self-help is meant to separate Japan’s policies from the west. By shifting responsibility to the recipient, self-help is meant to allow for more autonomous decision making on the part of the receiving country. But more importantly, as Akira and Yasutami have written, “in contrast to the traditional Western view that aid is an obligation that those who are fortunate owe to those who are not, the Japanese concept is that aid means helping those who help themselves.”

This paper draws from the view that Japan’s ODA strategy seeks to create an alternative to the dominant World Bank/Washington Consensus arguments. In particular, the paper explores the evolution of the TICAD process with close attention paid to the three conferences by asking the following question. In what way does the TICAD agenda attempt to position Japan’s ODA strategy and policy as separate and unique from the Western ODA efforts? The conferences often have been discussed in the context of the Asian model of development. To what extent has this model been raised by the TICAD process? This article seeks to explain and understand this question by examining the evolution of Japan’s ODA policy towards Africa and the history of the TICAD process covering the three TICAD meetings.

TICAD I

With a formal statement in place to facilitate policy dialogue with other donors and with recipient countries, Japan turned its attention to Africa. In 1992, Japan called for an international conference involving the donor community, African governments, and non-governmental organizations. While previous aid conferences typically involved the donor community speaking among themselves or a summit held by an OECD country (such as England or France) with participation by former colonies, Japan intentionally sought a broad and inclusive conference format. Japan asked the United Nations and a non-governmental organization (the Global Coalition for Africa) to serve as co-sponsors. One analyst suggested that by enlisting the involvement of these agencies, the “TICAD initiative was not a unilateral act, but that it was essentially consistent with the priorities of the entire UN system of organizations.” Moreover, it was held in Tokyo in order to raise public awareness of African issues. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) official in charge of the first TICAD, Japan’s motivation to organize this conference was threefold.

Japan clearly saw the humanitarian needs in Africa and given Japan’s economic wealth, it could create a positive aid environment. Second, Japan desired to be treated as a major global power by both other powerful countries as well as by the majority of countries in the world. As a latecomer in providing aid to Africa, Japan needed Africa as a means to inject itself as a leading donor country. Third, as part of its strategic plan to position itself as a major Asian power, Japan used TICAD as a platform to put forward the so-called Asian development model. During the 1980s, Japan began to criticize the negative impact of structural adjustment policies in Africa and, in more general terms, criticizing the so-called Washington Consensus and neo-liberal policies. Japan’s view of the Asian development model offered an alternative to African countries.

One observer wrote that, by the early 1990s, “a consensus began to develop in Japan on the measures that must be taken to prevent Africa from ‘falling off the map.’” One important measure was a coordinated effort by donor countries led by

Japan to focus a new aid strategy towards Africa. In October 1993, Japan convened the first TICAD. The conference consisted of nearly 1000 participants from 48 African countries, 13 major donors, 10 international organizations, and more than 45 NGOs. The most important outcome from this conference was the approval of the document, "Tokyo Declaration on African Development." This document broke new ground in terms of a global and collaborative approach to international aid to Africa. Its themes emphasized partnership, ownership, and the Asian model of development. The preamble of the Declaration states that the participants believe the document will "serve to strengthen an emerging new partnership for sustainable development of Africa based on self-reliance of African countries and the support of Africa's development partners."

Partnership implied equivalent influence and input into the development process. In contrast to the traditional World Bank and International Monetary Fund approach which dictated policies to recipient countries, TICAD's framework explicitly called for mutual interaction as equal members. The Declaration also states that "with the end of the cold war, African countries and the international community now have an opportunity to share a broader common understanding of the need for dynamic development cooperation." Japan's view of partnership was also broad and inclusive. It called for a more vigorous incorporation of non-governmental organizations into the development process. Governments are only one agent in the development process. The end of the Cold War demonstrated to Japan the importance of persuading public opinion, civil society, the private sector, and NGOs to act as participants in this process. The Declaration calls for "full participation by the people at all levels, who should be galvanized toward action as agents for progress." The concept of ownership was an implicit principle in the Declaration. It emerged as an identifiable concept in later ODA documents. A TICAD II paper referred to ownership as being "derived when development priorities, as set by Africa are pursued. This ownership should be based on continuous dialogue between government, the private sector and civil society." But for Japan, ownership was used strategically to direct attention towards its request based aid policy. Instead of going directly to African countries with money and specific projects, Japan waited for those governments to take "ownership" of their

development needs, decide on targeted projects, and then approach the Japanese aid agencies.

The Asian model of development was inserted into the Tokyo Declaration on behalf of the Japanese government. In light of its criticism against the over reliance of structural adjustment policies (SAP) and its interpretation of Asian economic development during the 1980s, the Japanese government offered an alternative development strategy. Eyinla notes that "in order to avoid some of the greatest pitfalls associated with the failure of the Structural Adjustment Program, the declaration recognized the linkage between political and economic reforms." In contrast to the World Bank's separation of political from economic reforms, the participants of TICAD specifically recognized the necessity of these reforms as well as the painful consequences resulting from their implementation. The Declaration called for greater consideration of the "specific conditions and requirements of individual countries" by SAPs. Japan used this criticism to launch what it called "the Asian experience of economic development." In examining the success of Asian countries, the Declaration noted that "the backdrop of development success lies in the combination of a strong commitment by the leadership and the people to economic prosperity, appropriate long-term development strategies and functional government administration to pursue these strategies coherently." This assertion, with Japan's own experience as central, has been extended and elaborated in latter TICAD documents.

What were the results of the first TICAD? According to a noted scholar on Japanese foreign policy to Africa, there were few concrete gains for Africa since TICAD I. "The results of the conference have more symbolism than substance, because the effective, results-based initiatives were not forthcoming, neither from the African nor the international communities." While specific gains were lacking, TICAD did have broader outcomes. The development momentum initiated by TICAD led to the promotion of African-Asian dialogues. A TICAD II document stated that "a more concrete outcome of the TICAD I process was the emerging South-South partnership forums which emerged to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills from Asian to African countries." Yet, more concrete and tangible outcomes did emerge from TI-

CAD such as several post-TICAD initiatives centred on institutional building. These included the Partnership for Democratic Development, conflict prevention and resolution activities, and the African Aid Initiative. And Japan achieved several concrete objectives as a result of its leading role in the conference. Despite the intentional statement of TICAD being a non-pledge conference, African countries look favourably upon Japan's initiatives and aid philosophy. As one government official commented in an interview, TICAD I was "good PR." This good will be translated into favourable votes on behalf of Japan. Although Japan failed to win a seat on the Security Council, one scholar observed that "there is strong inference that TICADs were electioneering activities for gaining a permanent seat on the UN Security Council – a supreme wish for the Government of Japan leaders." However, Japan did prevail in other areas. In 1996, Japan relied on Africa's bloc voting to win the Asian region non-permanent seat on the Security Council, the election of Shigeru Oda as Justice of the UN International Court of Justice, and the election of Sadako Ogata as head of the UN High Commission for Refugees. But more importantly, these initiatives underscored Japan's willingness to pursue its strategic objectives by positioning itself as an alternative to the dominant ODA institutions. At the end of TICAD, the government announced it would host TICAD II in 1998. TICAD II would not only assess the implementation of the Tokyo Declaration, but it would "chart strategic direction for African development into the 21st century

The first TICAD conference is suggestive of Japan's interest to claim its role and to increase its visibility in Africa. Japan's criticisms of conventional structural adjustment policies and neo-liberalism emerged at this time. These criticisms led to the promotion of Japan's own "Asian model of development." Moreover, Japan initiated new language that focused on partnership and ownership with Africa to highlight the important distinction from Western aid agencies and governments.

TICAD II

The period between TICAD I and II (1993 and 1998) represented a different geo-strategic and financial environment than the one leading up to the first conference. The end of the Cold War had

created new and long-lasting pressures on official development assistance. Financial resources were being redistributed towards Eastern European countries while the world's attention was increasingly on the situation in Iraq. Moreover, the financial constraints remaining from the East Asian crisis became more permanent in Japan. Africa was on the back burner. ODA had dropped from \$23.4 billion in 1994 to \$15.3 billion in 1999. Japan's ODA budget was cut by 10 percent in 1997. Yet, Japan continued to press for an Asian development plan that could be utilized by African recipients of Japanese aid. The Tokyo Declaration on African Development emphasized the "relevance of the Asian experience for African development." Moreover, "the backdrop of development success lies in the combination of a strong commitment by the leadership and the people to economic prosperity, appropriate long-term development strategies, and functional government administration to pursue these strategies coherently.

Post-Cold War trends both in the international community and in Japan forced the Japanese ODA administration to re-evaluate ODA both generally and in terms of Africa. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsored a reassessment which was published in early 1998. The report made clear that the East Asian financial crisis had placed serious financial constraints on the government's ability to finance aid. The report noted that while Japan's economy accounted for a significant portion of global GNP, it plays a marginal role in international defence and security affairs. "Today, Japan should be striving to meet its obligations to the world by pursuing and implementing ODA reforms that reflect recent domestic and global trends, and that enable it to better satisfy the genuine needs of international society." In particular, the report accurately described Japan's earlier ODA strategy to emphasize self-reliance, debt repayment, and the promotion of economic production. The government following TICAD I began to re-evaluate this strategy. Japan examined certain political conditions, including human rights, efforts by the recipient to democratize or adopt a free market system and trends in the development of weapons for mass destruction.

The ODA Reforms report stated that "Japan needs to explore the long-range prospects for economic independence while also furnishing emergency humanitarian assistance, and should prioritize aid for the satisfaction of basic human needs, human resources development, and other areas that can

be expected to facilitate the eradication of poverty." In other words, Japan began to move away from a strict implementation of economic development policies to a strategy that combined both economic development and poverty eradication. In a list of ten ODA objectives, the report places poverty elimination and social development as the first one. Yet the second objective is infrastructure development. As the report states, "economic advances are essential to the goal of human-centred development; in this respect, ODA-backed infrastructure projects can be expected to retain their value for some time to come."

In its conclusion, the report urged the Japanese government to assume a leadership role in "forming global partnerships by assisting efforts in South-South cooperation, coordinating aid with other industrial powers, and collaborating with multilateral institutions." As part of its leadership position in ODA, Japan introduced a third way for economic development in the developing world. According to one observer, Japan used the East Asian Miracle as justification for its ODA policy in the 1990s. Japan made the implicit argument that the neo-liberal economic strategy was not the only way to achieve economic development. In fact, the business community in Japan criticized the government for providing resources to too many high income developing countries that in turn competed directly against Japanese firms on aid projects.

Instead, in 1996 the Ministry of International Trade and Industry's (MITI) Economic Cooperation Committee recommended that Japan's ODA strategy should be used primarily to lower risks of infrastructure investment undertaken by private investors. The TICAD process and series of conferences related to African aid and development mirror this recommendation. Indeed, TICAD II's primary theme was "poverty reduction through accelerated economic growth and sustainable development, and effective integration of African economies into the global economy."

TICAD II was held in October 1998 with over 400 delegates including representatives from 120 countries and international organizations. The theme of the conference was "Poverty Alleviation and Integration of Africa into the Global Economy." The pri-

mary objective was to emphasize the poverty reduction strategy through increased economic growth, not just debt relief or grants. The second objective was to shift the burden of planning and decision-making to African countries. Ownership of the development process was again highlighted at this conference. A third objective was to establish an African-Asian partnership as central to economic development process. In particular, Japan's view on this objective was to apply what it considers successful development experiences in Asia to the development activities in Africa.

The primary document laid out at the conference stated that "TICAD I involved outlining the problem areas in African development and tried to focus on the general means for addressing these issues. TICAD II aims to focus more specifically on the areas to be developed, using the framework outlined in TICAD I as a basis for cooperation." The document suggests an action plan, but with no concrete financial commitments, the recommendations were fairly empty. However, as a form of logic and direction for the development process, the "Tokyo Agenda for Action" achieved some goals.

TICAD II illustrates the wide gulf between the development strategies and policies of the World Bank and those of the Japanese government. The government argued during TICAD II that reduction of poverty should be viewed as a result of economic production. It should not be solely a target of development through debt relief and the extension of new grants. A second difference is the emphasis placed on governance as a condition for new financial assistance. Japan expressed doubts on the ability and appropriateness of governments and international organizations to measure good governance. Finally, they differed over the meaning of globalization and whether it is effective in reducing poverty.

One analyst wrote that "the 'Achilles heel' of the Agenda lay in determining where the enormous resources to implement its laudable objectives would come from." In other words, the conference "neither yielded any dramatic increases in Official Development Assistance to African countries, nor did it result in practical measures to deal with the

crushing debt burden which most Sub-Saharan African countries have to bear." But following the kinds of achievements resulting from the first TICAD, TICAD II actually led to a deepening of understanding of the development problems in Africa and building on Asia-Africa cooperation. Moreover, the Japanese government focused explicitly on promoting Asia-Africa cooperation. The conference document stated that "one of the main goals of TICAD I was to promote Africa-Asia cooperation, and this has improved substantially in the last five years so that Asia is now a major investor in Africa." In particular, TICAD II developed a partnership with Africa based on its rice production. The New Rice for Africa (NERICA) has been discussed as a major and practical achievement of the TICAD process. NERICA emerged as a powerful agent linking the government's objectives of Asia-Africa cooperation, the growing role of NGOs, and positive publicity. TICAD II set the stage for the development of NERICA as this important agent. According to one Japanese development economist, NERICA was a "brand new idea" that sprung from the synergy of Japanese leadership and financial support and Japanese rice production experience. The chair of TICAD III stated that "NERICA is an excellent example of how a variety of partners – African governments, farmers, international agencies, and donors – can work together on actions with potential for quick development impact." This cooperative endeavour that led to NERICA also has established links with the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and TICAD III. A NEPAD official said that "NEPAD is therefore keen to explore further how NERICA can be integrated into the existing varietal portfolio of African farmers with complementary technologies, sound natural resource management practices, and improved rice marketing and distribution systems."

TICAD II also created confidence in Japanese foreign policy to either initiate new foreign policy endeavours or to partner with other foreign governments. For Japan, TICAD solidified its pre-eminent role in world affairs. While TICAD I had links to NGOs, TICAD II extended cooperation with them and the creation of new aid initiatives. In particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to bring together the global commitments from TICAD II and the focused objectives of NEPAD. NEPAD was formally endorsed by the Organization of African Unity in July 2001 and now has links to many as-

pects of Japanese policy towards Africa. The principles of African ownership fit into Japan's overall framework of providing assistance to Africa. A Japanese ambassador commented that "Japan has advocated consistently since the first TICAD in 1993 that the most essential principle for African Development is: First, Africa would exert its ownership, and then, the international community would extend cooperation through partnership." The TICAD guideline is meant to bridge Japan to international initiatives, such as the G8 Summit talks, the Strategic Partnership with Africa, and South-South Cooperative Initiative. In particular, Japan used TICAD II as a means to present its plan for debt relief. Japan has been the largest among G7 creditors in providing bilateral loans to the 40 heavily indebted poor countries. It thus became the leading contributor in terms of bilateral debt relief under the initiative. However, the Japanese government had previously resisted calls for debt relief. As a top donor, it feared it would have to cover a disproportionate share of the cost. More crucially, aid administrators were reluctant to write off loans to poor countries for "fear of encouraging moral hazard or discouraging fiscal discipline." Yet, the government successfully presented its plan to the 1999 G7 summit although differences remained based on the best ways to promote development in the developing world and on the difference between grants and loans. Japan remains committed to economic production to pull Africa out of its poverty and focuses on loans as a means to ensure correct economic policies. TICAD II illustrates the tension exhibited by Japan's emphasis on its self-help approach on the basis of request-based aid and the pressures from other OECD states to be more proactive and multilateral in providing aid.

Immediately following TICAD II, MOFA issued a statement declaring "solidarity between Japan and Africa" with attention to "concrete actions." The development objectives focused on enhancing the linkage between the NEPAD and TICAD processes. In particular, the government of Japan committed itself to spend \$750 million over a five year period from 1998 to 2003 to invest in basic human needs areas. The government also pledged \$2 billion to implement a new initiative on education in Africa. A third step was the promotion of Asia-Africa Cooperation. MOFA used this plank to share Asia's development experiences with Africa especially in

the areas of rice production (NERICA) and Asia's development experiences.

At the time of TICAD II, the Asian financial crisis created barriers for increased growth in aid, yet Japan still pushed at least in its documents for a strengthened partnership with Africa based on Asian economic policies and values. Additionally, Japan continued to break from the Washington Consensus emphasis on debt relief. Instead, Japan sought to reorient discussion towards its own approach of expanding economic production.

TICAD III

Although many Japanese participants in TICAD assumed it would disappear, the process continued albeit slowly and with uncertainty. In 1998, the possibility of a TICAD III was not even mentioned by officials in MOFA. Indeed, one observer wrote in 1999 that "the aim of TICAD III would essentially be to reinforce Tokyo's credentials as a responsible major power constructively contributing to global order and governance. If on the other hand, it is judged that the vote to enlarge the UN Security Council will not take place in the foreseeable future, then Tokyo might well discreetly jettison the TICAD initiative by pleading domestic economic constraints and conveniently transfer operational responsibility to a multilateral diplomacy."

Despite the continued slump in the Japanese economy, the government pursued the policies derived from TICAD. A common theme among those interviewed concerned Japan's interest to obtain a seat on the Security Council. The Japanese government viewed TICAD I and II as means to showcase its leadership as a major international donor. Japan sought entry into the ODA process in order to demonstrate its leadership on the world stage, to highlight what it considered the success of the Asian development model, and to secure a seat on the UN Security Council. Japan's approach during the period of the first two TICADs remained bilateral though it had the appearance of multilateralism with the invitation to co-sponsor the initiative to the Global Coalition for Africa, the United Na-

tions, and the World Bank. Yet, following TICAD II, pressures mounted on Japan to alter its foreign aid approach in general and to Africa in particular. The government was careful not to set up a bureaucratic Conference secretariat. In part, it did so to minimize administrative costs, but it also sought to keep administrative control in the hands of Japanese bureaucrats, especially in MOFA. Given the absence of any new money contributed to TICAD's initiatives, simply offering to host a third TICAD was a government's goal.

Two factors motivated the Japanese government to consider organizing TICAD III. In the few years following TICAD II, the aid initiatives received a boost from the creation of the African Union and the formation of the NEPAD. They both reinvigorated the ODA process by formalizing Africa's willingness to assume ownership, partnership, and governance over ODA. An African diplomat wrote that "the underlying principles of ownership and partnership in TICAD and NEPAD are essential for helping Africa deal with the various challenges militating against its sustainable economic growth." This view was formalized at TICAD Ministerial level Meeting in December 2001.

The Chair's Statement "also welcomed...NEPAD launched by African leaders as a concrete commitment to assume effective leadership and accountability in realizing the principles of ownership and global partnership." NEPAD is an amalgam of debt relief measures proposed by South Africa, Senegal, and Nigeria. Ownership and partnership are key concepts emanating from what President Mbeki of South Africa refers to as a "New Paradigm Shift of Africa." In contrast to previous structural adjustment programs which were externally imposed on African governments by international organizations, NEPAD's approach places emphasis on self-responsibility and, equally important, on active participation based on a perceived stake in the process and outcome of development. A Japanese diplomat at TICAD writes that "the basic attitude of Japan to fully respect the ownership of the recipient government in conducting development aid is derived from her own historical experiences in the modernization process."

The modernization process of Japan since the Meiji Era was a history to harmonize through exercising full ownership the introduction of modernization and the preservation of traditional culture." With the end of the Cold War, ownership is to be understood within a democratic context. Pressure increased in the late 1990s by both donor governments and recipient countries to democratize Africa and to reform its administrative structure.

A second factor derived from the change in the request-based lending approach. Academics and some policy officials have criticized the long standing policy of waiting for African governments to initiate request for specific amounts of aid. What some have suggested is that Japan should publicly utilize its development experiences by sharing them with African countries. As one high official in the Japan Bank for International Cooperation said in an interview, "the ODA community should use our role and our own experiences." The evolution of thinking is related to a cultural argument expressed by many officials. A more direct approach to lending money has been tied to a Japanese-based view of development knowledge and experiences. Some have expressed the importance of cultural identity in the TICAD process. A few former MOFA officials commented on the Asian identity as a departure from western views on development and foreign aid. Indeed, another MOFA official mentioned that "the 'Asian experience' means bring alternative approaches to development and the ODA process."

Although one MOFA official stated in an interview that as late as 2002, few government officials believe TICAD III would be scheduled, the conference was in fact organized. And these factors were imbedded in the third conference. In the first planning document for TICAD III, MOFA officials listed TICAD's aims as 1) to awake international attention towards Africa; 2) to promote African ownership; and 3) to strengthen international partnership. These objectives were then tied to the so-called Pillars of TICAD III. They were the synergy between TICAD and NEPAD; Japan's leading role in the ODA process; expanded involvement of civil society and the private sector; and renewed international partnership. Interestingly, when asked in an interview about the selection of these four pillars with two high ranking MOFA officials involved in the TICAD preparation, both replied there was

no particular reason for their selection. The public objectives of TICAD were for consumption by domestic and foreign interests. According to these MOFA officials, TICAD III had a "hidden agenda." In the absence of financial support for its commitments, Japan has to rely on the good intentions of the TICAD process and on the positive view from African countries of Japan's leadership role. As they said, "TICAD has name value, but there is no money in our pocket."

TICAD III was held at the end of September 2003. As the largest of the three conferences, more than 1000 participants attended representing 89 countries, including 23 heads of state from Africa, 50 African countries, and 47 international organizations. Foreign Minister Kawaguchi formally presented TICAD III's objectives to the African Union in August 2002. These objectives had changed from the ones the MOFA staff expressed in interviews. Japan, in her view, would give priority to 1) Asia-Africa cooperation; 2) human centred development; and 3) efforts to consolidate peace. The first is a common theme in Japanese statements and interviews with officials. The main claim is that Africa can learn from the development experiences of Japan in recent decades. As Ms. Kawaguchi remarked in her speech, "we believe that Asia's experience and expertise in development may also be useful for African development in the 21st century, because Asia, in the latter part of the 20th century, approached development challenges that are similar to Africa's situation."

With regards to human-centred development, the Foreign Minister stressed the solid initiatives introduced by Japan following TICAD II. In particular, she pointed out funded projects in the areas of education, health, and the supply of safe water. Her statements were supported by the final TICAD III agenda. Human-centred development emphasized human resources, water, and health and medical care. A related theme was entitled "poverty reduction through economic growth." Of these pillars, this one in many ways is the most significant and it also illustrates Japan's departure from more conventional development stances. As the statement declares, "without economic growth, poverty reduction cannot be realized." The lessons of Japan's economic success have been attributed to research and development, the

development of special strains of rice, the development of basic infrastructure, increased trade and investment with Asia, debt relief, and the promotion of economic growth.

She was briefest in discussing the third objective of efforts toward the consolidation of peace. Japan has had limited experience in this area and has introduced few measures. Since TICAD II in 1998, Japan has supported a number of initiatives aimed towards conflict resolution. These schemes have included the Landmine Trust Fund, the Grant Aid for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building, and the UN Small Arms Fund.

As the government moved closer to TICAD III, it drew on previous international conferences and aid commitments. A TICAD III "Concept Paper" drew attention to these recent initiatives. The Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000 followed by the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg discussed African development. Additionally, the G8 in 2002 adopted the "Africa Action Plan." The concept paper stated that "TICAD III will maintain and further strengthen this momentum and contribute to reaffirming the partnership in the international community assisting NEPAD."

These themes were reinforced in the TICAD Tenth Anniversary Declaration published in October 2003. "Thus, the TICAD process has contributed to enhancing ownership and partnership to develop genuine solidarity that leads to expanded and multi-layered cooperation in support of African development." The Declaration points to the four pillars of TICAD. First, it breaks from the Washington Consensus policy prescriptions of strict privatization and neo-liberal policy objectives. "This challenge can best be met by adopting a mutually reinforcing combination of two approaches: state-led development based on leadership and democratic governance, on the one hand, and community-based development based on the empowerment of individuals, on the other." This view point stems from the Japanese government's emphasis of its own historical path of economic devel-

The TICAD process should encourage and strengthen Africa's confidence by recognizing the force of African-owned development.

African development can be achieved only by the concerted efforts of Africa and its development partners

opment and which has constituted an alternative to neo-liberalism.

Second, conflict and security issues dominate the development process. The declaration emphasizes the role of international partnership in "extending comprehensive and integrated assistance to African countries." Clearly, this newly inserted objective derived from 9/11 and the perceived link between poverty and terrorism.

Third, human security is a broad set of objectives that highlight problems such as poverty, hunger, infectious diseases, and a lack of education. These objectives have been highlighted by the international community at least since the Millennium Summit in 2000.

Finally, the declaration emphasizes African ownership of the development process. The TICAD process should encourage and strengthen Africa's confidence by recognizing the force of African-owned development. Ownership has been an integral component of all three TICAD meetings. The final TICAD III agenda had something for nearly every participant. It first laid out the accomplishments of the previous TICAD meetings, including the financial commitments made by the participants with special focus on Japan's contribution. The document then articulated the "TICAD's Approach" towards assisting African countries in their development process. The TICAD approach fundamentally implies cooperation between African countries and Asian countries based on the twin principles of ownership and partnership. By establishing and deepening the policy dialogue with African countries through NEPAD, the long term objective is to institutionalize the TICAD process. The Tenth Anniversary Declaration highlighted this claim.

It said that "one of the ultimate goals of the TICAD process is to forge solidarity between Africa and the rest of the international community based on ownership and partnership because African development can be achieved only by the concerted efforts of Africa and its development partners." In

practice, this approach implied the transfer of "Asia's experiences and development strategy" to African countries. During this last conference period, Japan continued its focus on ownership, partnership, and governance, especially by joining the momentum behind both TICAD and NEPAD. Japan linked its ODA policies to those generated from the Millennium Development Goals and other international aid initiatives. It became clear that some of the language and values used by earlier versions of Japan's ODA policies made their way into these newer international aid documents.

TICAD IV

TICAD IV, recently held in Yokohama, was the largest of these conferences. More than 2000 participants attended, along with over forty heads of state, the President of the World Bank, representatives of many international organizations, donor countries, NGOs, and observers. In his opening address, Japan's Prime Minister of Japan, Yasuo Fukuda, provided the key themes of this conference. The Prime Minister focused heavily on private investment in Africa instead of foreign aid. Japan was calling for long-term foreign investment (led by Japanese firms) which would leverage other resources within and outside Africa. In particular, he called for building of transportation networks connecting natural resources within Africa to the roads and ports which would more effectively ship those resources to Japan. At the end, he briefly mentioned Japan's concern for combating diseases, such as AIDs and malaria, and to do more to reduce the effects of climate change in Africa.

Following his remarks, a dozen African leaders each spoke for a few minutes with two themes emerging from their speeches. First, they frequently mentioned the significant gap between the price of natural resources in their countries and the value added in the processing back in the developed countries. A coffee farmer in Africa sells a pound of coffee for only around \$US1, but then foreign processors add value to the product and sell the coffee for \$10. The gap, they argue, needs to be narrowed. Second, they called for more private investment and trade from Japan. Africa only receives 0.4 percent of Japan's global foreign investment and of that amount 80 percent goes to South Africa and Egypt. Moreover, Japan only im-

ports two percent of its total import total from Africa.

As a non-Asian and non-African observer to this conference, I noticed not just what these leaders said, but what was not said. These leaders, including Japan's Prime Minister, infrequently mentioned critical issues such as poverty reduction, human rights, democracy, or income distribution. Japan, of course, believes that over time private investment will lead to greater growth, increases in tax revenue, and greater focus on social welfare and poverty reduction initiatives. But outside of the conference, many African and Japanese non-governmental organizations expressed frustration with these leaders. They asked for further attention to reduce poverty, expand education, protect human rights, and improve access to health care. These groups also want a direct seat at the table at TICAD.

But outside of the conference, many African and Japanese non-governmental organizations expressed frustration with these leaders

Conclusion

The TICAD process provides an intriguing and informative opportunity to examine Japanese ODA strategy. As the country emerged into a dominant donor government in the 1990s, it sought to engage the other donor countries and institutions in a new dialogue on the scope and direction of foreign aid. Japan has made moves in recent years to counter the neo-liberal policy emphasis on structural adjustment with a more nuanced approach emphasizing self-help policies, loans, and poverty reduction through industrial development. Taken as a whole, the TICAD process represents the Japanese government's response to perceived inroads by globalization and neo-liberal economic ideology. But TICAD is more than a simple response to complex global forces. Japan itself draws extensively from its perceived model of national and regional economic development as it hopes to influence non-Asian societies as in Africa. Moreover, by carving out a developmental niche away from the conventional World Bank pattern of financial assistance, Japan also hopes to highlight its global strategic position as it seeks to have greater influence in Africa and other developing regions.

Through its long standing commitment to hold conferences on African development, the Japanese government significantly contributed to

the international community and to present an alternative strategy to the Washington Consensus ideology. The success of TICAD can be seen in the diffusion of its core concepts to other aid agencies. The primary concepts of ownership and partnership have been incorporated into several international meetings, including the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and three consecutive G8 Summit meetings, beginning in 2002. In an independent review of TICAD, the author argued that "the twin objectives of ownership and partnership promoted by TICAD have now come to be accepted principles in development planning and cooperation...The advent of NEPAD has a number of positive implications for future cooperation within the TICAD framework, as TICAD is expected to serve as a major platform for global support for NEPAD."

In July 2005, the G8 summit illustrated a common approach to this mode of analysis by recent foreign aid and debt forgiveness policies. The G8 countries importantly backed Tony Blair's call for a doubling of foreign aid from \$25 billion annually to \$50 billion by 2010. Blair also recommended a further increase of another \$25 billion annually to be achieved by 2015. Bush initially resisted Blair's goals, but recently announced that he will ask Congress to double U.S. support for Africa from \$4.3 billion to more than \$8.6 billion in 2010. And the G-8 as a group promised to write off \$40 billion in debt that 18 of the world's poorest countries owe.

During this fifteen year period of holding TICAD meetings, the Japanese government sought to promote an alternative financing and development approach. In contrast to the views commonly referred to as the Washington Consensus, Japan relied on its own development experiences as a guide in assisting African countries. Its experiences suggest to the Japanese government that state administrative functions have a crucial role in the development process. In particular, the state role can facilitate needed economic production as it appeared to occur in Japan and other Asian countries. What the Japanese government and the TICAD process are promoting, in part, is the reduction of poverty through economic production instead of direct funding of poverty programs. From Japan's perspective, this emphasis adheres to the

concept of ownership also highlighted in TICAD. As one review commented, "ownership is the premise of a 'developmental state.' In other words, that the state has a positive, facilitating role in the economy." In interviews with TICAD and MOFA officials, they repeatedly commented on the necessary role of the state as both a lesson from the Asian experience and an important objective for African states. In a more recent statement at the 2004 TICAD Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Conference, the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry commented that "I very much count on the initiatives of private players for the promotion of trade and investment; however, when the country's economy is just about to take off, the role of the government in efficiently allocating the limited resources for the promotion of trade and investment that would prompt economic growth is important."

The two themes of infrastructural investment and poverty reduction are not necessarily contradictory, but indeed should be considered complementary. Japan's approach focuses on the process of investment, while the NGOs highlight immediate results. Both are needed and, fortunately, both sides remain in dialogue with each other. While foreign aid itself will not solve the long-term problems facing Africa, it is necessary for immediate relief of people currently suffering. However, in the long run, Japan's emphasis on infrastructural investment led by private sector involvement is appropriate and needed. Japan's own investment in the TICAD meetings demonstrates the high visibility of African development for the Japanese government. The Japanese government should be commended for such long-term commitment. As Japan now moves onto TICAD V, I would make two recommendations. First, African development should not be viewed simply as African diplomacy. Fifteen years of the TICAD process generally has highlighted government to government relations. TICAD V should be more inclusive, engaging African civil society in more tenable ways. Second, the core of African development should be considered as human-centred. Infrastructural investment is necessary, but not sufficient to create truly sustainable development. For TICAD V, the government needs to more directly reinsert discussion and policies on poverty reduction, human rights, and income distribution.

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TICAD Process: What's in it for Africa?

By Aulline Mabika

This month, all roads led to Japan for over 50 African leaders who have been invited to Yokohama, for a conference on African development known as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which Japan convenes once every five years. TICAD is a policy forum for African Development which Japan initiated in 1993 and has led with other co-organizers which consist of UN, UNDP and World Bank. The 2008 conference is the fourth one.

Priorities at TICAD IV included:

- Boosting Economic Growth in in order to make the currently strong economic growth in Africa self-sustained, more pro-poor and inclusive(in areas including trade, investment and tourism, infrastructure development, agriculture)
- Ensuring "Human Security" Assistance to help achieve MDGs as well as consolidation of peace and good governance

Addressing Environmental Issues/ Climate Change

The African leaders met in April in Gabon to prepare for the TICAD fourth conference and they were concentrating on three major issues which they thought should define the TICAD Summit. Among these was the issue on economic development towards poverty eradication which they thought TICAD four can make a difference from the previous conferences on economic development. The specificities on economic development would include, inter alia, issues of how Japan would facilitate market access for African products to their country and Asia.

The other issue was on foreign direct investments (FDI) where the leaders believed that the Japanese

government can leverage their overseas development aid (ODA) with the private sector investments, where the Japanese would use the ODA to create conditions and invite the private sector to invest in Africa. Once this was done then progress could be made in terms of poverty alleviation.

The third area was on infrastructure development. The leaders made reference to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) a programme of corridor development and linkages, sub-regional linkages between Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Central Africa between countries. The ministers realised that they needed to begin dealing with the backlog infrastructure and therefore would need the assistance of the Japanese in anchoring their developmental programmes into sub-regions, such as SADC

The main question for ordinary Africans today is human centred development. It is no use to hail economic prospects that may lead to economic growth which will not improve the livelihood of the ordinary African

The issues coming out of the preparatory meeting clearly presents the aspirations that African leaders carried to Japan. The question however, is how far will TICAD IV meet these noble aspirations of our leaders and the African people in general?

It is unfortunate that our leaders get excited about some of these processes while taking them in isolation and independent of other processes prevailing in the region such as the EU- ACP Economic partnership Agreements (EPAs). For instance what they agreed with regards to infrastructure development. They have a programme on paper of corridor development as well as sub-regional linkages such as SADC and COMESA. Yet the very existence of the Regional Economic blocs is under threat from EPAs currently being negotiated between ACP countries and the EU.

TICAD IV was held against the backdrop of a deadlock on trade between developing and developed countries in the World Trade Organisation Doha round. This deadlock is a sign that the world is not yet serious about tackling real issues affecting Africa's development. It remains to be seen if TICAD IV will be able to tackle real issues affecting Africa such as empowering farmers and

providing them with markets, dealing with famine, refugees, HIV/AIDS and other neglected diseases as well as providing real aid for Africa. The question of high levels of indebtedness needs to be addressed among other pressing issues.

The conference was held during a time where there is progress in consolidation of peace and democratisation through African self efforts as well as promising economic prospects in Africa as a whole. The truth of these assertions however remains to be seen because while there may be solving of other conflicts others still persists such as in South Africa, Darfur and also another crisis in Zimbabwe. With regards to economic prospects, yes there may be there but they are just prospects. The main question for ordinary Africans today is human centred development. It is no use to hail economic prospects that may lead to economic growth which will not improve the livelihood of the ordinary African. What matters for Africa is not so much the quantity of growth but the quality.

The issue of addressing environmental degradation and climate change poses a new challenge for Africa and indeed the rest of

It is high time Africa demand its rightful place in the world order and refuses piecemeal solutions to her challenges. It does not matter what TICAD IV will produce and feed into the G8 meeting as long as the disparities caused by the Economic Partnership Agreements in Africa are not addressed then there is not much benefit for Africa from these processes. The EPAs have caused distortions and disturbances in Africa's integration efforts by ignoring completely the existing regional economic blocs and creating new meaningless ones. The whole process is a total mockery of the efforts by Africans to integrate and has been interpreted as being driven by the need to seal market access deals by the EU in the face of the growing threat from China (and indeed now Japan).

Africa's challenges remain such as poverty, food shortages, infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. These remain pressing and will require efforts from governments in both the developing and developed world, civil society and the corporate sector especially transnational corporations whose quest for profits in the world has

left many Africans poorer. The issue of addressing environmental degradation and climate change poses a new challenge for Africa and indeed the rest of the world. Addressing this challenge requires multi-stakeholder efforts as well.

Aulline Mabika is the Southern African regional coordinator for SEATINI

Editorial: The elusive quest for Africa's development: Will Japan deliver?

By Rangarirai Machedze

At a time when African countries are facing huge developmental challenges, Japan hosted the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in Yokohama City. The conference, the fourth to be held since 1993 after every five years deliberated on a number of issues but most importantly raised the issue of Africa being the driver of its own development agenda. While the international community and other development partners have a crucial role to play in supporting Africa's own efforts to address and overcome a plethora of challenges, it is the primary responsibility of the African governments to ensure that such objectives are achieved. This message from the TICAD conference provides crucial lessons for Africa if it is to move out of the vicious cycle of poverty and disease. The lessons Africa will learn from this process also should be informed by the existential truth presented by the present global economic situation. And that truth is Africa will not develop as long as it continues to pander to the dictates of corporate-led globalisation where liberalisation and the free market ideology are being pushed as a solution to the current problems.

For decades, Africa has been marginalised in matters of trade and development. This marginalisation has now been embedded in the structures of international economic organisations that wield unlimited power mostly in poorer countries. Not only is this marginalisation embedded in international organisations but also in other powerful developed countries that still look at Africa (deliberately) as an equal trading partner, when in fact the partnership is based on asymmetrical power relationships. Because of the nature of the current global economy, where Africa has been

locked into a “fixed economic policy model,” it has become “normal” that the free market ideology is what Africa should pursue to realise development. Yet this ideology has failed and is failing with clear results (crises) at a global scale. The current credit crunch and the global food crisis are clear cases in point. The failure to conclude the Doha round of trade negotiations and the mercantilist negotiations between the European Union on one hand and Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries on the other are also testimony to a global economy in crisis. The TICAD process, therefore, should be taken seriously as it provides an alternative approach to development. The elements of the Japanese and indeed the East Asian experiences could be useful to Africa although these need to be customised to individual nations. Thus, as Lehman in his article in this *Bulletin* notes, compared with the neoclassical orthodoxy that stresses macroeconomic stability and free markets, the emerging Japanese view is distinct in its primary pursuit of long-term real targets, acceptance of different economic policies for different conditions of development, and emphasis on the active role of government as an initiator of change.

The first article in this *Bulletin* traces the history of the TICAD conferences since its birth in 1993 to the present day. What is important though is not the successful hosting of these conferences but tangible results that could be transformed into action by the African countries. The fact that Japan developed its economy with the government in the forefront of providing the resources and policy direction means a lot for African countries. State-led development is crucial as governments are best suited to provide the direction the economy needs. But this can only be achieved if institutions are built that are critical to the sustenance of the development process.

Hence the initiative of the Japanese is instructive enough that institutional building together with the already infrastructural developments taking place is a pre-requisite for sustained development. The programme on Partnership for Development under TICAD should be pursued vigorously where the principle of ownership of the development process as well as the agenda for that development is an implicit principle.

The African leaders should take cognisance of what the East Asian experiences have to offer. It is pointless to spend resources attending such conferences (that provide an alternative development strategy) when on the ground (existential truth) our leaders are engaging in something else. The current processes at the WTO as well as the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) negotiations with the European Union should be viewed from this perspective. The European Commission and some of the governments in Africa argue that EPAs are “good” for Africa as they present a “good development model” based on “shared values” of the European nations and the ACP countries. This is not true if one were to look at the core elements of the so-called development model. It is based on the neo-liberal policies of liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation of economies of Africa. The African leaders are agreed under the TICAD process that this does not work in poor countries yet they sing a different tune when it comes to negotiations with the European Union. Our analysis shows that the agreements in their current form will further de-industrialise, de-agriculturalise and decimate the food security of African countries including paralysing their policy options for indigenous development.

The second article in this *Bulletin* therefore questions the ingenuity of our leaders as they have taken noble processes like TICAD in isolation to developments in their countries. The writer makes the point that regional integration is in shreds because of the European Commission that has systematically practiced a policy of divide and rule in Africa. This is especially the case in Eastern and Southern Africa, where the older indigenous efforts at regional integration within the context of SADC, COMESA and the East African community are now in tatters. Regional integration is the only way that African countries could use to reap the benefits of TICAD especially benefiting from a huge market size buttressed by domestic savings.

Until Africa drives its own development agenda, it will remain a provider of raw materials with no potential to develop and industrialise.

It is particularly important that from the TICAD process governments set in motion a rescue plan for Africa that looks at people-led development

strategy combining policies on an alternative production system for poverty reduction and income distribution.

Rangarirai Machedze is the Deputy Executive Director for SEATINI

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