

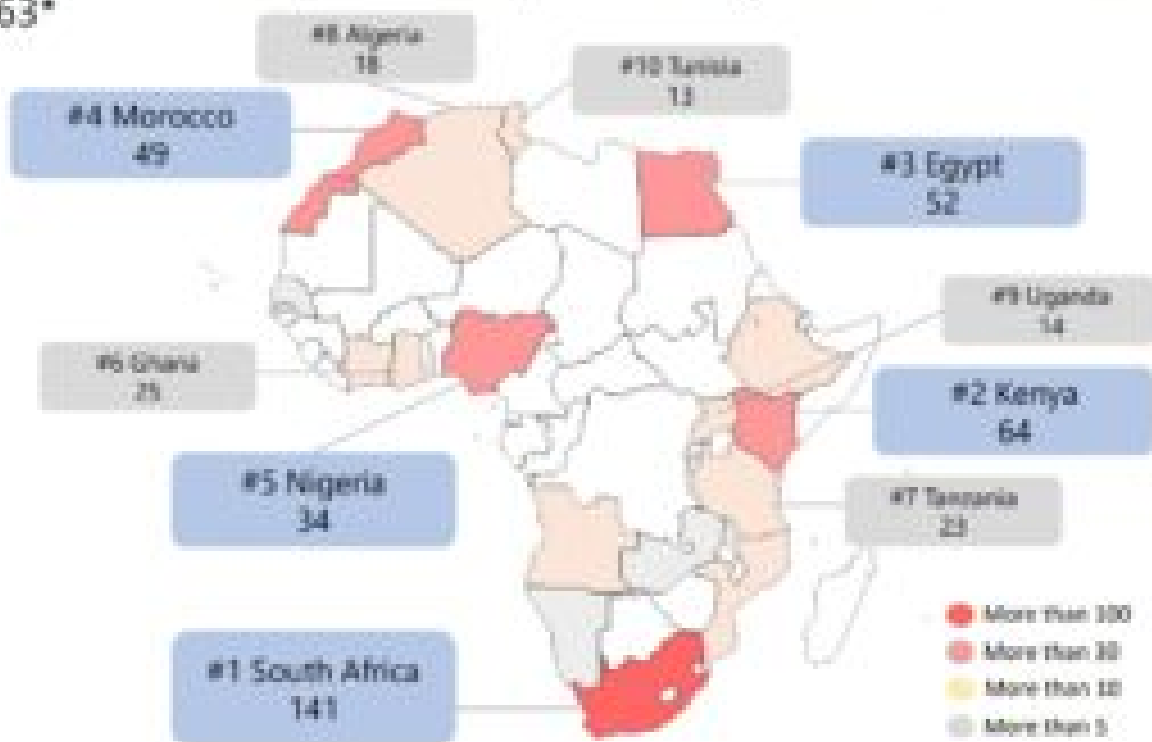
The overwhelming success of the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) which was convened by African Union Member States and their development partners, in Tunis, Tunisia further cemented Japan positive leadership role in Africa's development.

The conference looking ahead to a post COVID-19 pandemic era, reaffirmed Japan's commitment to collaborating with African countries in building a resilient and sustainable society in Africa to be characterized by human security and attainment of AU Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

According to a final communique issued at the end of the two-days international meeting, participants also expressed appreciation for Japan's comprehensive efforts in ensuring equitable access to safe, effective and quality-assured COVID-19 vaccines in Africa.

The document also commended efforts by the Japan International Cooperation Agency through its vaccine and cold storage facility provision and its up to \$1.5 billion USD of financial contribution to the COVAX facility for global access for COVID-19 vaccine.

The number of Japanese companies doing business in Africa totals 563*



Map illustrating Japanese companies operating in 54 African countries

Cooperation efforts, according to the statement have also been materialized through financial facility to AfreximBank to advance the development of local production capabilities for vaccines and medical products and to procure vaccines through the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) with support from Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI).

At least sixty-six official delegations representing 48 countries took part in the two-day event along with regional and international organisations, civil society in the Tunisian capital city, Tunis

One of the major purposes was to identify ways to build resilience and achieve inclusion and abundance in Africa in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, global warming and the state of play in Ukraine, according to the organisers of the event.

It is expected that over the next three years, Japan will fully deliver its pledge of allocating \$1.08 billion USD for strengthening health systems and fighting against the three major infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

These efforts by Japan's Global Health Strategy which aims to strengthen prevention, preparedness and response for public health crises seek to build on tangible progress made under Africa Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AfHWIN), it said.

The communique added that the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent socio-political and environmental shocks have highlighted the imperative to tackle these and other emerging challenges in the current socio-economic system, and to promote public-private partnership towards Africa's development.

The Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) also called attention to the importance of promotion of private sector-led growth in Africa.

The new cooperation framework between Japan and Africa is built on three key pillars aimed at encouraging investment, promoting innovation from the private sector through streamlining collaboration between Japanese and African companies and technology transfer, and strengthening industrial human resources

development,

Latest estimates by the World Bank show that despite relatively rapid economic growth, private investment in Africa is still relatively low.

It said that the proximate reasons for this situation are poor infrastructure, weak skills and a host of policy and institutional impediments such as business regulations and trade restrictions.

More efforts are needed to achieve sustainable economic growth

However, the latest development is seen by delegates at TICAD 8 as the most decisive move by African Governments to build a resilient and sustainable society characterized by human security and attainment of African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Apart from mobilizing private investments and providing support to health sector, African delegates at TICAD 8 also welcomed Japan's contribution in the areas of mitigation and adaptation aimed at reducing vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

Key efforts, according to the document will be deployed to tackle climate change, within the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, including developing green infrastructure, providing assistance in the fields of disaster management, agriculture, forestry, marine and terrestrial environment, as well as preserving of ecosystems on the continent.

The eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) took place in Tunisia, one of many import-dependent countries battered by global supply disruptions and price spikes unleashed by the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Tunisian host President Kais Saied called for a "new approach" towards Africa, noting that many countries which had racked up large foreign debts since independence were also net exporters of human resources — taking skills gained in Africa to be used in the global North.

Latest official estimates show that there are 563 Japanese companies operating in 54 African countries in industries like electronics, automobiles, textiles, and energy, among others (END)