

Tunis Regional Preparatory Meeting for TICAD IV, 21-22 November 2007

Report of the Civil Society Session

Introduction:

Firstly, we would like to recognize the efforts of the Government of Japan and Tunisia as well as all the co-organizers for organizing this successful event.

The civil society in Japan and Africa have been organizing dialogues along with the process of TICAD. These discussions that took place in Nairobi, Tokyo, Lusaka and here in Tunisia have collected the inputs from more than 70 civil society organizations. Outcomes of these discussions have been summarized as “the Voices of African and Japanese Civil Society towards TICAD IV.” This document underlines the priorities in line with the themes identified for the TICAD IV.

This Tunis meeting has been very productive in reiterating the role of civil society as an equal and active partner of TICAD and the developmental process in Africa.

TICAD is a tremendous opportunity for Africa, alongside other processes. In that respect, we echo the words repeatedly mentioned in the plenary and sub regional sessions on the first day to “harmonize” different developmental efforts that are already in place and to integrate TICAD process into existing regional development mechanisms.

The following are the outcome of the discussion in the civil society session;

Recommendations:

1. TICAD IV needs to take a stock of already-existing commitments, including National and Regional Action Plans endorsed by national governments in different development sectors. Commitment coming out of TICAD IV should support the priority areas that the African Government already identified, and be coupled with financial commitment. We as civil society can contribute to this process by helping implement such commitments.

For example;

- Millennium Development Goals;
 - African Health Strategy (African governments committed 15% of national budget for health), and Maputo Plan for reproductive and maternal health;
 - Continent Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities;
 - International Convention on Bio-diversity and its National Action Plans,
 - African Youth Charters and Africa Fit for children;
- and other existing commitments

2. TICAD needs to recognize Civil Society as an equal and active partner in the process of TICAD and in developmental processes at grassroots, national, regional, and international levels. Civil society can take part in creating awareness among the people about TICAD, bringing up the voices of people in to the process, and delivering the TICAD commitment to the people that it intends to support.
3. To realize these, TICAD should establish a Support Fund for civil society capacity-building on implementation, follow-up, monitoring and advocacy on development objectives, including TICAD commitment.
4. As one of the follow up mechanisms, Civil Society proposes to create TICAD Watch Process which:
 - Holds Governments accountable to the commitments made through TICAD process;
 - Formulates a White Paper highlighting policy recommendations to reflect the voices of the deprived and marginalized people; and
 - Reports on the TICAD process to the public and civil society.

In summary, we believe that the key words for TICAD process are: harmonization; concrete action; and follow-up mechanism.

We believe that we can achieve MDGs and tackle other challenges raised by TICAD, only if a wider range of stakeholders are integrated and engaged in development process, including governments, private sector, and civil society.