

# Informing the Future of Japan's ODA

**Japan's ODA within an African context**

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>ARI</b>	African Rice Initiative
<b>ASEI</b>	Activity–Student–Experiment–Improvisation
<b>CAADP</b>	The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
<b>CARD</b>	Coalition for African Rice Development
<b>CICE</b>	Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education
<b>CRS</b>	Creditor Reporting System (an OECD dataset)
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (UK)
<b>GBS</b>	General Budget Support
<b>GDP / GNI</b>	Gross Domestic Product / Gross National Income
<b>GRIPS</b>	National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (Japan)
<b>HIPC</b>	Highly Indebted Poor Country
<b>IDA</b>	International Development Association (World Bank)
<b>INSET</b>	In-Service Training
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Country
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>METI</b>	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (Japan)
<b>MITI</b>	Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Japan)
<b>MIC</b>	Middle Income Country
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance (Japan)

<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan)
<b>NEC</b>	National Electoral Commission
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>ODI</b>	Overseas Development Institute
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development
<b>OPEC</b>	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
<b>SMASSE</b>	Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education
<b>SSA</b>	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>STEP</b>	Special Terms for Economic Partnership (a type of loan)
<b>TC</b>	Technical Cooperation
<b>TICAD</b>	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNTFHS</b>	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

## PREFACE: Japan at a crossroads

In 1979, Ezra Vogel, a Harvard academic, wrote a book entitled “Japan as Number One: Lessons for America” in which he portrayed Japan, with its strong economy and cohesive society, as the world’s most dynamic industrial nation. Just over three decades later, Japan holds lessons of a less encouraging kind. Its society is growing older at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world. Its position as the second largest economy in the world has been usurped by China many years earlier than had been predicted. And with the rise of the emerging ‘BRIC’ (Brazil, Russia, India and China) economies, its influence as the ‘Asian representative’ within high-level international forums is increasingly challenged.

To some extent, these problems have been looming for many decades already, with Japan typically finding it difficult to assert itself on the world stage on a level commensurate with its economic might. Its Official Development Assistance (ODA) has in many ways become Tokyo's main foreign policy tool, utilised as a form of investment, a confidence-building measure, a solution for bilateral problems, a manifestation of economic power and global leadership, and as a tool for buying power and influence in various international organisations. As the 2010 OECD-DAC *Peer Review of Japan* put it, “Japan sees international development cooperation as in its own long-term interests.” The future of Japan’s ODA is therefore an issue of much greater importance than simply maintaining Japan’s national pride in its status as one of the world’s largest bilateral donors – it is a political and economic imperative.

This means that after decades of being broadly acknowledged as the ‘quiet diplomat’ in international affairs, a ‘bridge’ between East and West, Japan is today standing at a political, economic, social and cultural crossroads, with the future of its ODA a critical influence on its compass. A number of interrelated questions are apparent:

- ❖ What are the distinctive characteristics of Japan’s ODA, and can these add value to contemporary development efforts or are they more of an obstacle to effective collaboration and cooperation?
- ❖ Should Japan aim to recapture / pursue a greater role for itself on the international stage, and if so, how might it need to change the way it promotes, allocates and evaluates its ODA accordingly?
- ❖ To what extent is the way Japan views the value of its ODA aligned with the perceptions held by the other major stakeholders in the development field?
- ❖ How can Japan make more effective use of particular topics, countries, programs or learnings within the diverse spread of its ODA to secure greater interest, profile and influence among key external stakeholders?

These questions will be explored throughout this research project, with this report constituting the second in a series that will be made available through the JICA UK website ([www.jica.go.jp/uk/english](http://www.jica.go.jp/uk/english)). I hope you enjoy reading it.

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## ***About this project***

To help inform discussion of how Japan's ODA might best respond to a rapidly changing development landscape, the UK Office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has commissioned the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) to undertake a three-part research project entitled "Informing the Future of Japan's ODA".

Each phase of the project has its own focus and deliverables, which are designed to complement and progressively build upon the findings from each stage to make recommendations for JICA about more effective engagement in the future. The first phase of the study examines the history and evolution of Japan's ODA to date, in an effort to identify its contemporary value within an evolving development landscape. The second phase, the findings of which are presented in this report, looks at whether the distinctive characteristics of Japan's ODA may be practically applied to meet some of the current and emerging challenges facing African countries, and highlights issues that may influence JICA's effective engagement in this region in the future. The final phase of the project addresses how Japan might enhance its profile and influence in the development field within an increasingly crowded donor marketplace.

The Terms of Reference for the project can be found in Appendix A.

## ***Phase two methodology***

This report was developed on the basis of both desk research and a series of interviews with development professionals from JICA and a range of other organisations (see Annex B). The research team at ODI conducted a review on Japan's ODA towards Africa that included academic books, articles, donor reports and evaluations, as well as documents available on the websites of both JICA and the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).<sup>1</sup> Quantitative data to support the report's conclusions were also gathered from the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database. In addition, the team developed a comprehensive list of questions to guide a series of 9 face-to-face or telephone interviews with relevant stakeholders, including current and former Japanese government officials, as well as representatives from several donor agencies, academics and civil society organizations.<sup>2</sup>

Through this combination of primary and secondary data, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and some strategic and conceptual thinking, the ODI team has sought to identify how Japan's development model and ODA approach is being applied to Africa and how this compares to the priorities and approaches of other donors. The information thus gathered helps to provide an indicative assessment of what makes Japan's ODA distinctive, as well as what some of its strengths and weaknesses are, in the African context.

However, given the limited nature of this exercise, in terms of both time and resources, it was not always possible to obtain a complete picture. Beyond the literature reviewed by the team, this report also relies on the accuracy of information provided by interviewees based on their given perspective and experience. As such, there is an important subjective quality to the analysis presented here.

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<sup>1</sup> See the list of References at the end of this Report for further details of sources used in the desk research.

<sup>2</sup> See the list of Interviewees at the end of this Report for further details of contributing individuals.

# 1. Introduction

This report examines Japan's ODA to Africa<sup>3</sup> and the lessons for more effective engagement in Africa in the future. It is part of a wider study, commissioned by the UK Office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) entitled "Informing the Future of Japan's ODA".

Any reflection on Japan's ODA to Africa must be set within a broader review of the donor landscape. This landscape is a dynamic one, reflecting a wide range of motives, historical relationships and recent developments. There has been a significant presence of prominent OECD DAC donors in Africa, from multilaterals to the World Bank to bilaterals (and former colonial powers) such as the UK and France. These have come together to agree on common policy frameworks (such as around the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness) but they also remain a diverse group, with some significant differences. In recent years, these donors have emphasised issues of governance and institutional reform, as well as responding to conflict, in relation to African development. They have also begun to respond to growing African criticism about the lack of ownership and onerous conditionalities in relation to aid.

Furthermore, there are a number of emerging or non-traditional donors who are increasingly reshaping the aid landscape within Africa. Much attention has been paid to the role of China in Africa, for example, but countries like Korea, Brazil and others are also increasingly active. This supports greater diversity of approaches and aid models, although criticism has been levelled at these donors where they are seen as supporting governments and regimes that may not reflect the interests of their wider citizenry.

In this complex terrain, Japan remains a relatively small player, having traditionally focused the majority of its ODA on its Asian neighbours. Its support to Africa is still a smaller proportion of its ODA than to Asia (although it is growing) and the footprint of other donors remains far larger in terms of the overall amounts provided.

However, in 2008, Japan made a commitment to double its aid to Africa. Significantly, this is also at a time when there is increasing debate and reflection on the models and approaches adopted by donors and, crucially, on the needs and requests of those in African countries. In this respect, Japan has the potential to offer a number of its distinctive strengths, namely as an empathic partner, a steady supporter, as a distinctive voice, and as an effective implementer. However, it will need to respond to some key areas of concern if it is to capitalise on these potential strengths.

This report therefore proceeds as follows: Section 2 examines key trends in the donor landscape in Africa. Section 3 sets out Japan's model in Africa, highlighting areas of similarity and difference to its engagement in Asia, before Sections 3 and 4 look at the potential added value of Japan and options for the future.

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<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this report, we use Africa to refer to sub-Saharan Africa.

## 2. Key trends in the donor landscape

Analysis of Japan's aid to sub-Saharan Africa needs to be situated within a reflection on the wider donor landscape. Whereas Japan has been a dominant donor in parts of Asia, the African context presents a more complex landscape, with a growing plurality of actors. Understanding how a range of donors have engaged with Africa is therefore crucial for identifying Japan's potential added value and comparative advantage.

Much of the contemporary donor landscape in Africa reflects the historical relations that characterised colonial engagement. The so-called "Scramble for Africa" marked a process of colonisation of African territory by European powers (between the late 1880s and the outbreak of World War One), the legacies of which are still being felt today. Motivated by a range of commercial and strategic interests, colonisation established a set of historical relationships and fundamentally shaped the foundations of African states and societies, often in profoundly negative ways (Herbst 2000; Migdal 1998; Davidson 1992).

Since many African countries achieved independence, links have remained between former colonial powers and African countries, reflecting a mix of commercial, cultural and strategic interests as well as some recognition of the responsibilities of these former colonial powers. There has also been an opening up of donor engagement, with a broadening recognition of the countries and organisations engaged in overseas support and development assistance. In recent years, a number of key debates have surfaced, including discussion of the so-called 'Washington Consensus' and rival development models; the rise of new aid paradigms (including the governance and human security agendas); and the rise of a range of emerging powers as prominent donors. These are all reshaping donor-recipient dynamics in Africa, and reflect the emerging reality that aid and international assistance is itself at something of a crossroads in many African contexts.

### 2.1) *The Washington Consensus*

The term 'Washington Consensus' has been interpreted in a variety of ways, but at its core refers to a set of economic policies advocated for developing countries by institutions based in Washington, namely the international financial institutions (the IFIs, primarily the IMF and World Bank) and the US Treasury (Williamson 2004). It developed from the recognition in the late 1970s that the state in many countries (particularly in Latin America) had become bloated and ineffective; as a response, the Consensus proposed radically reducing the size of the state and strengthening the role of the market (Ibid.).

Box 1 sets out the key features of this consensus, as summarised by Rodrik (2002). As this Box makes clear, some of the elements of this prevailing approach included financial and trade liberalisation, privatisation and fiscal discipline. This was exemplified through policies of structural adjustment adopted towards Africa, which grew from the late 1970s and spread to almost all African countries, through formal agreements with the IMF and the World Bank, with the exception of South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia (Olukoshi 2000).

#### **Box 1: Ten key features of the Washington Consensus (Rodrik 2002: 10)**

1. Fiscal discipline
2. Reorientation of public expenditures
3. Tax reform
5. Financial liberalization
6. Unified and competitive exchange rates
7. Trade liberalization
8. Openness to DFI
9. Privatization
10. Deregulation

UNICEF's *Adjustment with a Human Face Report* (1987) set the stage for a broad critique of structural adjustment policies, highlighting some of the social and economic costs and their failure to produce intended developmental outcomes. Since then, a body of analysis has highlighted related challenges, including its sidelining of the role of the state in promoting development. Trevor Manuel, former Minister of Finance, South Africa, for example, has argued that in practice few African countries applied, or could apply, all the reforms advocated by the Washington Consensus, in part because of the difficulties of pursuing them, but also because it was not clear that its policy prescriptions were appropriate to Africa's needs (Manuel 2003). This was seen to be reflected in the fact that Africa, at the turn of the new millennium, and despite sustained donor engagement for decades, continued to be the poorest region in the world and had remained particularly vulnerable to (violent) conflict and global economic downturns.

## **2.2) New development paradigms?**

In part due to these criticisms, by the 1990s some donors began to reconsider, at least in theory, the nature of their engagement with developing countries. This led to new thinking and language on issues of aid effectiveness and partnership with recipient countries. Blueprint structural adjustment policies and conditionalities characteristic of the Washington Consensus were ostensibly superseded by a 'new' approach to development, embodied in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process (Rocha Menocal and Rogerson 2006). Started in 2000, in the wake of the international initiative on Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), PRSPs were intended to be nationally owned development strategies and priorities prepared by governments through a participatory process involving civil society and development partners, and, in principle, would serve as a framework to guide all concessional development flows (Piron 2004).

In addition, in 2000, leaders from virtually all countries agreed to a set of eight ambitious objectives to combat world poverty; the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A focus on the MDGs placed considerable emphasis in the international community on poverty reduction through the delivery of basic social services, rather than through economic growth alone. At the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, participating countries reaffirmed their commitment to meet the MDGs by the year 2015. In particular, rich countries renewed their pledges to increase development assistance to 0.7% of national income and poor countries committed to taking concrete steps to improve governance, establish development priorities, and adopt sound policies for growth. In 2005, in an OECD DAC led process, donor and recipient governments again pledged to adhere to a set of principles for achieving aid effectiveness, which placed country ownership at their core (see Box 2).

### **Box 2: Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness (OECD-DAC 2005)**

- **Ownership:** Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions
- **Alignment:** Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures
- **Harmonisation:** Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective
- **Managing for results:** Managing resources and improving decision-making for results
- **Mutual accountability:** Donors and partners are accountable for development results

As part of these principles, OECD DAC donors committed to increase the levels of programme based aid (over project aid), in an attempt to address aid fragmentation and make greater use of country systems. This led to the rise of a number of new aid modalities, principally forms of general and sector budget support which have been heavily piloted in

some African countries, although overall they have remained a relatively limited area of donor support.

These agendas are themselves now increasingly under review. The MDGs set a fast approaching deadline of 2015, leading to growing debate on what a post MDGs agenda might be, and the Paris Principles are due to be reviewed at a forthcoming High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November 2011. Analysis of the challenges of realising these commitments has contributed to some shifts in the priorities of parts of the donor community.

Recent studies, including a major study of sector budget support in six African countries<sup>4</sup>, argue that, while these modalities have usefully strengthened policy dialogue and frameworks at the national level, in some countries they have not paid sufficient attention to more downstream issues of implementation and the incentives at local levels, undermining their ability to realise concrete development outcomes (Williamson and Dom 2010).

Moreover, realisation that the MDGs are not going to be met in some countries has placed a spotlight on the underlying institutions and governance conditions needed to realise these targets; similarly, the lack of mention of issues of conflict and fragility, despite their relevance in countries at the bottom of all development indicators, has led many donors to reassess their funding to conflict affected countries.

### *Governance*

From the 1990s onwards, donors have increasingly highlighted the importance of governance and institutions as the essential foundation that underpins development. The Report of the Commission for Africa (CFA 2005) diagnosed poor governance as the single most significant developmental challenge besetting the region, stressing that “without progress in governance, all other reforms will have limited impact”.

For some donors, including the US and a number of European donors, as well as some UN agencies, this initially translated into a ‘good governance agenda’ which placed principles of participation, inclusiveness, accountability and rule of law at its core. As a result, there was increased investment in improving the quality of governance in Africa, including considerable support to public sector reform, as well as to civil society activism<sup>5</sup>. The focus of this agenda on (formal) institutions has been important and offered an important corrective to earlier approaches that promised development without due concern for the institutional framework needed to deliver those policies (Grindle 2011).

However, the nature of the relationship between ‘good governance’ and growth is itself increasingly contested. There is a widespread perception that such governance and public-sector reforms, as well as capacity-building efforts more generally, have fallen short of expectations for improved developmental outcomes, including in Africa (Pritchett and de Weijer 2010). Multiple evaluations have shown the limitations of programmes designed to support ‘good governance’ measures (for example, Pritchett and de Weijer 2010). In light of these challenges and limitations, concepts of ‘good enough’ governance or forms of growth enhancing governance have been developed (Grindle 2011; Booth 2011). These seek to understand the governance or institutional arrangements that work for development, including in sub-Saharan Africa (Wild and Foresti 2011). This change in approach, entailing

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<sup>4</sup> These were Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

<sup>5</sup> For example, between 1990 and 2000, all major donors except Japan increased governance and NGO support from approximately 4 per cent to 9 per cent of total ODA expenditure (OECD DAC). This has also been an increasing area of policy engagement for many donors.

a shift from a focus on 'best practice' based on idealised blueprints towards a focus on 'best fit' based on contextual realities, is gradually gaining momentum across a range of donor agencies (DFID 2009; World Bank 2009; Wild and Foresti 2011) and provides a potential opportunity for much greater Japanese inputs and engagement (discussed in further detail below).

### *Fragile states*

Fragile states have also emerged as a top priority and concern in current development thinking and practice. Africa has been an important area of donor focus in this respect, because it is the home of a large majority of what Paul Collier (2007) calls "the bottom billion" of the world population, who live in fragile states suffering from a variety of "development traps", including conflict, bad governance, the natural resource curse, and regional dynamics generated by "bad neighbourhoods". This has resulted in the direction of aid flows towards conflict affected countries and the recognition of the need for aid to be conflict sensitive. As discussed in the first Report prepared as part of this project, Japan has shown a particular commitment to issues of human security, devoting 10 percent of ODA (not including debt relief) to food aid/food security and a further 10 per cent (also not including debt relief) on emergency relief and rehabilitation (OECD DAC CRS) (Rocha Menocal et al 2011).

### **2.3) The rise of non-traditional donors**

A number of emerging or non-traditional donors, including China, South Korea, Venezuela, India, and Brazil have been increasing their support to poorer countries, especially in Africa. For the most part, these emerging donors do not belong to the OECD DAC (except South Korea, which joined in 2010), and as such they remain outside the Paris framework of aid effectiveness. Most of these donors provide aid for a variety of reasons, including energy security, enlarged trading opportunities, and new economic partnerships, as well as forms of solidarity and south-south support, against the backdrop of their own rapidly growing strength and size in the global economy (Woods 2008). The exact level of this funding is difficult to gauge – the OECD, however, has estimated that resources from non-DAC donors (including emerging donors, non-DAC multilaterals and private foundations) amount to \$30 billion a year (approximately one quarter of that given by DAC donors each year) (Prada et al 2010).

China's engagement with Africa provides a useful illustration of the extent to which it is shaping the wider development landscape. Its trade with Africa has grown significantly, to the point that it is now Africa's third most important trading partner, largely fuelled by Chinese imports of oil from Sudan and other African countries (Woods 2008, McKinsey 2010). For China, aid (although not always conforming to ODA definitions) has been a strategic component of its foreign policy: "With inventive packages of aid, loans, and investments, the People's Republic, in return, secured votes to take China's seat at the United Nations (held by Taiwan's government until 1971), opened up channels for much-needed oil and mineral resources, mitigated its food-security concerns, and gained a strategic foothold on the continent" (McKinsey 2010). Moreover, Chinese aid is often tied to Chinese labour and materials.

Brazil is another emerging power which is building its profile and engagement in Africa and beginning to shape the wider landscape, particularly in Portuguese-speaking African countries (Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde), which account for the bulk of Brazilian resources to the region. Cabral and Weinstock suggest that in 2009, the continent received most of the Brazilian aid agency's annual budget (50%), followed by South America, although other estimates indicate that Brazilian aid to Africa, while substantial, is still less than Brazilian aid allocations to Latin America (ONE 2011). Brazil has also reportedly

become a leading player in triangular cooperation: memoranda of understanding have been negotiated between Brazil and several traditional bilateral partners, such as Japan, Germany, Spain and Italy, as well as with multilateral organisations, to provide cooperation to a third country in the South (Cabral and Weinstock 2010).

These emerging or non-traditional donors are challenging much of the prevailing consensus among DAC donors. To some extent, some of these new donors disburse their aid in ways similar to Japan. For instance, they are often characterised by low conditionality, respect for sovereignty and the principle of non-interference; a focus on the 'hardware' of development (such as infrastructure and productive sectors – although not across all non-traditional donors); strong linkages between aid, trade, and investment; and project-based rather than more programmatic aid.

This has often been favourably received within many African countries and by African leaders who have lamented the loss of interest within the mainstream donor community in some of these core areas, and who have also benefited from growing competition between donors. But some of these emerging donors have also been challenged for their narrow focus on strategic interests (rather than poverty reduction), which has translated – in some cases – to support for regimes and governments who are not seen to operate in the interests of their wider populations (Woods 2008; Wild and Mephram 2006).

#### ***2.4) Aid to Africa at a crossroads?***

As the above overview illustrates, there is considerable reflection on donor engagement in Africa. Donors who have long (colonial) histories with the African continent, and who are prominent members of the DAC, are increasingly challenged to show the results of their prolonged investment and to learn lessons from past (and sometimes unsuccessful) models of engagement. The goals of the Paris Declaration, for instance, remain far from being achieved and progress on key indicators across Africa remains irregular. Despite numerous efforts to promote country-led ownership, many donors continue to dominate the development agenda and decision-making processes in aid dependent African countries. In the run-up to the next OECD DAC High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (to be held in Busan in November 2011), a number of African countries have sought a greater leadership role and are calling for changes to how the DAC framework supports and facilitates notions of ownership.

Moreover, a number of key policy agendas of these DAC donors are increasingly contested. There is growing debate and reflection on the nature of the relationship between governance and growth – challenging many of the precepts of the 'good governance' agenda – as well as challenges to link upstream policy engagement with downstream implementation concerns. This, combined with fears of declining public support at home, are leading to their own processes of reflection. Furthermore, there remains considerable variation in the aid programmes of those within the DAC. While there is often talk of a 'DAC Consensus', this is itself contested and in reality exists more in a rhetorical, rather than practical, sense.

Meanwhile, the rise of emerging powers and less traditional aid actors poses further challenges to this prevailing consensus. Discussions are ongoing as to whether these types of donors can be expected to play by OECD DAC rules and abide by the Paris Declaration when they operate in Africa. However, as the number of actors and models in Africa increases, issues of coordination (to avoid overlap or working at cross purposes) and harmonisation come increasingly to the fore – and African leaders themselves have expressed frustration at the competing requirements and approaches of the wide range of donors they now have to deal with (although this is also balanced by the benefits of increasing donor competition for recipients) (Woods 2008, Rocha and Rogerson 2006).

These issues provide an important backdrop for reflection on the role of Japan in Africa, and help map the contours of what is an increasingly crowded landscape of donor engagement in Africa. They demonstrate, above all else, that while Japan reflects on its own model and potential value added, it does not operate in a vacuum. A wide number of donors are also engaged in processes of self reflection and review, and there are a number of areas where Japanese experiences may be usefully brought to bear.

### 3. Japan in sub-Saharan Africa

Japan is now an established development partner in Africa, with 31 JICA offices and hundreds of projects across the continent. In 2008, it pledged to double its aid to Africa and has maintained that commitment in spite of Japan's changed economic outlook.

However, Japan's ODA to Africa remains low as a proportion of its overall ODA contributions, averaging 14 per cent (including debt relief as part of ODA) between 2005 to 2009. This contrasts with allocations averaging 35 per cent amongst other DAC reporting donors. This means that Japan remains a relatively small donor in Africa (see Figure 2). Table 1 identifies the top five donors by volume to Africa since the 1970s, with Japan as a comparison.

**Table 1: ODA (USD billions) to sub-Saharan Africa from top 5 donors by total volume and Japan<sup>6</sup>**

	1973-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	Total
<b>IDA</b>	10	31	35	55	130
<b>EU Institutions</b>	10	23	26	46	106
<b>France</b>	4	17	21	40	83
<b>United States</b>	3	15	10	54	82
<b>Germany</b>	7	13	12	22	53
<b>Japan</b>	3	9	10	17	38

In order to understand how Japan is engaging with Africa, and how these issues are playing out in different contexts, we examine both the historical trajectory of Japan's ODA and the current models and modalities it employs.

#### **3.1) Japanese aid to Africa: A historical perspective**

Looking at the historical trends for Japan's engagement with Africa, Sato presents five stages which have shaped its development assistance (see Box 3) (Sato 2010: 11). Figure 1 summarises how Japan's ODA to Africa has changed over time, both including and excluding debt relief.

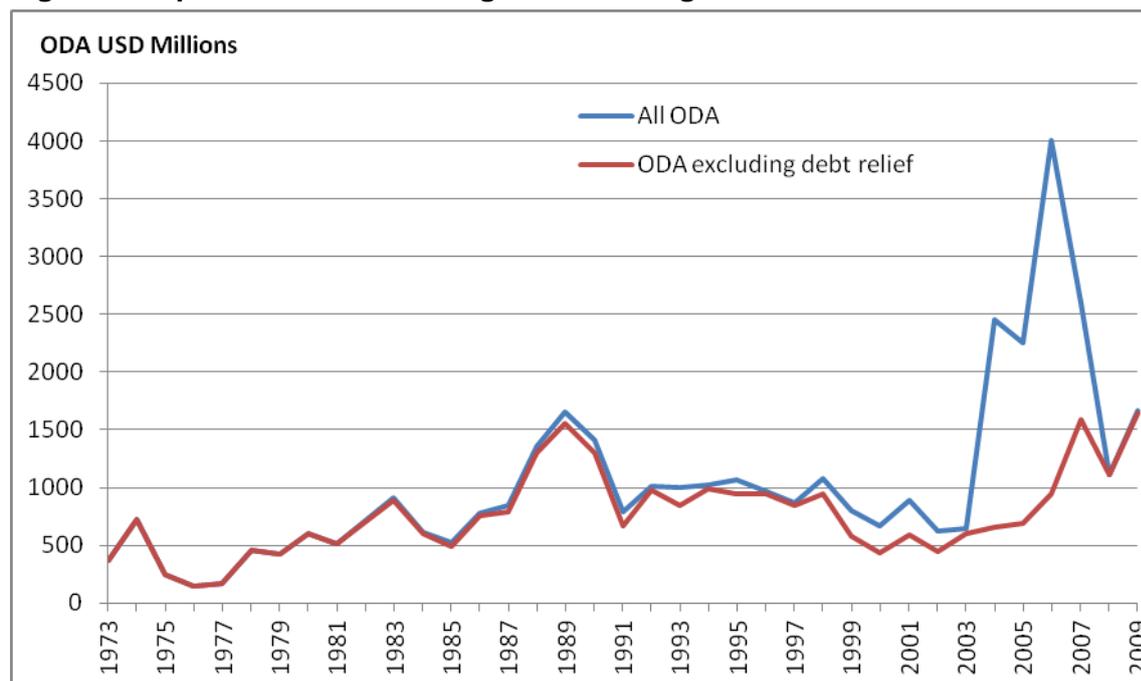
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<sup>6</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Top 5 by total volume reported to the OECD DAC CRS between 1973 and 2009. Commitments constant (deflated). Includes debt relief.

**Box 3: The five stages of Japan in Africa** (Sato 2010:11)

- 1954 – 1973: The beginning of Japanese aid to the first oil crisis
- 1974 – 1980: The first and second oil crises
- 1981 – 1988: Period of rapid expansion of Japanese aid
- 1989 – 2000: Period when Japan became the largest international donor and began engaging in international policy issues
- 2001 – present: Period when Japan has faced a shift in international aid debates and domestic challenges

**Figure 1: Japanese ODA excluding and including debt relief to sub-Saharan Africa<sup>7</sup>**



Levels of Japanese aid to Africa during the **first stage** were negligible, as around 98 per cent of Japanese ODA focused on Asia, as part of reparations for policies of the past (Sato 2010: 11; 13; Lehman 2010a: 4). The explicit purpose of Japanese aid during this time was, as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) stated in 1958: ‘to expand the export market and to secure the import market of important raw materials’ (quoted in Sato 2010: 11). By the 1960s, consulates had opened in Pretoria, Cape Town and then Rhodesia as well as embassies in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and Ethiopia (Morikawa 1997: 53-54; 59). Trade and cultural exchanges began, particularly with South Africa in the 1960s (Morikawa 1997: 56). Trade links were also re-established with East Africa, where Japan had engaged in exports in the 1920s (Ampiah 1997: 35). Uganda was the first African country to receive a Japanese loan in 1966, followed by Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania in the same year (Moss and Ravenhill 1985: 78). Despite these initial forays into the continent, however, by 1969 Africa’s share of Japan’s ODA (excluding South Africa) was just 1.1 per cent (Morikawa 1997: 70).

The **second stage** of Japan’s aid relationship with Africa saw the beginning of increases in ODA flows, although the actual increases in this debate were slight, as demonstrated in the graph above. Oil crises in 1973 and 1979, caused by an oil embargo and the quadrupling of

<sup>7</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated) in USD millions.

oil prices by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), contributed to a wider global financial crisis (Sato 2010: 13). This crisis highlighted to Japan the danger of resource dependence and the importance of securing natural resources (particularly rare metals) from a more diverse marketplace (Moss and Ravenhill 1985: 82; Ampiah 1997: 5). As a result, Africa became a region of increasing interest to Japan (Ampiah 1997: 16-17; Sato 2010: 13)<sup>8</sup>.

This was underscored by increases in ODA allocations, with Africa's share rising to between 8 and 10 per cent by 1980 (Moss and Ravenhill 1985: 82). African countries considered rich in natural resources and to have potential for economic growth were favoured, and low interest loans were provided to these countries, to develop infrastructure such as transport, communications and power plants (Morikawa 1997: 69-70). However, political and humanitarian motivations were also at play. The impact of the oil shocks were aggravated in Africa by severe droughts in 1973-1974, causing a drop in agricultural production that stunted the development prospects of affected regions (Horie 1997: 76). Japan's focus on agricultural assistance from the early 1970s sought to respond to this particular challenge (Horie 1997: 76).

Japanese aid to Africa continued to expand through the **third stage**. This was partly due to pressure from the international community for Japan to give more in light of its economic stability. The United States, for example, explicitly requested that Japan include more grants in its aid portfolio and direct more aid to Africa in 1985 and UN policy also called for increased aid to Africa (Sato 2010: 14-15). Japan provided significant famine relief in East Africa and, responding to international pressures, made ODA one of its three pillars in its policy to counterbalance the trade surplus (Sato 2010: 15-16). During the 1980s, Japan also became South Africa's primary trading partner (Sato 2010: 18). Japan's willingness to continue trading with the Apartheid regime provoked international and African criticism, however, and Japanese aid to other African states has been perceived by some as a strategy to address this (Morikawa 1997: 57-59).

In 1989, the **fourth stage**, aid to Africa constituted a high of between 15 and 19 per cent of Japanese ODA (Sato 2010: 15; CRS Data). This subsequently decreased (if you exclude debt relief) but has remained around 10 per cent since (Sato 2010: 15). 1989 was also the year in which Japan surpassed the United States as the world's largest donor and remained so until 2000 (Sato 2010: 16). Efforts to deepen the conceptual thinking around aid were apparent in the initiation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, spearheaded by Japan and bringing together development partners and African leaders to discuss the challenges and priorities for development on the continent. TICAD has continued with conferences held every five years in Japan and has had a strong voice in promoting South-South learning (Sato 2010: 17).

TICAD has also provided Japan with a higher profile in debates on African development and it is seen as a vehicle for building support amongst African states for Japan's seat on the UN Security Council (Sato 2010: 17) (Box 4). TICAD III (2003) emphasised poverty reduction through economic growth, despite the predominant focus of the international community on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and this was further developed in TICAD IV with the emphasis again on boosting economic growth.

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<sup>8</sup> In 1974, Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs visited Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire and Tanzania. Following the second oil crisis, in 1979 the Japanese Foreign Minister visited Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Senegal, Tanzania and Kenya (Sato 2010: 13).

However, interviews conducted as part of this research project suggest that the outcomes and discussions from TICAD are not widely known or disseminated, and some argued that changing dynamics (such as the growth of China in Africa) have undermined some of the potential of this forum to set the agenda for African development.

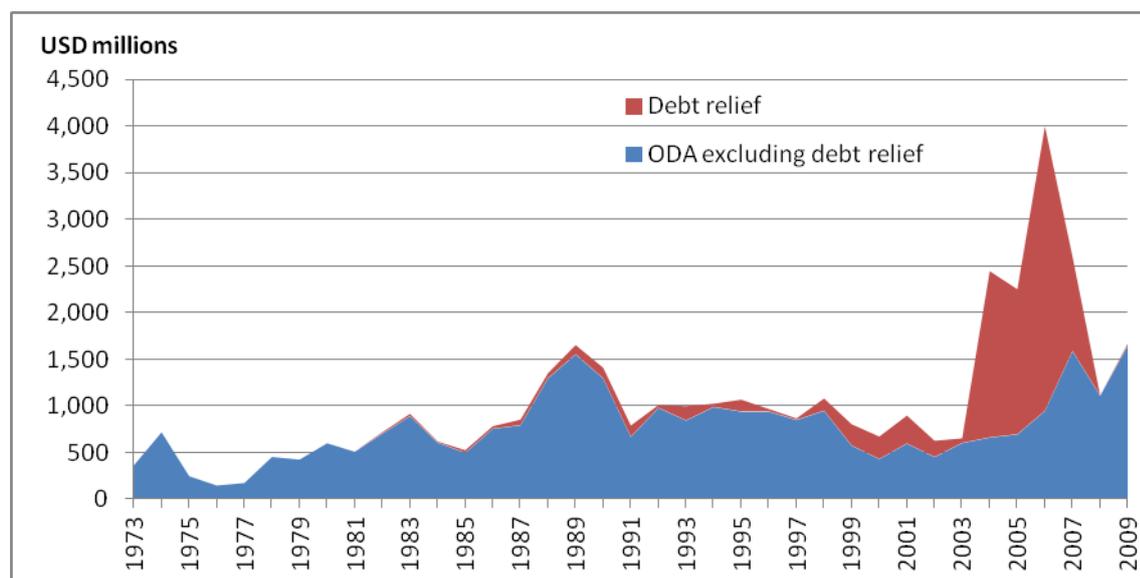
**Box 4: The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)** (adapted from JICA 2010: 66)

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) was established in 1993 by Japan to bring African leaders and development partners together to discuss how African development can best be supported. TICAD has been held every five years since, with the key milestones achieved at each conference set out in the table below. Japan has utilised TICAD as a way of enhancing African ownership of their development processes and of sharing East Asian experience as an alternative development path. TICAD has also assisted Japan in forging partnerships with other development partners, such as UNDP.

Milestones for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)	
TICAD I October 1993 (Tokyo)	Participants included 48 African countries, 12 donor countries and international organizations. The Tokyo Declaration was adopted as the expression of agreement that Africa's development is a priority issue for the international community.
TICAD II October 1998 (Tokyo)	Participants included 51 African countries, 29 partner countries and international organizations. The Tokyo Agenda for Action was adopted, expressing agreement on policies for social development, economic development, good governance, conflict prevention and post-conflict development.
TICAD III September 2003 (Tokyo)	Participants included 50 African countries, 39 partner countries and international organizations. TICAD Tenth Anniversary Declaration was adopted, emphasizing the establishment of peace, people-centered development and poverty reduction through economic growth.
TICAD IV May 2008 (Yokohama)	Participants included 51 African countries, 34 partner countries and international organizations. The Yokohama Declaration was adopted. Japan pledged to double its aid with a focus on agricultural development, trade and investment, tourism promotion and human resource development. Yokohama Action Plan was presented as a five-year roadmap for aid to Africa; a monitoring mechanism was established.

Most recently, in **stage five** (2001-present), Japan has been displaced as the largest global donor, and its aid (not including debt relief) has reduced in the face of recession and financial deficit (Sato 2010: 18) - including aid to Africa. Taking debt relief into account, Japanese ODA continues to increase, however debt relief by definition is not 'new money' and hence close attention needs to be paid to aid flows outside of debt relief. As Sato notes: "In 2006, ODA to Africa reached \$2.56 billion, 2.2 times that of the previous year. However, of the \$2.56 billion going to Africa, 79.8 per cent was in fact applied to debt relief" (Sato 2010: 19). Figure 2 indicates how this has shaped Japan's ODA to Africa, which has in many respects been similar to the patterns of other DAC donors, as shown in Table 2.

**Figure 2: Action relating to debt (debt relief) and total ODA from Japan to sub-Saharan Africa<sup>9</sup>**



**Table 2: Action relating to debt (debt relief) as a share of ODA to sub-Saharan Africa from 5 key donors<sup>10</sup>**

	1973-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	Total
France	0%	4%	11%	48%	27%
Germany	16%	19%	36%	43%	32%
Japan	0%	4%	10%	48%	25%
United Kingdom	2%	16%	8%	27%	19%
United States	0%	0%	1%	8%	5%

Indeed, Japan was initially concerned about debt relief packages raised at the Gleneagles Summit and other fora, given that loans make up a large portion of Japan's ODA disbursements and that debt forgiveness would weaken self-help by implying that governments need not adhere to their commitments (Lehman 2010a: 5). By limiting the use of loans to heavily indebted countries in Africa, Japan has had to accept less of a role for domestic economic benefit in some ODA allocations. A fuller outline of the current phase of Japanese aid to Africa is set out in the following section.

As the above analysis reveals, a number of factors motivate Japanese engagement with Africa. Initially, the primary aim was to strengthen domestic industry and seek out new export markets (Moss and Ravenhill 1985: 66). With the shock of the oil crises in the 1970s, this rationale expanded to include the search for resource security, particularly of rare metals and minerals frequently found in Africa (Ampiah 1997: 5; 16-17). Finally, as Japan began to refine its aid policy, humanitarian and poverty reduction concerns have come to play a greater role, but this has also been in response to international pressures and some criticism (Morikawa 1997: 57-59).

<sup>9</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated) in USD millions.

<sup>10</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated).

### **3.2) Japan's development model in Africa**

of the first report for this research set out the key components of Japan's development model, including the key principles, modalities, thematic/geographic priorities and partners adopted by Japan (see Rocha Menocal et al 2011). This section examines whether and how this development model is borne out in the context of Japan's aid to Africa.

Turning first to the key principles which have shaped Japanese aid to Africa, the principles on which Japan's overall development model rests – self-help, local knowledge and non-interventionism - are largely drawn from its experience in Asia but, to varying degrees, are borne out by its experience in Africa too. Much emphasis is placed on the use of lessons from Japan's own modernisation experience as well as support for the transferral of lessons from the East Asian development experience to Africa. In Ethiopia, for example, JICA is working with GRIPS to support the Ethiopian government in adapting lessons from East Asia for the industrial sector (GRIPS Development Forum 2010).

By emphasising a demand or request led approach, Japanese aid practitioners argue that they are more sensitive to ensuring country ownership in Africa. All projects reportedly require the engagement (in proposing and agreeing projects) of the government, and this is seen by its proponents to translate into a respect for non-interference and low conditionality. Yet this approach to aid has also been questioned by some who argue that Japanese aid, particularly in relation to technical assistance, (and in common with a number of other donors) can still be led by the politics of the Japanese ministries themselves. An IDRC report notes that:

“JICA projects require the support of the relevant ministry to go ahead. Because, by regulation, the various ministries provide experts for planning and implementation of JICA's activities, the availability of ministry personnel largely determines the scope and type of activities that can be included in a project design. All decisions require consensus among various players who may be unknown to outsiders working with Japan on a joint cooperation on ODA” (Beaudry-Somcynsky and Cook 1999).

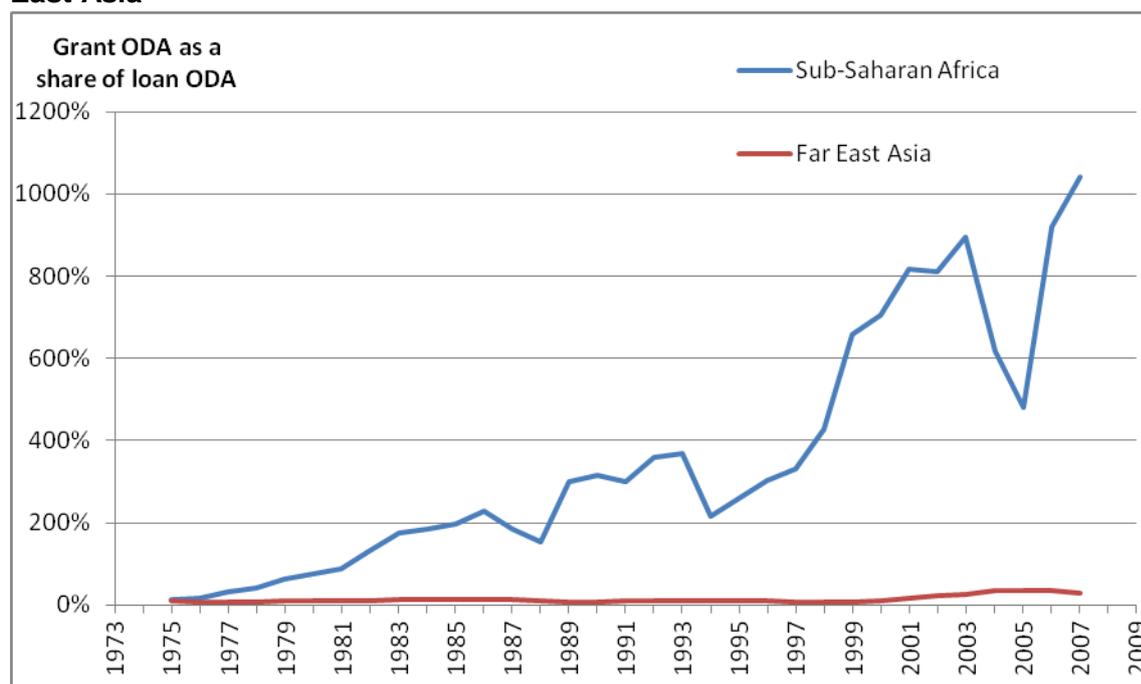
The report goes on to note that private Japanese companies also actively engage in 'project-finding' for ODA-funded projects. Thus, elements of the demand-led or 'ownership' of JICA projects can itself, it argued, be questioned (Beaudry-Somcynsky and Cook 1999).

As the historical trends discussed above reveal, there has remained a strong emphasis on the mutual benefits of development assistance, particularly in terms of resource security and this appears to have shaped much of Japan's engagement in Africa (including its identification of countries and regions for engagement).

Turning to the dominant modalities of Japanese assistance to the continent, we see some slightly different patterns to Japan's model in Asia, as set out in Figure 3. Traditionally, much of Japanese development assistance in Asia was provided through technical assistance and loans. In Africa, however, Japan has moved to a significantly higher proportion of grants in their aid (in part because the HIPC Initiative reduced loans, as discussed in Section 3.1) (Court 2005: 21). Japan has not moved towards more programmatic aid approaches, as set out in the Paris Declaration, however, and has utilised direct budget support sparingly in Africa (Takahashi 2010: 63).

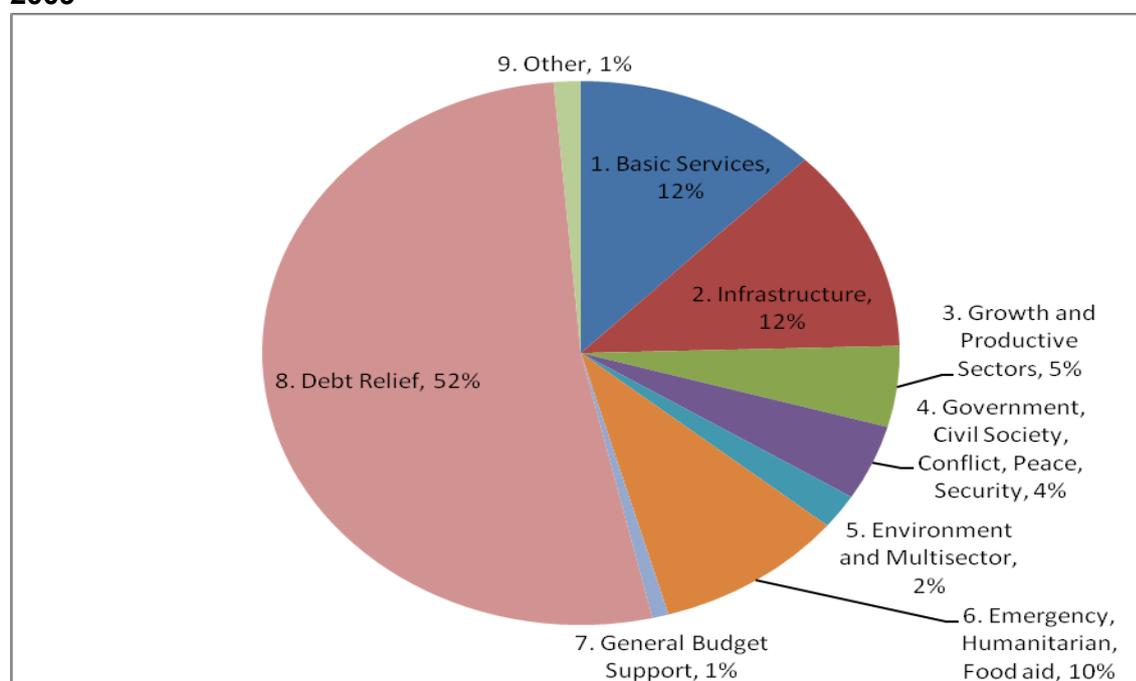
Through technical assistance, Japan's aid is often tied to the use of Japanese organisations and expertise, and in recent years the providers of this assistance have reportedly broadened, to include both private sector and civil society organisations.

**Figure 3: Ratio of Japanese grant ODA to loan ODA in sub-Saharan Africa and Far East Asia <sup>11</sup>**



In terms of its thematic focus, as the figures below illustrates, Japan’s ODA to Africa reflects patterns of debt relief and significant investment in infrastructure and basic services (see Figures 6 and 7 below).

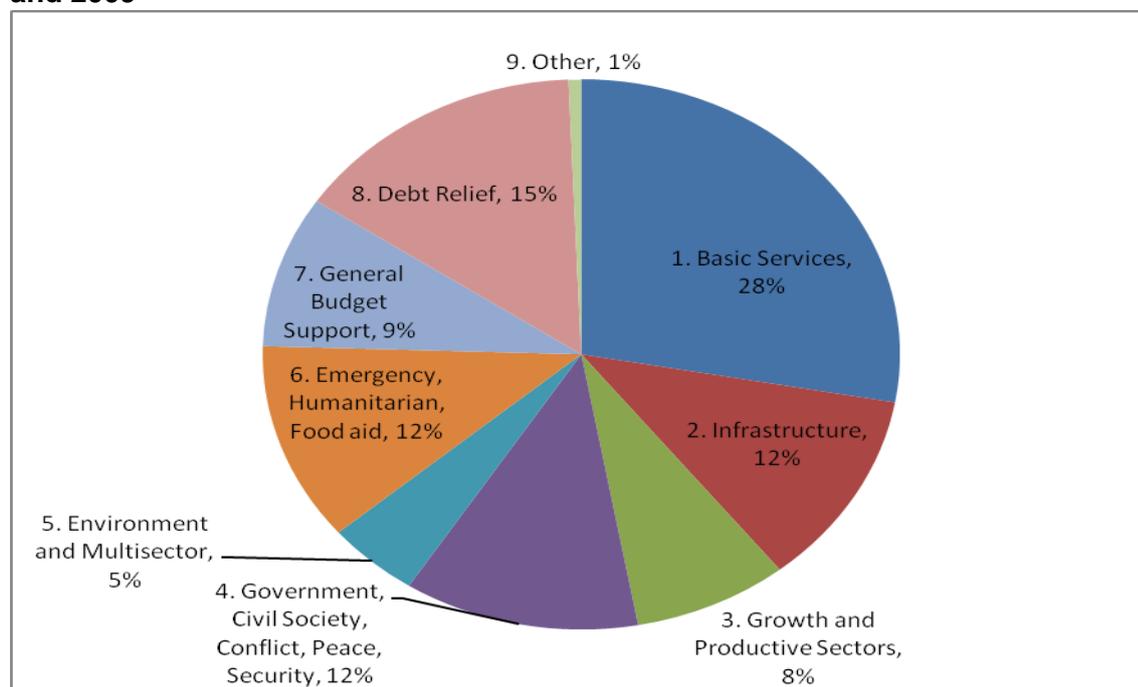
**Figure 4: Sectoral shares of Japanese ODA to sub-Saharan Africa between 2005 and 2009 <sup>12</sup>**



<sup>11</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated), Moving 5 year averages taken to smooth trend. Figures exclude debt relief.

<sup>12</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated).

**Figure 5: Sectoral shares of other donors ODA to sub-Saharan Africa between 2005 and 2009<sup>13</sup>**



As the above reveals, Japanese ODA in Africa has focused heavily on infrastructure and trade (Lehman 2010b: 28). Japan's commitment to large infrastructure has, however, slightly declined since 2000, largely due to Japan's suspension of new ODA loans to countries applying for the Enhanced HIPC Initiative, which had been the primary financing mechanism for large-scale infrastructure projects in the past (GRIPS Development Forum 2008a: 6-7). That said, some important infrastructure projects continue, as set out in Box 5 below.

**Box 5: Sondu/Miriu Hydropower Project (Adapted from KenGen 2004)**

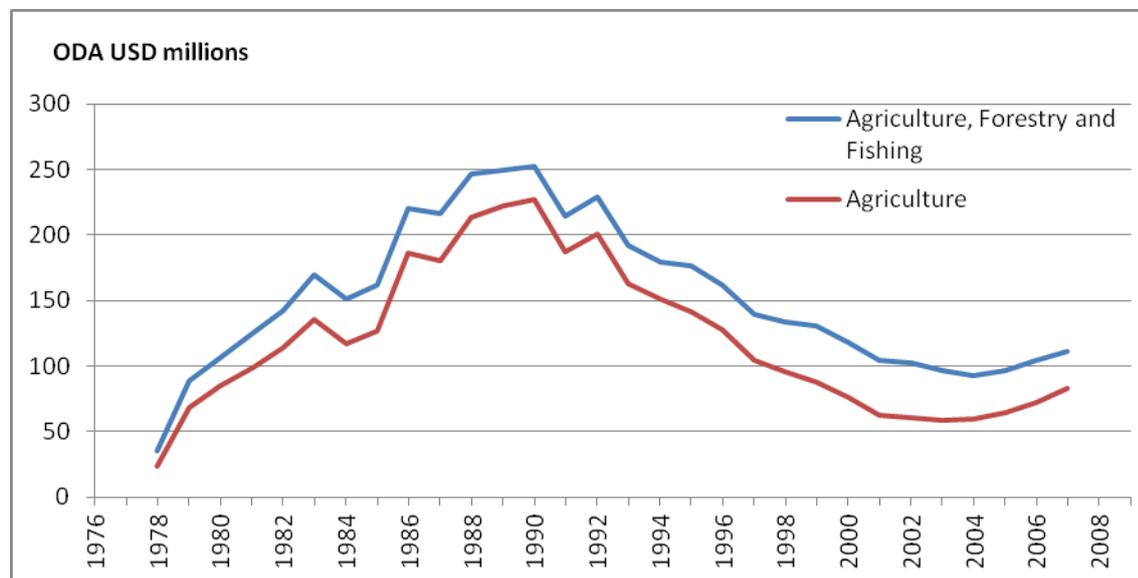
Demand for energy in Kenya is not matched by capacity to provide it. Recognising this, Japan has provided an ODA loan (through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation) for the Sondu/Miriu Hydroelectric Power Project located in Nyakach, about 300 kilometres northwest of Nairobi. The financing by JBIC covers 85% of the project cost. The project utilises water from the Sondu River flowing into Lake Victoria to generate 60MW of power and an average annual energy production of 331 GWh. Its stated aim is to contribute to the promotion of industry and business in the area and in this way to contribute to poverty reduction efforts.

Throughout the 1990s, agriculture was considered a rather outmoded form of development assistance in Africa and few other major donors invested heavily in this area. However, Japan's continued commitment to agriculture projects has been recognised in recent years, particularly for its relevance in addressing issues such as food security and the green revolution (Court 2005: 27). While the trends (see Figure 6 below) suggest that investments in agriculture have declined significantly since their height in the late 1980s, Japan has

<sup>13</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated), Other donors include both bilateral and multilateral donors reporting to the OECD DAC CRS in each year.

continued to maintain a presence in some areas of agriculture, such as rice cultivation (see Box 6 below).

**Figure 6: Volume trends in Japanese ODA to the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors<sup>14</sup>**



**Box 6: Coalition for African Rice Development** (adapted from JICA/AGRA 2008)

The livelihoods of most Africans depend heavily on agriculture, as approximately 70% of the people live in rural areas and 90% of these are employed in the agriculture sector. Agriculture contributes around 25% of Africa’s GDP and the majority of its exports are agricultural products. In light of the importance of agriculture in Africa, JICA has focused development assistance on rice production, as one of the staple crops in Africa for both export and domestic food source. In association with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), JICA has established the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD). CARD aims to respond to the increasing importance of rice production in Africa and to provide the international framework to assist self-efforts of African countries to increase rice production. It does so by providing technical assistance and packages including improved seeds and fertilizer. CARD also uses demonstration plots for learning, conducts interventions into water management where necessary and links to broader advocacy and policy frameworks within the rice sector such as the “NERICA Initiative” launched at TICAD III (2003), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and the African Rice Initiative (ARI). The aim of CARD is to contribute to achieving an African green revolution through doubling rice production over a period of 10 years (2007-2017), reducing reliance on imports, improving exports, and ensuring food security.

JICA has some long running experience in providing support in the health and education sectors in Africa. In Niger, for example, JICA implements the School for All project, aimed at increasing enrolment in primary education by encouraging residents to be more involved in school administration and creating links with local government (JICA 2010: 64-65). The government of Niger has reportedly been impressed with results from the project pilot and is now rolling out the administration system countrywide (Ibid.). Box 7 provides an example of

<sup>14</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated), USD Millions, 5 year moving averages are used to smooth the trend.

Japan's support to teacher training in Kenya, which it is now developing in other countries and using as a basis for south-south cooperation (see also the first report for this research).

**Box 7: Japanese and Kenyan Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education** (Adapted from Task Team on South-South Cooperation 2010)

Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) is a project implemented jointly by the Kenyan and Japanese governments in 32 African countries, using In-Service Training (INSET) to capacity building teacher-trainers and teachings in mathematics and the sciences. A technical team of Kenyan and Japanese experts conduct National training for trainers, who conduct INSET for teachers in district INSET centres hosted in selected public secondary schools throughout the country. The Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa is a full-fledged National INSET centre, with 61 full-time academic staff and 4 Japanese experts. 1,442 District trainers conduct INSET for 16,251 teachers at the 108 district centres every year. SMASSE INSET addresses teachers' attitude, pedagogy, content mastery and teaching/learning materials. Learner-centred approaches through the Activity-Student-Experiment-Improvisation (ASEI) pedagogic paradigm and the Plan-Do-See-Improve approach are the focus of SMASSE INSET. Teachers design and use locally available resources and students' real life situations to improvise teaching /learning materials that enhance learner participation and scientific skills. They improve their skills in work planning, monitoring learning achievement, self and collegial evaluation and utilization of feed back to improve subsequent lessons.

An important aspect to Japan's support to education is its emphasis on higher education. For example, in Kenya, Japan provided support to establish and maintain the Jomo Kenyatta University, which is now a rated Kenyan institution. This has been in contrast to other donors who remain focused on the MDGs (which prioritise primary school education) but it has been belatedly recognised as an important and necessary area of support.

In the area of peace and security, while this has been an important area of emphasis for Japan, it is not yet an area of significant programming for Japanese aid in Africa. From 2004-2008 Japan disbursed around US\$550 million in assistance to peace consolidation in Africa, including emergency humanitarian aid, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), community rehabilitation and election support (TICAD 2008: 17-18). For example, in Sierra Leone Japan supported the first elections held in 2007 (following the departure of UN peacekeepers in 2005), supporting the procurement of polling materials, including ballot papers, voting screens, indelible stain, thumbprint ads, and the building of the NEC's warehouse (Ibid.). Some of the assistance provided under the heading of 'peace and security', however, is frequently related more to Japan's traditional spheres of operation, such as infrastructure in conflict-affected countries, rather than to engaging with addressing the drivers of conflict and peace-building directly.

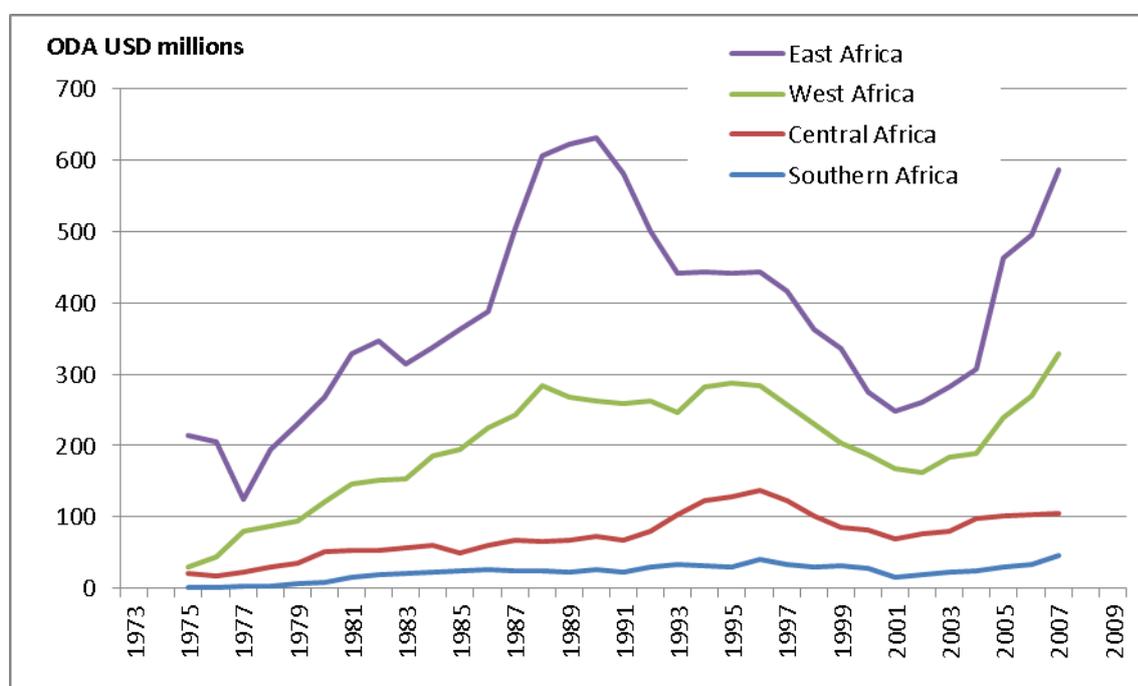
In general, much of Japan's support to Africa remains characterised as the provision of specific projects – located at micro or local levels – which aim to address a specific sectoral or operational challenge, as the examples of teacher training or rice production above demonstrate. However, there is a dominant perception among interviewees that at times Japan's assistance in Africa struggles to become 'more than the sum of its parts' as a result of this approach, particularly where its' focus on micro level implementation is not translated effectively into policy discussions and learning.

The illustrations of successful projects captured in the boxes above, for example, tend to emphasise specific project activities (a hydropower project, teacher training, or specific inputs to rice cultivation) rather than more macro level change. Moreover, while other DAC donors engaged in Africa have moved towards a focus on more programmatic policy frameworks (with aid modalities like budget support to support them), Japan appears to have

rich experience of implementation and downstream issues, but these are not effectively captured (in reports, presentations and other written outputs) and communicated in policy fora. Part of the explanation for some of these weaknesses is thought to lie in dynamics within the Japanese aid architecture, and the perceived distance between MOFA, which leads policymaking, and JICA, which implements projects on the ground (see also GRIPS 2008; Rocha Menocal et al 2011). These issues will be explored further in the third phase of this research, but they remain a persistent theme in analysis of Japan's development assistance to Africa.

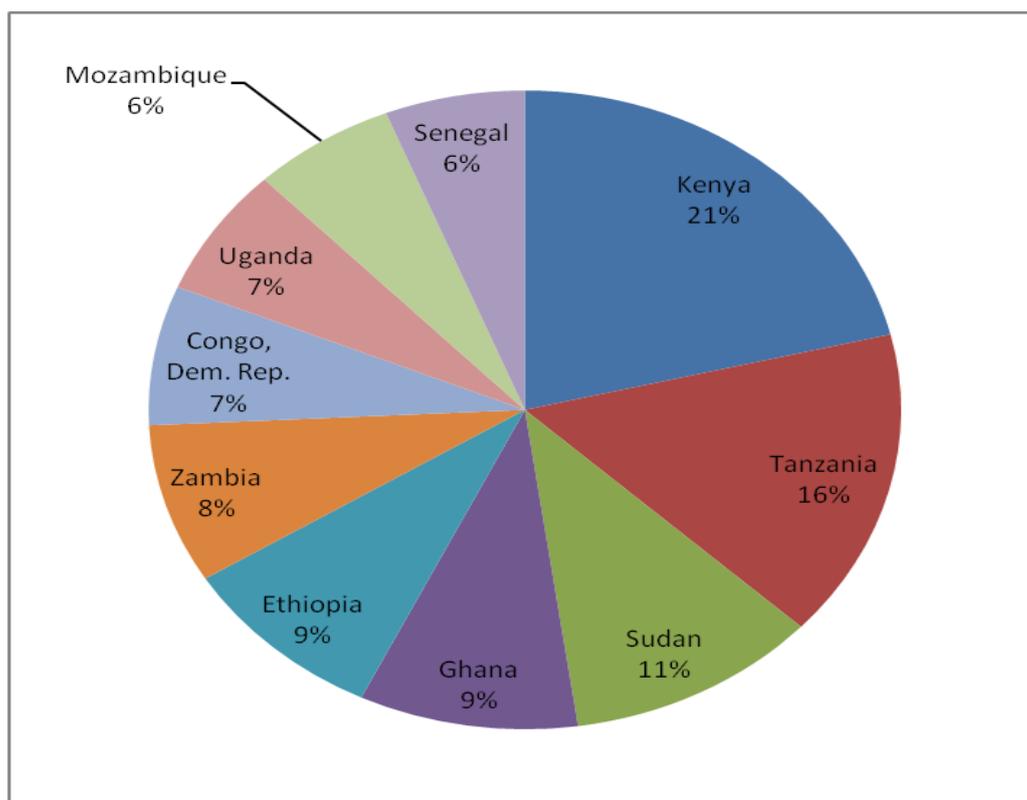
In terms of regional or country focus, Japan's aid to Africa has been spread across a large number of countries, with significant investments in East Africa but also in Western, Central and Southern Africa (see Figure). It is accepted in the literature that Japan, not unlike most donors, has operated a 'key countries approach', giving priority status to certain countries based on a range of factors, including their interdependence with Japan, resource deposits and levels of poverty (Morikawa 1997: 22). As the Figures below reveal, this has translating into support which covers a wide range of African countries.

**Figure 7: Japanese ODA to sub-Saharan Africa by region<sup>15</sup>**



<sup>15</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated), USD Millions, 5 year moving averages are used to smooth the trend, excluding debt relief.

**Figure 8: Top 10 Sub-Saharan African recipients of Japanese ODA, 2005-2009<sup>16</sup>**



Finally, if we look at the approach to partners, the dominant partners remain African governments themselves (as in Asia). While in parts of Asia, Japan has been the dominant donor (reducing the imperative to coordinate with others), the plurality of donors active in Africa make it a very different setting, with considerably more competition among donors – and Japan as a comparatively small player, in the size of its support.

This means that to remain relevant, much closer coordination is likely to be necessary. However, according to interviews conducted as part of this research project, there is perceived level of resistance to the concept of harmonisation at high levels within the Japanese aid architecture. This is likely to reflect a number of motivations, which include fears about increased risk and the traceability of funds as well as the reduced profile of an individual donor (and increased pressures to follow the models put forward by others). This has translated to date into limited attempts to harmonise with other donors and to coordinate strategically on how to address cross cutting challenges.

At the same time, there is reportedly growing evidence at field level in Africa of the recognition by JICA staff of the importance of greater coordination and collaboration with donors, particularly in processes of scaling up assistance and in avoiding duplication. This has led to participation in a wide range of coordination fora in country and some partnering with others (including DAC members like the US but also China, Korea and Brazil); the TICAD process is also an example of growing coordination with other donors also participating in those meetings. Nonetheless, interviews reveal an ongoing perception that this participation is not systematically capitalised on. An evaluation of JICA's support in

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<sup>16</sup> Source OECD DAC CRS (extracted in April 2011). Commitments constant (deflated), excluding debt relief.

Mozambique, for example, highlighted the scope for Japan to adopt a more focused approach to donor coordination and partnerships (Third Party Evaluation 2008).

Interviews also pointed to a potential disjuncture between the views of MoFA and JICA staff at headquarters and JICA staff based in the field. This may mean that even where there is coordination, it is less effective in part because it is not sufficiently selective or strategic (with JICA staff reportedly attending all coordination fora rather than targeting key meetings) and because of wider scepticism of harmonisation within Japan, which undermines attempts to take leadership within these fora.

GRIPS (2008) has attempted to offer a way forward in this respect, through its emphasis on complementarity *and* diversity, arguing that

*“aid policy and instruments should be partly common and partly different among donors. Donors should be sufficiently common to be able to work together, share long-term goals, and simplify procedures. But they should at the same time retain their natural differences to permit a meaningful division of labour in development efforts”.*

In many ways, this reflects some of the realities of how OECD DAC donors have continued to operate (although this may change in light of the outcomes from the Busan High Level Forum), where a range of modalities in practice have continued to co-exist, despite the strong emphasis on programmatic aid. However the analysis for this project suggests that there are still opportunities for MoFA and/or JICA to address these issues more comprehensively and clarify Japan’s position.

## 4. What is the potential value added of Japan in Africa?

An earlier phase of this research set out some areas where Japan has the potential to add value to international development efforts. These are summarised in Box 8.

### **Box 8: Potential added value of the Japanese development model** (Rocha Menocal et al 2011)

- A Major Player (One of top five donors from the 1980s onwards)
- An Empathic Partner (Perceived sensitivity in dealing with recipient country governments)
- A Trusted Intermediary (Potential bridge between the more traditional DAC donors and 'emerging' or newer donors)
- A Distinctive Voice (With a model that differs from the mainstream DAC approach)
- A Steady Supporter (Continuity of approach and focus)
- An Innovation Leader (Leadership on issues of south-south cooperation and human security).

Drawing from the analysis above (Sections 3.1 and 3.2), some of these potential 'value added' characteristics appear to be present in Japan's engagement within Africa, while others are less obvious. For example, there is less evidence of Japan as a 'major player' (its support to Africa remains low and it is seen as a relative newcomer compared to others) or as an 'innovation leader'. Moreover, while there is some evidence of growing links and coordination with other donors, Japan does not at present seem to be playing a role as a 'trusted intermediary' or bridge between DAC and non-DAC donors – rather, it participates in both camps but has not tried to play a linking role between them.

In a number of other ways, however, Japan potentially has a number of strengths, namely as an empathic partner, a distinctive voice and a steady supporter in the African context:

- An Empathic Partner

Examples of the TICAD process, Japan's support for south-south cooperation, and its emphasis on self help and economic growth have all contributed to the perception that Japan potentially offers a more empathic perspective as a donor in Africa than other members of the DAC. This is facilitated by its lack of colonial history in Africa and by its approach to cooperation with recipient governments for all projects. At the same time, however, its adherence to tied aid is also seen as limiting some of the prospects for ownership and self help,

Japan's recognition of its own modernisation process and its emphasis on the transferral of lessons from the successful development of East Asian economies is also seen as a significant element contributing to Japan's perceived sensitivity in dealing with African countries.

A number of interviewees and relevant literature, however, argue that much more could be done to build on this, and to capture and share the relevant lessons from these examples of development progress. A GRIPS (2008) report usefully recognised that for the effective transferral of lessons, adaptation to context is key: "promoting policy measures adopted by a certain East Asian country in the past to another soil, without regard to historical context or country differences, hardly desirable". It

identified the key lessons from East Asia as the need for a strong field presence and to view development as a holistic social process, which implies: "...the crucial role of top leaders in breaking the initial poverty trap, the importance of constructing an 'imagined community' for national unity, adopting pragmatic gradualism in political development, and re- interpretation of imported systems in a particular social context" (GRIPS 2008: 14).

This seems to contrast with the features of the East Asian model commonly emphasised by Japan at present, which tend to focus on engagement with the government and prioritisation of sectors (infrastructure, agriculture) that drive economic growth. These are important dimensions, but there is perhaps greater need for recognition – set out in the GRIPS report – of the need to pay attention to underlying political and social dynamics, including the quality of leadership and the political settlement, the relationships between government and business and so on.

Recognition of the need to better understand some of the political and socio-economic conditions which contributed to the East Asian models could therefore be a greater focus for Japan, particularly where it seeks to help replicate these models in African contexts which may have very different underlying conditions. This does not mean Japan should shift more of its focus towards the support of governance reform per se. Rather, it could involve building the evidence base and disseminating lessons on what some of these underlying governance conditions might be for an 'East Asian' type model to be effective. This is a challenge that Japan is reportedly aware of (see for instance Horie 1997: 78) but has not yet been sufficiently crystallised into policy or strategy. A number of research institutes are now looking at these issues, including the ODI's Africa Power and Politics Programme<sup>17</sup>. Linking to these research programmes (potentially through the JICA Research Institute) could be a useful step forward to address this.

- A Steady Supporter and A Distinctive Voice

In the African context, Japan's role as a long term investor in core thematic areas (infrastructure, agriculture, basic services) supports the recognition of its distinctive voice and of its steady support, at least in comparison to other parts of the DAC group. In countries like Kenya, for example, Japan has had a presence since independence, reportedly leading to long term and stable relationships on the ground.

This has been reinforced through its sustained focus on issues like growth, infrastructure and agriculture, which have remained a core focus of Japanese engagement, even when they were more broadly out of the fashion in other parts of the international community. The emergence of donors like China and Brazil has opened fresh opportunities and a renewed interest in these thematic areas in Africa. Japan is therefore recognised as having a distinctive role (although it is one which has recently come to compete with China) in this respect.

In the past, it has been suggested by some that Japanese approaches in relation to areas like infrastructure have failed to adequately address the wider social and environmental impacts of these projects in a sustainable way (see discussion in Rocha Menocal et al 2011). However, Japan and JICA feel they are now tackling these issues in their engagement in Africa, but external stakeholders feel that there is

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<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.institutions-africa.org/>

still room for improvement if Japan wants to be recognised as a leader in this area, for example in relation to addressing environmental impacts (OECD 2010).

Examining Japan's experience in Africa, we identify another potential area of added value, as an 'effective implementer':

- An Effective Implementer

Reflection on Japan's engagement with Africa reveals an additional area as an 'effective implementer' where Japan can add value – and one which is increasingly relevant to debates about new aid modalities.

Yanagihara (1998) has argued that the Japanese approach to development can be characterised as an “ingredients approach”, focused on field level engagement and the relevant institutions which can realise change, in contrast to the “framework approach” of other DAC members, more focused on the high level (or upstream) policy frameworks (cited in GRIPS 2008: 12).

This seems to be borne out by some examples of Japanese practice in Africa, where emphasis is reportedly placed on building field level engagement (often over long time frames) and prioritising the implementation of specific projects of support. This stands in contrast to the practices of other DAC donors, who have tended to focus predominantly on national level policy engagement including through forms of programme based aid.

There may be growing space for engagement between these two approaches, however, as more top down, policy framework engagement is increasingly recognised to have neglected more downstream implementation realities (Williamson and Dom 2010; Yoshida 2011). This opens up new opportunities for Japan to engage with a range of DAC donors, including those like the UK who have conventionally been seen as far removed from Japan models of development, but who are increasingly keen to better understand local dynamics, implementation realities and reform incentives. Again, however, it has been suggested by some observers that Japan could further capitalise on this experience and translate its lessons more effectively into higher level policy debates (Yoshida 2011).

## 5. Options for the future

In light of the dynamics of Japanese aid to Africa described above, there are a number of areas in which Japan appears to have some distinctive strengths – as an empathic partner; a steady support; a distinctive voice; and an effective implementer. There are also a number of wider development debates to which Japan can potentially make important contributions – including the application of lessons learnt from East Asia, the relationship between growth and governance and the need to link aid modalities to implementation realities.

Realising this potential will involve some adjustments to current approaches. Here we suggest some potential strategies for the way forward:

- Building on what works: There is a common perception that Japan has the potential to make useful contributions to a number of current development debates in Africa. These include reflections on the governance/growth relationship (building on its East Asian experience) and on effective implementation and its links to policy frameworks and aid modalities. But this will require greater investment in capturing the lessons from the East Asian experiences and building the policy expertise to analyse and present this learning.

Moreover, where Japan feels it has a comparative advantage (for example, in relation to infrastructure), it will be important to ensure that this support addresses any criticism (for example regarding environmental impacts); where Japan and JICA feel they have already addressed past criticism in this area, efforts should focus on disseminating the evidence base for this.

- Going to scale: Greater reflection on the lessons from East Asia should be accompanied by greater analysis of the contexts in Africa, to better assess which elements of the East Asian model may (or may not) be applicable. Japan could also support building a stronger evidence base and greater dissemination of these lessons, including through research partnerships. A focus on identifying what the core lessons for Africa might be, based on the East Asia experience but also allowing for the differing governance and economic conditions, would be particularly helpful and could make a significant contribution to ongoing DAC debates, for example on the relationship between governance and growth and how to target assistance accordingly.
- Realising 'complementarity and diversity': The crowded donor landscape in Africa means that finding ways of cooperating and sharing information with other donors can be crucial. In some sectors, such as infrastructure, there is reported openness to greater Japanese leadership, to coordinate and advise others. But elements of institutional resistance to concepts of harmonisation are seen as undermining this potential. In the run-up to the next High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Japan could set out a case for maintaining diversity in a context of cooperation and complementarity which may be well received, but it will require greater openness at senior levels.

Securing strategic alliances: An earlier phase of this research discussed the potential role for Japan as a bridge between DAC and non-DAC donors. At present, in Africa, Japan seems to straddle both groups. For example, it is a member of the DAC fora but it is not always closely linked to DAC agendas and is also building bilateral links for development projects with donors like South Korea and Brazil (arguably more effectively than a number of other DAC members have done). However it is not currently perceived as a bridge or link between DAC and non-DAC groups in the

African context. Moreover, it is questionable whether a bridging role for Japan would be welcomed (not least in relation to China, which remains a politically sensitive area for Japan too).

Instead, a more realistic strategy may be to identify the key strategic alliances which Japan could prioritise with other donors in the African context, but this will need to be based on the realities in each country rather than attempting to align with one grouping or another across the continent. In Mozambique, for example, there are reports that alliance with the US led to greater influence where Japan was previously excluded from a key donor decision making forum (because it was not providing budget support). Examples of tripartite collaboration with Korea and Brazil also seem useful in this respect. Building strategic alliances with individual DAC and non DAC donors at the country level is therefore likely to be a useful strategy going forwards. The third report in this research study examines options for engagement at the international level too.

While this report does not present a comprehensive overview of Japanese engagement with Africa, it seeks to identify the key features of Japan's development assistance to Africa and the potential for it to add value to development processes. As we highlight, there are a number of important ways in which Japan has some distinctive strengths, both in terms of its contributions to current development debates and its on the ground experience. As a wide range of donors similarly reflect on their own approaches and effectiveness, this seems to be an opportune time for Japan to capitalise on these advantages, and to take steps to address those areas where there may be opportunities to improve.

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## APPENDIX A: Project Terms of Reference

### PART ONE – Locating Japan’s ODA within a crowded, shifting marketplace

This part examines the history and evolution of Japan’s ODA to date, in an effort to extract / identify its contemporary value within a rapidly changing development landscape. The major question it seeks to answer is:

- What is the value add of Japan’s development model compared with other major donors?

Answering this question will involve answering a number of more focused ‘minor’ questions, including:

1. What do we mean by a development ‘model’ or approach and how does it relate to a country’s ODA policy?
2. What are the most common characteristics of development models shared across the donor community?
3. What are the defining features of Japan’s contemporary ODA /development model, and how / why have these changed over the last few decades?
4. What is the relation between Japan’s ODA and Japanese culture, and what implications might this have for the former’s propensity for change?
5. Who are the most comparable donor agencies to JICA in terms of their development model / ODA policy, and who are the most different?
6. How is Japan’s ODA currently viewed / appreciated by other key stakeholders (e.g. donors, western media, international NGOs), as compared with their closest counterparts?
7. How will Japan’s ODA and/or development model be affected by the rise of Brazil, Russia, India and particularly China as emerging economies / donors?

This element of the research is designed to *raise awareness* about the history and contemporary value of Japan’s ODA, and will target audiences including:

- Japanese Government - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- JICA HQ
- JICA Overseas Offices
- Other Bilateral and Multilateral Donors / Government Agencies
- International NGOs
- United Nations Agencies
- Japanese Embassies
- Japanese & Foreign Media / Academic Institutions

It is anticipated that the methodology supporting this element of the project will include desk research (e.g. comparing OECD DAC Peer Reviews), telephone / face-to-face interviews with academics and officials, and case studies / success stories from JICA’s information database.

## **PART TWO – Applying the strengths of Japan’s ODA within an African context**

This part examines how the distinctive value of Japan’s ODA can be practically applied to meet some of the contemporary and emerging challenges facing African countries. The major question it seeks to answer is:

- What has been the value add of Japan’s contribution to African development to date, and what areas, issues, populations or programs should it concentrate on going forward in cooperating effectively with other key stakeholders?

Answering this question will involve answering a number of more focused ‘minor’ questions, including:

1. What has been Japan’s strategy for ODA to Africa so far, and what have been the key influencing factors behind this approach?
2. What have been some of the key success stories in Japan’s assistance to Africa to date, and what have been some of the major barriers to success?
3. Which donors appear to have had greatest success in providing sustainable, effective assistance to Africa, and how has this been achieved?
4. What are the key priorities that are / will be driving the work of other major donors providing ODA to Africa over the next ten years?
5. Avoiding duplication and recognising its distinctive strengths, what areas, issues, populations, programs or methods might be most appropriate for Japan to focus on in providing ODA to Africa over the next ten years?

This element of the research is designed to be *policy-oriented* and *practically focused*, and will target audiences including:

- Japanese Government - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- JICA HQ and JICA Overseas Offices
- Other Bilateral and Multilateral Donors / Government Agencies
- International NGOs
- United Nations Agencies
- Japanese Embassies
- Japanese & Foreign Media
- Japanese & Foreign Academic Institutions
- TICAD V Working Groups and Conference delegates in 2013

It is anticipated that the methodology supporting this element of the project will include desk research, telephone / face-to-face interviews with academics and officials specialising in African development located in-country and around the world, and case studies / success stories from JICA’s African database.

## **PART THREE - Positioning Japan's ODA as a leader in its field**

This part contextualises the research within the United Kingdom to examine how the findings from the previous two research elements can be used to enhance the public recognition and status of Japan's ODA within an increasingly competitive marketplace. The major question it seeks to answer is:

- What is the best way for Japan to enhance its profile and influence in the development field to remain a leader despite the emergence of new players?

Answering this question will involve answering a number of more focused 'minor' questions, including:

1. What are the most common perceptions / misconceptions among development stakeholders in the UK regarding Japan's ODA?
2. How might Japan best quantify / understand the gap between the size of its ODA contribution and its perceived contemporary public recognition worldwide?
3. What have been the implications of this gap in shaping Japan's ability to influence development policy and practice at the highest international levels?
4. How have / do donors similar to Japan maintain public profile and influence relating to their ODA, both domestically and abroad?
5. Using the example of the UK media, what are some of the relationships, resources and models of interaction that might successfully enhance the profile and influence of JICA in this region?

This element of the research is designed to be *policy-oriented* and *practically focused*, and will target audiences including:

- Japanese Government – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- JICA HQ
- JICA Overseas Offices – particularly those in UK, USA and France
- Other Bilateral and Multilateral Donors / Government Agencies
- International NGOs
- United Nations Agencies
- Japanese Embassies
- Foreign Media – particularly those organisations based in the UK

It is anticipated that the methodology supporting this element of the project will include desk research, telephone / face-to-face interviews with UK-based journalists, academics and officials specialising in international development.

## **APPENDIX B: List of interviewees**

Professor Kweku Ampiah, Leeds University

Ms Sumie Ishii, Director of JOICFP (Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation on Family Planning)

Penny Jackson, OECD

Mr. Masaaki Kato, Chief Representative, JICA KENYA

Izumi Ohno, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)

Mr. Ichiro Tambo, Executive Advisor to the Director General, Africa Dept. JICA HQ

Fletcher Tembo, Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute

Takumo Yamada, Advocacy Manager, Oxfam Japan

Prof Kazuhiro Yoshida, Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University