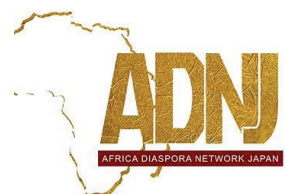


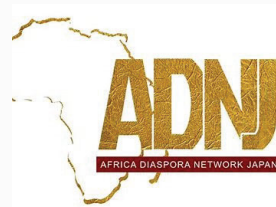
# **THE YOUTH AGENDA 2055: THE FUTURE WE WANT**



## ORGANIZATIONS

### **Africa Asia Youth Nest (AAYN)**

AAYN is a general incorporated association led by youth established with a focus on recipients of the Tobitate! Japan MEXT scholarship. The group is dedicated to fostering a cohesive global community wherein youth from African and Asian nations converge to envisage a brighter future and jointly confront contemporary societal challenges.



### **African Diaspora Network Japan (ADNJ)**

ADNJ is a network of the African community in Japan, including those of African descent that operates different associations with an aim to strengthen African and Japanese socio-economic development ties. ADNJ is the United Africa in Japan that brings Africans and Japanese together as one community through a strong and trustworthy network for the betterment of both societies.

### **Youth Partners**

Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS)  
Kakehashi Africa (KA)  
Network of African Student in Japan (NASJA)  
Intercontinental Youth Connect (IYC)  
G7/G20 Youth Japan  
MPJ Youth

### **Supporting Organizations**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)  
United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>AAYN</b>	<b>Africa Asia Youth Nest</b>
<b>ADNJ</b>	<b>Africa Diaspora Network Japan</b>
<b>GBV</b>	<b>Gender Based Violence</b>
<b>IDP</b>	<b>Internally Displaced Person</b>
<b>JENESYS</b>	<b>Japan–East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths</b>
<b>JICA</b>	<b>Japan International Cooperation Agency</b>
<b>MOFA</b>	<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan</b>
<b>ODA</b>	<b>Official Development Assistance</b>
<b>SDGs</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>
<b>TICAD</b>	<b>Tokyo International Conference of African Development</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nation Development Programme</b>
<b>UNV</b>	<b>United Nation Volunteers</b>



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy proposal, Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want, is the outcome of a collective and sustained youth-led process spanning over a year and a half. It reflects the insights, aspirations, and commitments of young people across Africa, Japan, and beyond, gathered through surveys, consultations, and multi stakeholder dialogues. From 2024 to 2025, youth engaged through a sequence of structured engagements that shaped the policy's vision and content. These included:

- Global Youth Questionnaire Survey (January–March 2024)
  - Online “Future Design” Workshops (July–August 2024)
  - 1st Africa–Japan Youth Drive (24 August 2024)
  - Virtual Briefing on TICAD Youth Engagement (9 November 2024)
- Stakeholder Consultations with TICAD Co-organizers (January–March 2025)
- Youth TICAD Pre-Event (8 February 2025)
  - 2nd Africa–Japan Youth Drive (23–25 February 2025)
  - Africa Stakeholder Meetings (20–27 February 2025)

These engagements, spanning national, regional, and global levels, brought together youth from over 40 African countries and across Japan to co-create and refine both the vision and the Plan of Action for the Youth Agenda 2055.

The policy proposal was shaped under the strategic leadership of Terry Otieno, a renowned international youth engagement facilitator and policy advisor on sustainability, who directed the structure and focus of the policy proposal. It was drafted by Yuki Yasumiba, co-founder of Africa Asia Youth Nest (AAYN), supported by Terry Otieno, and Nebibanga Evina, a data scientist, with Terry Otieno serving as the editor throughout the process. Their leadership, along with the efforts of David Kpondehou, Ami Nishi-jima, and Haruka Iwasa as well as the TICAD Youth Engagement Team ensured the inclusivity, clarity, and coherence of this youth-led and youth focused policy proposal.

We are grateful to the thousands of youth, civil society representatives, and institutional partners who participated, reviewed, and championed the Youth Agenda 2055 throughout its development.

## FOREWORD

It is with pride and unwavering hope that we present the Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want. As the founder and President of African Diaspora Network Japan (ADNJ) and the co-founder of Africa Asia Youth Nest (AAYN), we have had the honor of walking this journey alongside the brilliant young minds behind this policy proposal, we can confidently say: this is more than a policy document. It is a bold declaration of purpose, innovation, and shared responsibility from a generation determined not only to be heard but to lead.

For the past one and a half years, we have witnessed an extraordinary movement take root and grow. From the first survey that gathered the youth voices, to the dynamic regional youth dialogues, to the powerful Youth Drives in Tokyo, Japan and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; this process has been youth-led, collaborative, and visionary. It has brought together young people from across the African continent and Japan, not to list their needs, but to co-create a practical, forward-looking roadmap for change.

What sets the Youth Agenda 2055 apart is its refusal to rely on external intervention. We, the young people behind this Agenda are not asking stakeholders to “save the future.” We are stepping up to build it, hand in hand with governments, civil society, the private sector, and development partners. The inclusion of a detailed Plan of Action in the policy signals a new paradigm: one in which youth are not passive recipients of aid, but co-architects of global cooperation and resilience.

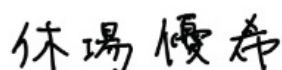
We have initiated this journey not only as organization leaders, but as cheerleaders for the young people. We are not alone in advocating for this Agenda as other TICAD stakeholders including UNDP, JICA, UNV, the government of Japan, 40+ African-based organizations and several African governments. The young people’s effort in developing the Agenda has ignited the belief in what is possible when youth are not tokenized, but trusted.

The Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want is a powerful invitation to act, to collaborate, and to dream collectively. The future we want is one built on mutual accountability, shared leadership, and radical hope and thanks to this Agenda, we are one bold step closer.

David Kpondehou: Founder of African Diaspora Network in Japan (ADNJ)



Yasumiba Yuki: Co-Founder of Africa Asia Youth Nest



## Executive Summary

Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want is a youth-led policy proposal emerging from a 1.5-year collaborative process involving over 40 African countries, Japan, and global youth networks. It reflects a shared vision for a just, peaceful, and sustainable future co-created by African and Japanese youth in the lead-up to TICAD 9 and beyond. The goal of the TICAD 9 Youth Initiatives, through this policy proposal is to institutionalize youth within TICAD. The plausible way to achieve this institutionalization is by hosting TICAD Youth Initiatives under one or more TICAD co-organizers. Support from UNDP and JICA has opened collaboration opportunities and access to key organizations. With the right setup, funding can be secured to sustain TICAD youth initiatives while it is hosted within the co-organizers, possibly as a youth-led unit. While initial support may be needed, youth have demonstrated the ability to mobilize and collaborate effectively.

To ensure the implementation of Youth Agenda 2055, TICAD 9 Youth Initiatives envision a long-term co-creation model beyond TICAD 9, anchored in three frameworks:

**a.** TICAD Youth Foundation is a dedicated support mechanism for youth-led development, innovation, and entrepreneurship, aiming to create long-term impact through funding, capacity building, and visibility to help young people take their "first step." It will feature a specialized digital platform that promotes youth-led skill-sharing and capacity building, while also offering opportunities for African and Japanese youth to connect, match, and engage in mentoring. Additionally, a verified section for youth-led projects will attract investors interested in supporting impactful, homegrown innovations. The foundation will also include a global fundraising arm, leveraging donations from the public, private, and civil sectors to ensure sustainable funding for youth-driven projects.

**b.** TICAD Youth Advisory Board is a representative body of young elected-leaders that provides youth perspectives on policies and programs within TICAD initiatives. The board advises on youth priorities and emerging issues, ensuring diverse representation, especially from marginalized communities. It reviews policy proposals, collaborates closely with TICAD co-organizers, and monitors youth engagement across TICAD processes.

**c.** Youth Drive is an annual conference, hosted by TICAD Youth Advisory Board, within the TICAD framework that provides a space for a wide range of youth to actively engage in dialogue, advocacy, networking, and capacity building while tracking the progress of the Youth Agenda and related youth-led initiatives.

The Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want is structured around three core pillars—Society, Economy, and Peace & Governance which form the foundation for advancing youth well-being and sustainable development. These are supported by two essential cross-cutting enablers: People-to-People Relationships between Africa and Japan, and Climate Resilience & Sustainability. Together, they shape a future-oriented framework for youth empowerment and interregional cooperation founded on 10 Actions.

## Pillars

### 1. Society:

This pillar reimagines health and well-being as well as the education systems to be inclusive, digitally enabled, and future-ready. It promotes stronger Africa–Japan partnerships in scholarship programs, vocational and digital skills training, internships, and language learning to ensure young people are equipped to thrive in a globalized world.

### 2. Economy:

Focusing on employment and innovation, this pillar calls for building inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystems, supporting climate-smart industries, expanding access to digital infrastructure, and promoting youth-led enterprises through policy support and interregional investment.

### 3. Peace & Governance:

This pillar addresses the lack of youth representation in political and governance structures. It advocates for legal youth quotas, civic and political education, youth inclusion in policy processes, and the promotion of transparency, accountability, and intergenerational leadership.

## Enablers

**1. People-to-People Relationship between Africa and Japan** At the heart of Africa–Japan cooperation, this enabler emphasizes mutual understanding, cultural diplomacy, and human exchange. It advocates for long-term partnerships through joint youth forums, collaborative projects, alumni networks, and community-based engagements to deepen trust and solidarity.

### 2. Sustainability

This enabler integrates youth-led climate action, green finance, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development into all areas of engagement. It underscores the importance of long-term thinking, intergenerational equity, and institutional mechanisms that ensure continuity of youth engagement beyond TICAD 9.

## 10 Actions of Youth Agenda 2055



1. Universal, High-Quality, and Inclusive Education through Innovation, Support, and Collaboration



2. Enhancing Youth Health and Well-being: Strengthening Access to Healthcare, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, and Mental Health Support



3. Economic Stability and Youth Empowerment: Building a Win-Win Future for Japan and Africa



4.Fostering Youth Entrepreneurship: Overcoming Barriers and Unlocking Potential



5.Strengthening Global Peace and Security through Disarmament, Dialogue, and Youth Empowerment v



6.Empowering Youth in Decision-Making: Ensuring Representation and Active Participation



7.Strengthening Youth Mobility and Exchange through Study Abroad and Language Learning Opportunities



8.Promote Social Cohesion between Africans, Japanese, and the Diaspora in Their Communities



9.Strengthening the Japan–Africa Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development through TICAD



10.Strengthen a Holistic Approach to Climate Change and Climate Justice through Japan–Africa Youth Cooperation

## Key Points

### Detailed Structure & Functions of the Proposed Three Frameworks for continuity of the Youth TICAD Initiative



#### TICAD YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

#### **Purpose:**

The Youth Advisory Board is a representative body of young leaders that provides strategic guidance and youth perspectives on policy, program design, and implementation across TICAD initiatives.

#### **Functions:**

1. Advise TICAD stakeholders on youth priorities and emerging issues.
2. Facilitate youth consultations and ensure diverse representation, especially from marginalized communities.
3. Review and contribute to policy proposals, working closely with TICAD co-organizers.
4. Monitor and evaluate youth engagement across TICAD-related processes.

#### **Structure:**

- Regional representation ensuring inclusivity across Africa and Japan.
- Rotating leadership with defined terms (e.g., 1–2 years).
- Thematic working groups ( society, peace and governance, economy, education, climate action, innovation).
- Regular virtual and in-person convenings aligned with TICAD timelines.



## YOUTH DRIVES/CONFERENCES

### **Purpose:**

Youth Drives and Conferences are youth-led mobilization platforms that create spaces for dialogue, advocacy, networking, and capacity building within the TICAD framework.

### **Functions:**

1. Assess progress, share outcomes, and identify challenges based on the Action Plan. Youth-led monitoring tools will be utilized to track performance and impact.
2. Convene an annual youth drive and a Youth TICAD Conference every three years to discuss youth-related development issues.
3. Facilitate Kabanmochi in TICAD and other global conferences where young people shadow diplomats in conferences
4. Serve as incubation spaces for new ideas, partnerships, and policy proposals.
5. Provide leadership and advocacy training for young people.
6. Generate outcome statements that feed into official TICAD processes.

### **Structure:**

- Organized annually or biannually with rotating host countries.
- Thematic sessions aligning with TICAD and SDG priorities.
- Youth participation is ensured through open calls, partnerships with youth networks, and scholarships for underserved communities.

## **Youth Foundation**



### **Purpose**

The Youth Foundation is a dedicated support mechanism for youth-led development, innovation, and entrepreneurship, fostering long-term impact through funding, capacity building, and visibility.



## **Core Components & Functions:**

1. Digital Platform: A centralized space for youth to share skills, collaborate, and access resources.
2. Project Verification Hub: A section featuring vetted youth-led projects to attract investors and donors.
3. Fundraising Arm: A global resource mobilization strategy involving private sector partners, diaspora networks, and philanthropic organizations.
4. Capacity Building: Both hybrid and in-person training through academic scholarships, entrepreneurial exchange programs and apprenticeships, ICT and digital innovation programs
5. Media & Storytelling Arm: Highlighting successful youth startups, innovations, and showcasing cultural identity through digital storytelling, blogs, and short documentaries.

## **Youth Foundation Structure**

### **1. Governance & Leadership**

Board of Trustees

Provides strategic oversight and accountability.

Includes representatives from youth networks, TICAD co-organizers, private sector, and civil society.

Ensures regional and gender representation.

Executive Director

Leads day-to-day operations and implementation of strategic goals.

Reports to the Board of Trustees.

### **Advisory Council**

- Composed of youth experts, entrepreneurs, academics, and TICAD 9 Youth Advisory Board representatives.
- Offers technical guidance and youth-driven insights.

## **2 Core Departments & Units**

### **a) Digital Innovation & Platform Unit**

Manages the dedicated digital platform for youth engagement.

Facilitates online skill-sharing, peer learning, and networking.

Oversees the Verified Projects Section for showcasing youth-led initiatives to potential investors.



## **b) Fundraising & Partnerships Unit**

Leads global resource mobilization efforts.

Builds partnerships with the private sector, philanthropic institutions, diaspora, and governments.

Manages the sustainable financing mechanisms for youth projects.

## **c) Capacity Building & Exchange Programs Unit**

- Designs and delivers hybrid and in-person training programs.
- Coordinates entrepreneurial exchange programs, apprenticeships, and mentorships.
- Partners with universities, enterprises, and innovation hubs.

## **d) Storytelling, Media & Communications Unit**

- Runs the media storytelling arm, spotlighting youth-led innovations and cultural narratives.
- Develops campaigns, blogs, documentaries, and interviews to raise visibility.
- Manages media partnerships and youth journalism initiatives.

## **e) Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Unit**

- Tracks project outcomes and institutional performance.
- Captures success stories, lessons learned, and impact metrics.
- Supports evidence-based advocacy and continuous improvement.

## **3. Regional Focal Points / Country Chapters**

- Decentralized national or regional chapters to localize programming and outreach.
- Coordinate local projects, events, and stakeholder engagement.
- Feed insights and updates into the global foundation.

## **4. Youth Council / Ambassadors Program**

- A network of youth ambassadors and fellows selected annually.
- Act as liaisons between the foundation and youth constituencies.
- Support outreach, storytelling, and local implementation..

# **THE YOUTH AGENDA 2055: THE FUTURE WE WANT**

# THE YOUTH AGENDA 2055: THE FUTURE WE WANT

## Introduction

“Youth Agenda 2055: The Future We Want” is a visionary blueprint for the future of Africa and Japan, jointly developed and led by young people from both regions. Serving as a critical nexus between Africa and Japan—as well as between youth and society—this agenda aims to foster an inclusive and sustainable future through a win-win partnership. It articulates the shared aspirations of African and Japanese youth and outlines calls for concrete actions necessary to realize this future.

Additionally, it presents a comprehensive action plan, emphasizing the leadership role of youth as key agents of transformation. The Youth Agenda 2055 aligns with major international frameworks, including the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union's Agenda 2063, the United Nations' Pact for the Future, and other global development agendas. Through this alignment, it reinforces the role of youth in shaping a resilient and equitable global future that reflects the world we want to build together.

TICAD9, scheduled for August 2025, presents a crucial opportunity for young people from Africa and Japan to take the lead in co-creating actionable development strategies. To maximize this opportunity and advance the goals of Youth Agenda 2055, we propose the following three frameworks as requests to the TICAD co-organizers:

- Youth Advisory Board
- Youth Drives/Conferences
- Youth Foundation

# The Future We Want & A Call to Action for TICAD Stakeholders

## **Pillar 1: Society**

### **Action 1: Universal, High-Quality, and Inclusive Education through Innovation, Support, and Collaboration**

#### **We are Facing:**

- In Japan, the student-to-teacher ratio in primary education is 1:15.1 (OECD, 2021), while in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is 1:31 (WB, 2018), highlighting a significant disparity.
- The enrollment rate in higher education is 51% in Japan and 9% in Sub-Saharan Africa (WB, 2021).
- The literacy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa is 76.5%, and the primary school completion rate is around 61%, indicating that equality in both quality and access to education has not been achieved for all. Marginalized groups—including women, those in conflict zones, refugee camps, and rural areas—are often left furthest behind (UNICEF, 2024).
- “Brain Drain” continues to challenge Africa’s development, as highly educated individuals migrate to developed countries in search of better opportunities. This exodus of talent hinders local innovation and capacity building.

#### **We Want a Future Where:**

- 100% of young people—including those with disabilities, girls, ethnic minorities, and displaced persons—possess academic skills equivalent to the completion of basic education.
- All young people, through education, can develop a strong sense of agency and responsibility by cultivating values such as morality, tolerance, mutual respect, traditional and cultural identity, dialogue-based conflict resolution, and environmental stewardship. In doing so, they will contribute to a peaceful, inclusive society as empowered change-makers.
- Innovation driven by higher education and research institutions thrives through the co-creation and exchange of homegrown knowledge between Africa and Japan.

## Call to Action:

- Access to Education: Prioritize the development of inclusive, basic educational infrastructure that is gender- and disability-sensitive. Simultaneously promote systems and resources for non-formal education, homeschooling, and distance learning, ensuring no one is left behind in accessing quality learning opportunities.
  - Quality of Education: Improve teacher working conditions, secure national education budgets, and utilize flexible human resources, including community volunteers and public/private sector secondments. Establish feedback mechanisms from parents and communities (e.g., community schooling) and reduce teachers' workload through the strategic use of ICT.
  - Higher Education, Research, and Development: Expand financial support for higher education based on students' economic status and career aspirations. Strengthen research infrastructure and university management, establish data systems that are secure and transparent, encourage academia-industry collaboration, and provide career development and tuition support for international students and returnees. This will prevent talent outflow and promote the circular flow of knowledge.
  - Non-Cognitive Skills and Career Education: Integrate volunteer work, internships, and service learning opportunities into school curricula. Create youth-friendly career guidance centers offering early-stage support, mentoring, and access to career resources.
  - ICT for Education: Invest in digital infrastructure for schools, ensure equitable access to personalized and tech-driven learning, introduce digital literacy as a core subject, and support youth-led online learning platforms and content development. This will improve young people's adaptability, digital skills, and capacity to thrive in a knowledge-based economy.
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## **Action 2. Enhancing Youth Health and Well-being: Strengthening Access to Healthcare, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, and Mental Health Support**

### **We Are Facing:**

Health is the foundation of human dignity and economic growth. Public health infrastructure is not only vital for individual well-being but also instrumental in stabilizing economies. For instance, if the UN's goal of reducing malaria by 90% from 2015 levels by 2030 is achieved, Africa's economy could benefit by approximately \$16 billion annually. Investing in preventive care reduces long-term medical costs and attracts sustainable investment. However, Africa's healthcare sector is heavily reliant on international aid, with only 23 out of 55 countries surpassing the African Union's 5% budget allocation benchmark—far below the OECD average of 13%. Vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, remain most affected by potential funding cuts (AU, 2024).

A stark disparity in access to basic health-care is evident when comparing Japan's under-5 mortality rate of 3 per 1,000 to Sub-Saharan Africa's rate of 73 per 1,000 (UNICEF, 2024). Additionally, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) remains a challenge. Teenage pregnancy rates stand at 1.3% in Japan, compared to 27% in Sub-Saharan Africa, reflecting the need for improved SRH education and services.

Mental health also requires urgent attention. Globally, 14.6% of the population lives with a mental disorder, with 10.9% in Africa. Half of adult mental health issues begin before the age of 14. Yet, over 71% of youth experiencing mental health conditions are undertreated, and nearly half the global population lives in areas with just one psychiatrist per 200,000 people (WHO, 2022).

### **We Want a Future Where:**

- African countries double their domestic health spending and achieve 100% universal health coverage for young people.
- 100% of youth understand their sexual and reproductive health and rights, make informed choices, and respect others' rights.
- Mental health prevention and care are normalized, accessible, and youth responsive, enabling young people to thrive.

## Call to Action:

### 1. Health Expenditures in National Budgets:

- African countries will double domestic funding for healthcare, nutrition, and public health to build sustainable systems.

### 2. Universal Health Coverage:

- Develop youth-accessible healthcare systems via schools, kiosks, and community hubs. Leverage ICT tools, generic drugs, and climate-adaptive public health strategies. Strengthen human resources in healthcare.

### 3. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR):

- Mandate SRHR education in schools.
- Expand youth-friendly services in gynecology and urology.
- Provide insurance and subsidies for contraceptives and menstrual health.
- Offer free prenatal and postnatal care.
- Establish survivor support centers and confidential reporting systems to combat gender-based violence and prevent STIs, HIV, and unintended pregnancies.

### 4. Mental Health Support:

Integrate stress management and mental health education in schools and workplaces.

- Provide free, anonymous online counseling and mandatory access to school/work-place counselors.
- Expand mental health training programs at universities and increase scholarships for mental health professionals.

## Pillar 2. Economy

### Action 3. Economic Stability and Youth Empowerment: Building a Win-Win Future for Japan and Africa

#### We Are Facing:

In Japan, young people face a triple burden: declining wages (down 4% since 1996), rising inflation (food prices up 20%), and soaring social security costs (increasing from 24.3% to 48%) (Ministry of Labor, 2024).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 21.9% of youth are NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training), and 71.7% of those aged 25–29 are in unstable jobs. Though educational access has improved, employment remains a major challenge (ILO, 2024).

Economic instability impacts mental health, discourages family formation, and contributes to rising inequality. Conversely, economic empowerment enables innovation, entrepreneurship, and social change, making it crucial to individual and societal development.

## **We Want a Future Where:**

- All young people enjoy stable, decent employment with access to a robust social security system.
- Japan and Africa form a mutually beneficial economic partnership, leveraging their unique labor strengths and markets.

## **Call to Action:**

### **1. Industrial Development for Job Creation Agriculture**

Agriculture drives the economic development in Japan and Africa but faces climate risks. Invest in flood control, irrigation, and tech infrastructure to build resilience. Expand smallholder support for access to AI, internet, and machinery. Promote youth engagement in agriculture and support research on risks such as biodiversity loss and job displacement from digitalization.

## **Africa**

As green energy drives demand for natural resources, it is vital to boost value-added processing and build strategic manufacturing and trade networks under AfCFTA. Given limited domestic job absorption, systems for orderly overseas labor migration should be developed. At the same time, attract FDI and grow labor-intensive industries by streamlining regulations.

Support returnees through entrepreneurship hubs and job placement services.

## **Japan**

With structural shifts underway, fostering future industries requires focused investment in R&D and strategic market expansion. Japan should target high-growth areas such as green energy, tech, and Africa's emerging markets to adapt to innovation and demographic change.

### **2. Japan-Africa Collaboration**

Strengthen the Africa Business Council as a hub connecting African and Japanese businesses, including startups and entrepreneurs, and ensure follow-up on recommendations. Make TICAD more open to the private sector by promoting successful business models, joint projects, and business tours to foster co-creation between both regions.

### **3. Decent Employment**

Implement policies that incentivize the transition from non-regular to regular jobs. Offer subsidies for youth internships and hiring, and enforce labor standards to guarantee safe, dignified work for young people.

### **4. Social Security**

Expand coverage for youth to include unemployment, health, maternity, and career breaks. Alleviate youth burdens by subsidizing student loans, providing housing assistance, and ensuring access to public housing. Introduce measures to balance social security costs amid population shifts.



## Action 4. Fostering Youth Entrepreneurship: Overcoming Barriers and Unlocking Potential

### We are Facing:

Youth possess flexible thinking and high adaptability, generating innovative solutions to address social challenges. African and Japanese youth are at the forefront of innovation through co-creation and global collaboration. In Japan, entrepreneurship remains limited—only 1.2% are entrepreneurs, 6.4% are part-time entrepreneurs, and 14.9% express interest. A staggering 77% show no interest at all, with lower interest rates among those under 29. A significant gender gap persists: over 70% of entrepreneurs are male (GEM Japan 2022; Statista, 2023). Conversely, in Africa, 70% of young people express strong interest in entrepreneurship and aim to launch businesses within a few years (Africa Youth Report 2024).

### We Want a Future Where:

Youth in Japan and Africa collaborate to co-create inclusive solutions, exchange experiences, and inspire a ripple effect of social transformation that transcends borders and generations.

In both contexts, access to funding is the top barrier (Japan: 48%, Africa: 52%).

However, secondary barriers differ:

- Japan: “Risk of failure” (32.1%) and “Lack of ideas” (31%), influenced by social and cultural expectations (Statista, 2023).
- Africa: “Corruption” (40%) and “Regulations” (27%), pointing to systemic and institutional obstacles (Africa Youth Report 2024).

Despite existing support programs, challenges remain:

- Limited Japan–Africa co-creation initiatives,
- A focus on scalability over experimentation,
- Lack of support for socially impactful but economically modest ventures.

### Call to Action:

- Supportive Culture: Cultivate an environment that tolerates failure, values youth innovation, and invests in long-term development.
- Financial Support: Establish the TICAD Youth Foundation to provide funding tailored to co-created initiatives—covering seed funding, mobility, and collaborative research.
- Material Support: Provide necessary tools and spaces (e.g., sewing machines, motorcycles, computers), and reduce barriers to accessing office space through public-private partnerships.
- Networking: Facilitate connections among youth, investors, companies, and research institutions from Africa and Japan.
- Entrepreneurial Skills: Offer training on business planning, fundraising, IP protection, and market entry (with a focus on African and Japanese contexts).
- Mentorship: Build a mentorship network that connects youth with experienced entrepreneurs and thought leaders.
- Information Access: Launch a bilingual (English/Japanese) platform that centralizes youth-focused entrepreneurial resources across both regions.

### Pillar 3. Peace and Governance

#### Action 5. Strengthening Global Peace and Security through Disarmament, Dialogue, and Youth Empowerment

#### We are Facing:

In 2023, 34.8 million people were internally displaced in Sub-Saharan Africa due to conflict and violence. Countries such as Sudan (6 million IDPs), DRC (3.77 million), Ethiopia (790,000), and Burkina Faso (710,000) are among the most affected (IDMC, 2024). Japan, as the only nation to experience nuclear bombing, has a historic responsibility to champion peace and disaster recovery.

#### We Want a Future Where:

A world where youth live free from violence and fear. All weapons of mass destruction are abolished, and ongoing global dialogue and cooperation secure lasting peace for future generations.

#### Call to Action:

- Immediate Cessation of Violence: Facilitate ceasefires and counter terrorism through AU-Japan-REC collaboration, while regulating illegal arms trade.
- International Solidarity for Disarmament: Lead global disarmament efforts by promoting treaties banning nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

- Addressing Emerging Threats: Build cooperative frameworks to prevent cyber, space, and AI-driven conflicts.
- Promotion of YPS (Youth, Peace, and Security): Mainstream youth into peacebuilding processes to recognize their role as active agents of conflict prevention and recovery.

### **Action 6. Empowering Youth in Decision-Making: Ensuring Representation and Active Participation**

#### **We are Facing:**

Young people remain largely excluded from national decision-making spaces. In Japan, only 7.7% of National Diet members are under 40. In Africa, representation ranges between 3.7% (Côte d'Ivoire) and 51.2% (Ethiopia), with most countries between 10–30%. Under-30s are barely represented across both regions (IPU, 2024).

Rwanda is the only country implementing a youth quota system in its legislature. While 63% of African youth believe they can impact politics, only 46% of Japanese youth under 18 feel they can make societal changes (Africa Youth Report 2024). Importantly, youth have never been formally included in TICAD's official sessions.

#### **We Want a Future Where:**

Youth believe their voices matter and actively shape policy and governance.

Decision-making becomes fair, inclusive, and future-oriented.

#### **Call to Action:**

1. Youth Mainstreaming: Integrate youth perspectives into all policy and program stages—planning, implementation, and evaluation.
2. Youth Participation in Decision-Making: Establish affirmative action and financial support for youth in political and institutional leadership.
3. TICAD Youth Advisory Board: Create a permanent youth body within TICAD to participate in all sessions, compile youth policy proposals, and oversee follow-ups on implementation.
4. Youth Diplomacy Skills: Develop practical youth leadership through:
  - Leadership positions in decision-making spaces,
  - Activism platforms and awareness campaigns,
  - Mock elections and Model UN in curricula,
  - Mentorship programs with political leaders,
  - "Kabanmochi" initiatives where youth shadow diplomats at international conferences.

## **Enabler 1. People-to-People**

### **Relationships between Africa and Japan**

#### **Action 7. Strengthening Youth Mobility and Exchange through Study Abroad and Language Learning Opportunities**

##### **We are Facing:**

While Western nations and China host tens of thousands of African students ie France: 100,000, China: 50,000 (UNESCO, 2022), Japan hosts less than 1% from Africa (~0.8%) (JASSO, 2022). Major barriers include:

- Language proficiency requirements and a limited number of English-language programs,
- Lack of Japanese language infrastructure in Africa,
- Limited scholarships and funding opportunities.

Africa is still excluded from many public exchange programs, forcing youth to self-organize opportunities.

TICAD9 Youth Surveys also found that 40% of youth feel disconnected from their communities—underscoring the importance of exchanges to foster belonging and solidarity.

##### **We Want a Future Where:**

Youth in Africa and Japan travel easily, connect through regular exchange programs, and communicate directly via language and technology—strengthening mutual understanding.

##### **Call to Action:**

- Expansion and Diversification of Exchange Programs:
- Build on existing programs like JICA's ABE Initiative and MEXT's Tobitate! to expand Japan-Africa connections.
- Promote diverse exchanges—student, community, corporate, and government—through short- and medium-term programs and sister school partnerships.
- Promote the introduction of exchange and capacity-building programs between local governments and central government agencies between Africa and Japan
- Launch a Japan-Africa exchange program led by African states & Japanese government (including adding Africa as one of the target areas of the JENESYS program by MOFA).
- Language Education: Promote Japanese language education in Africa through elective courses, language schools, and local support services. Launch programs to train and dispatch volunteer teachers, and expand access to teacher certification via in-person and multilingual online courses.

C.Promote free access to online learning services like Duolingo for youth, with in-house support. Collaborate with government and research institutions to include African languages, supporting the preservation and promotion of less-spoken cultures.

- College of Technology (高専) and Vocational Schools (専門学校) in Japan: To meet the demand for skilled talent in Japan and Africa, expand enrollment in Japan’s technical and vocational schools by enhancing public-private outreach, increasing scholarships, building local partnerships, offering online open campuses, and easing language requirements through conditional admissions.
- Introduction of Direct Flights: As a measure to overcome the physical distance between regions, introduce direct flights connecting Japan and Addis Ababa..

**Action 8. Promote Social Cohesion between Africans, Japanese, and the Diaspora in Their Communities**

**We are Facing:**

Many young people feel that media coverage in both Japan and Africa inadequately and inaccurately represents their countries, often mischaracterizing their societies and cultures.

The number of foreign residents in Japan has been increasing steadily, reaching a record high of 3,588,956 people in 2024—an increase of 177,964 individuals or 5.2% from the previous year. In response, efforts to establish inclusive systems for harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals are underway. However, challenges persist, including everyday difficulties stemming from cultural differences, limited access to human rights, barriers to social participation, and the risk of isolation (Immigration Services Agency, 2024).

Similarly, Japanese nationals living or studying in African countries have reported facing comparable challenges, including daily life struggles and instances of discrimination.

### **We Want a Future Where:**

People from Japan and Africa move beyond stereotypes, develop an understanding of one another's cultures, build meaningful people-to-people connections, and co-create sustainable, inclusive communities.

### **Call to Action:**

#### **Media Reforms**

- To ensure accurate representation of societies and cultural diversity, it is vital to strengthen collaboration between African and Japanese media. This includes:
- Facilitating information exchange
- Conducting joint fact-checking and reporting
- Producing co-authored features
- Promoting journalist exchange programs
- Amplifying positive storytelling
- Ensuring that diaspora voices are reflected in national narratives

### **Cultural and Artistic Content**

Make cultural content more accessible by:

- Translating Japanese manga and anime, as well as African films and music, into local languages
- Distributing such content through mainstream platforms (e.g., Netflix, local TV, and streaming services)
- Featuring African columnists and creatives in Japanese media outlets to foster intercultural exchange

### **Bilateral Cooperation to Increase African Workforce Participation in Japan**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Japan and African countries will support:

- Introduction of working holiday visa programs between Africa and Japan
- Establishment of visa consultation centers within African governments for work-related categories (e.g., training, technical internships, and skilled labor)
- Enhanced access to information for prospective African workers in Japan
- Support for job matching with Japanese organizations
- Relaxation of regulations concerning family accompaniment for workers in Japan

## Social Cohesion

To foster integration and mutual wellbeing of diaspora communities

1. Expand orientation programs for migrants to include language acquisition and cultural etiquette training 13
2. Establish one-stop consultation centers in municipalities, companies, and online platforms, providing support on loneliness, mental health, and employment—and ensure diverse representation among staff
3. Integrate translation apps into public consultation services
4. Create platforms for diaspora communities to express political opinions
5. Introduce compulsory multicultural education in host country school curricula and conduct awareness campaigns in communities
6. Increase funding for NPOs and civic organizations implementing these measures

### Action 9. Strengthening the Japan–Af–rica Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development through TICAD

#### We Are Facing:

Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget peaked around the launch of TICAD, reaching approximately 1,014.4 billion yen. Since then, it has declined to less than half, stabilizing at about 566.4 billion yen by 2025 (MOFA, 2025).

Due to Japan's anticipated economic contraction and rising social security costs, significantly increasing the ODA budget is unlikely. Public support for ODA has also waned: a 2023 survey found that 16.2% of respondents believed ODA should be “terminated” or “reduced as much as possible,” the highest figure on record (Japan Cabinet Office, 2024).

To improve public understanding and support for ODA, we must:

1. Increase people-to-people exchanges between Africans and Japanese, as highlighted in this Enabler
2. Strengthen public relations strategies to showcase ODA's real-world impact
3. Emphasize the reciprocal benefits of ODA—for example, international students supported by ODA contributing to Japan's workforce and helping sustain its social systems.

According to UNCTAD's mid-term review of the 2030 Agenda, the SDG investment gap in developing countries now stands at approximately \$4 trillion annually. To bridge this gap, an additional \$30 trillion in investment is needed by 2030. This reality underscores that ODA alone is insufficient—do-mestic resource mobilization and private sector involvement are now critical.



## We Want a Future Where :

Africa and Japan build a resilient, equitable partnership grounded in mutual understanding, shared responsibility, and sustained cooperation. Development financing sees a surge in private sector contributions and donations, while TICAD evolves into a dynamic platform that connects governments, civil society, and the private sector.

## Call to Action:

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- Conduct rigorous impact assessments of TICAD projects every three years
- Publish findings and adjust future strategies based on evidence
- Clearly define the implementation and accountability framework at each TICAD

## International Cooperation Public Relations

- Share results and impacts from TICAD both quantitatively and qualitatively
- Engage civil society and the broader public through continuous media and social media coverage—not just before TICAD events.

## Commitment from African Countries

As TICAD moves from a model of “aid” to “co-creation,” African governments must show leadership by:

- Allocating national funds for social development
- Implementing reforms in business environments and governance
- Actively partnering with Japan on joint initiatives

## Opening to the Private Sector

- Extend official TICAD participation to include private sector actors and NGOs from both Africa and Japan
- Promote inclusive co-creation by leveraging innovation, capital, and community-led expertise

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## **Enabler 2. Sustainability**

### **Action 10: Strengthen a Holistic Approach to Climate Change and Climate Justice through Japan–Africa Youth Cooperation**

#### **We are Facing:**

Africa is among the regions most severely impacted by climate change, facing escalating challenges such as reduced agricultural productivity, water scarcity, and coastal flooding due to rising sea levels. The African Development Bank (2019) projects a 5–15% annual GDP loss across the continent by 2050, disproportionately affecting poor and rural communities.

To meet climate goals, Africa requires approximately \$2.8 trillion from 2020 to 2030. However, as of 2022, only \$300 billion—just over 10%—has been secured for implementing the Nationally Determined Contributions (CPI, 2022). This funding gap underscores the urgent need for increased investment in mitigation and adaptation strategies, particularly in preventing climate-induced disasters such as droughts and floods.

#### **We Want a Future Where:**

Climate action is rooted in fairness and shared responsibility. We envision a transition to renewable energy and net-zero emissions through equitable international cooperation—balancing development needs with climate goals. This includes maintaining global temperature rise below 2°C, while also adapting to existing climate impacts and restoring ecosystems.

#### **Call to Action:**

- **Paris Agreement Alignment:** Ensure all policies and programs align with the Paris Agreement. Regularly formulate, implement, and review NDCs at TICAD and related platforms, encouraging continuous collaboration between Japan and Africa.
- **Climate Justice:** Promote climate justice by recognizing the historical responsibilities of countries like Japan. Japan must lead with expanded funding, capacity building, and technical support for Africa's climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.
- **Youth Participation:** Institutionalize youth participation in climate action to cultivate future environmental leaders and green jobs. Provide support for youth-led start-ups—especially those offering solutions in clean technology, renewable energy, and climate-smart agriculture—through targeted funding, mentorship, and tax incentives. 15

- **Technology & Research:** Boost joint research and innovation through partnerships between African and Japanese universities, focusing on climate resilience and clean technologies.
  - **Climate Adaptation and Action Sensitization:** Integrate robust climate change education in school curricula and public awareness campaigns in both Africa and Japan. Target high-risk communities to promote informed action and behavioral shifts.
  - **Migration & Refugees:** Collaborate on policy measures addressing climate-induced displacement. Develop frameworks to support climate migrants and facilitate their integration into host communities.
  - **Youth TICAD Conference (Every 3 Years):** Aligned with TICAD, this triennial forum will review achievements, refresh priorities, and set new milestones for the following phase of Youth Agenda 2055.
  - **Progress Reporting:** Key outcomes and findings from the annual conferences and Youth TICADs will be compiled into publicly shared progress reports, ensuring transparency and accountability across all partners. 16

## Implementation, Rolling Plan, Monitoring & Evaluation

### Plan of Action:

A living, youth-led Rolling Plan will be launched during Youth TICAD. It will serve as the primary implementation framework for Youth Agenda 2055.

### Monitoring & Evaluation Methods:

- Annual Youth Drive: Stakeholders will convene annually to assess progress, share outcomes, and identify challenges based on the Action Plan. Youth-led monitoring tools will be utilized to track performance and impact.

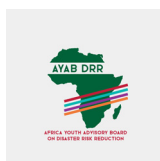
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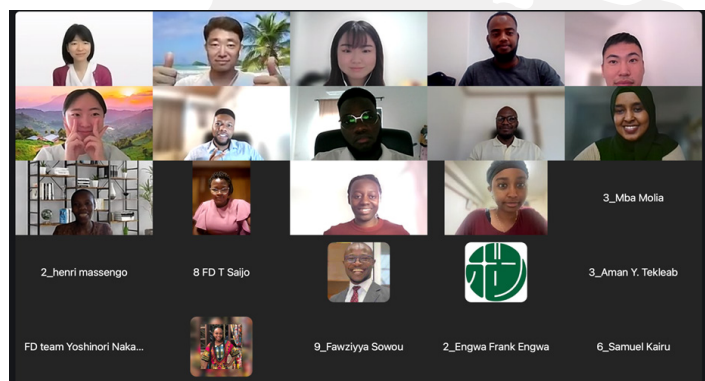
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## PARTNERS AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS





## Three-day “Future Design” sessions (Online, July–August 2024)



## Questionnaire Survey (Online, January–March 2024)



## 1st Africa–Japan Youth Drive (24 August 2024)



## Stakeholder Meetings: Africa & Japan (January 2025~)



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan (METI), TICAD Working Group of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizai Doyukai), TICAD NGO Network, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Côte d'Ivoire Office), African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU-CIDO), African Diplomatic Corps, Ethiopian Airlines, United Nations Industrial Development Organization – Investment and Technology Promotion Office, Tokyo (UNIDO ITPO Tokyo – Regional Advisory), United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (UN OSAA), the World Bank, and the African Export–Import Bank (Afreximbank), and more.





**Youth TICAD Pre-Event in Tokyo  
(8 February 2025)**



**2nd Africa–Japan Youth Drive in  
Ethiopia(23–25 February 2025)**



**Youth TICAD 2025 Media Seminar  
(18th July)**



**Youth TICAD 2025  
(August 18th to 20th)**



<https://youthticad2025.org/>

**Continues after TICAD 9  
towards the Future We Want**

# **THE YOUTH AGENDA 2055:**

## **THE FUTURE WE WANT**