

## THE ROLE OF JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (JICA) IN FACILITATING CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN JAPAN AND NIGERIA

**Enueme, Paul Ovie**

History, Strategic and International Studies, Dennis Osadebay University, Anwai, Asaba

+2348068523572

[talk2paulenueme@gmail.com](mailto:talk2paulenueme@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the expanding role of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in shaping cultural diplomacy and economic cooperation between Japan and Nigeria. The problem arises from the limited scholarly attention given to how development agencies, beyond financial aid, now serve as instruments of soft power and cross-cultural integration. Accordingly, the objective of this paper is to analyze JICA's contributions to cultural exchange, local-level partnerships, and human capital development, with particular focus on its unique "hometown" initiative that links Japanese communities with African countries. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach, drawing from documentary analysis, policy reports, and existing academic literature to interpret JICA's strategies and impacts. The analysis is grounded in Soft Power Theory, which provides a lens for understanding how states use attraction, culture, and knowledge-sharing to strengthen their global influence. The significance of this study lies in its illumination of how development cooperation can transcend economic aid to foster long-term cultural relationships and people-to-people diplomacy. Findings reveal that JICA has contributed significantly to Nigeria's workforce development, technological capacity, youth training, community exchanges, and cultural awareness programs. However, gaps remain in harmonizing institutional efforts, deepening cultural immersion, and establishing more rigorous impact assessment frameworks. The study concludes that JICA's evolving model of cooperation represents a promising tool for strengthening Japan–Nigeria relations. It recommends enhanced cultural programming, stronger follow-up mechanisms for training beneficiaries, and expanded local partnerships to ensure wider and more sustainable impact.

**Keywords: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Cultural Diplomacy, Economic Exchange, Local-Level Partnerships, "Hometown" Designations**

### **Introduction**

Japan's engagement with Africa has grown remarkably in the past three decades, evolving from a predominantly aid-centred approach to a more diversified model that integrates development cooperation, cultural diplomacy, and strategic partnerships.<sup>1</sup> This transformation is most visible through the activities of the Japan International Cooperation

Agency (JICA), Japan's principal organ for administering official development assistance (ODA) and promoting bilateral collaboration with developing nations. JICA's operations across the African continent and particularly in Nigeria represent a synergy between economic development and soft diplomacy, reflecting Japan's broader aspiration to consolidate mutually beneficial ties that extend beyond economic assistance.<sup>2</sup>

In Nigeria, JICA has distinguished itself through a wide array of technical cooperation projects, training programs, institutional support initiatives, and grassroots exchanges. These programs target areas such as infrastructure development, agricultural modernization, education, and human capacity enhancement, while simultaneously fostering intercultural understanding between Japanese and Nigerian societies.<sup>3</sup> Beyond traditional development frameworks, JICA's activities embody a conscious effort to project Japan's national image as a partner committed to shared growth, peaceful cooperation, and knowledge exchange. This marks a significant departure from earlier paradigms of donor–recipient relations, where economic aid was often unidirectional and detached from cultural contexts.

A particularly innovative dimension of JICA's outreach is the introduction of the "hometown" initiative, whereby specific Japanese localities are symbolically linked to African countries, including Nigeria, to promote localized relationships and community-to-community diplomacy.<sup>4</sup> This initiative not only personalizes international cooperation but also democratizes diplomacy by engaging local Japanese communities in the cultural and developmental narratives of Africa. It deepens people-to-people ties, enhances empathy, and facilitates reciprocal cultural learning, thereby complementing formal diplomatic channels with emotional and social connections.

This approach aligns closely with Japan's overarching diplomatic philosophy that emphasizes peaceful engagement, non-coercive influence, and the projection of soft power through culture, knowledge, and technology transfer.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to hard-power strategies that rely on military or economic dominance, Japan's development diplomacy through JICA leverages education, innovation, and human capital development as tools of persuasion and partnership. Such initiatives resonate deeply with Joseph Nye's conception of soft power, where influence is achieved through attraction rather than coercion. Japan, through JICA, seeks to promote its values of discipline, cooperation, and mutual respect, using cultural diplomacy as both a bridge and a catalyst for economic collaboration.

However, this evolving strategy also invites critical examination. While JICA's programs have strengthened bilateral ties and contributed to Nigeria's developmental agenda, scholars and policy analysts note persistent structural challenges, including coordination deficits, limited local ownership, and insufficient evaluation mechanisms for measuring long-term impact. Moreover, questions arise as to whether JICA's approach sufficiently integrates local cultural contexts and whether its interventions translate into sustainable outcomes for Nigerian communities. These concerns underscore the need to analyze not just what JICA does, but how it conceptualizes and implements development within an intercultural framework.

Consequently, this paper seeks to interrogate JICA's dual role as both a development agency and an instrument of Japan's soft power diplomacy in Nigeria. It explores how JICA's economic and cultural programs intersect, the extent to which they facilitate mutual understanding, and the implications for Japan–Nigeria relations within the broader context of Africa's international partnerships. By examining JICA's local-level initiatives, partnerships, and the “hometown” strategy, the study provides an understanding of how development cooperation, cultural exchange, and diplomacy converge to produce multifaceted international relationships.

In essence, this introduction situates JICA not merely as an aid agency but as a transformative actor in global diplomacy, redefining how nations relate in an era where cultural empathy, human capacity, and shared development goals are becoming as significant as financial assistance or trade agreements.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

The concepts underpinning this study are central to understanding the multifaceted relationship between Japan and Nigeria through the activities of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). These include the operational definition and significance of JICA as a development and diplomatic actor, as well as related concepts such as cultural diplomacy, economic exchange, local-level partnerships, and the innovative “hometown” initiative.

### **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is Japan's primary governmental body responsible for implementing official development assistance (ODA) and facilitating global cooperation.<sup>6</sup> Established in 1974 and later restructured as an independent administrative institution, JICA serves as the operational arm of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in promoting international development, human resource training, and global stability. Its mission extends beyond the traditional boundaries of aid provision; JICA embodies Japan's philosophy of “cooperation for mutual benefit”, blending development objectives with diplomacy, education, and cultural exchange.

JICA's core areas of intervention include technical cooperation, grant aid, training, volunteer dispatch, emergency assistance, and policy advisory services. Through these instruments, JICA promotes sustainable development in partner countries while also projecting Japan's values of discipline, innovation, and resilience. Its work in Nigeria, for instance, covers sectors such as education, infrastructure, health, agriculture, energy, and governance with an emphasis on knowledge transfer and institutional strengthening. Beyond economic cooperation, JICA operates as a platform for people-to-people exchange, advancing Japan's broader soft power strategy by cultivating long-term trust and friendship with recipient nations.

Importantly, JICA has evolved into a developmental diplomat, using non-coercive influence to shape global discourse on inclusive growth, innovation, and cultural empathy. This dual

role situates JICA as both an agent of change and a symbolic representation of Japan's identity as a responsible global partner committed to equitable and sustainable development.

### **Cultural Diplomacy**

Cultural diplomacy refers to the deliberate use of a nation's cultural resources, such as art, language, education, traditions, and shared values, to foster mutual understanding, promote peace, and advance national interests.<sup>7</sup> It is a strategic tool of foreign policy that seeks to build bridges between societies by encouraging dialogue, empathy, and respect. Unlike propaganda or direct political influence, cultural diplomacy operates on the premise that genuine intercultural engagement can transform perceptions and reduce conflict.

In Japan's case, cultural diplomacy is deeply embedded in its postwar foreign policy, emphasizing non-militaristic engagement and trust-building through culture and education. Through JICA, Japan uses various cultural programs, including exchange visits, youth training, and community collaboration, to create platforms where mutual learning occurs. For example, Japanese experts working in Nigerian communities not only transfer technical skills but also engage in cultural sharing, thereby humanizing international cooperation. Furthermore, cultural diplomacy strengthens national branding. Japan's global image as a society rooted in discipline, technological excellence, and respect for harmony (*wa*) is reinforced through JICA's humanitarian and educational interventions. Thus, JICA's activities become an instrument of Japan's soft power, influencing how the world perceives Japan not through coercion, but through admiration and collaboration.

### **Economic Exchange**

Economic exchange encompasses a wide range of activities involving the transfer of capital, knowledge, technology, and expertise between countries.<sup>8</sup> It extends beyond trade and investment to include technical cooperation, industrial capacity building, human resource development, and institutional partnerships. For Japan and Nigeria, economic exchange forms the backbone of their bilateral relationship, with JICA serving as a key facilitator. Through JICA's interventions, Japan provides Nigeria with technical training programs, development financing, and infrastructural support, while Nigeria offers investment opportunities, markets, and resource potential. This exchange promotes mutual economic empowerment rather than dependency. Unlike traditional aid models that reinforce hierarchies, JICA's approach emphasizes collaboration, co-creation, and reciprocity. Economic exchange through JICA also promotes knowledge diplomacy, where expertise in areas like engineering, agriculture, education, and digital technology is shared in ways that enhance productivity and innovation. It creates economic linkages that strengthen diplomatic ties, supporting both national growth in Nigeria and international reputation for Japan as a champion of ethical globalization.

### **Local-Level Partnerships**

Local-level partnerships refer to the direct cooperation between communities, local governments, civil society organizations, and institutions across countries.<sup>9</sup> These collaborations localize international relations by making development and cultural

exchange tangible at the community level. JICA's local partnerships in Nigeria exemplify this approach, as the agency works with state governments, universities, and grassroots groups to co-design and implement context-specific projects. Such partnerships encourage participatory development, allowing local communities to take ownership of initiatives. They also strengthen sustainability by ensuring that projects align with the socio-cultural realities of the host environment. Through mechanisms such as the JICA Volunteer Program and grassroots technical cooperation, Japanese experts and Nigerian stakeholders collaborate in education, public health, environmental conservation, and entrepreneurship. Local-level partnerships serve a diplomatic purpose as well, they promote mutual respect and equality, transforming development assistance into a two-way cultural and intellectual exchange. These relationships lay the foundation for a durable international friendship grounded in shared experience rather than distant policymaking.

### **“Hometown” Designations**

The “hometown” system represents one of Japan's most creative and human-centered diplomatic innovations. Initiated by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented through JICA, this system assigns a Japanese city or town to an African partner country, including Nigeria intending to foster deeper cultural, educational, and social ties.<sup>10</sup> Through these symbolic “hometown” relationships, Japanese municipalities host African students, organize cultural festivals, sponsor sports diplomacy initiatives, and facilitate community exchanges that connect citizens at the grassroots level. The underlying philosophy is that people-to-people diplomacy builds stronger and more enduring ties than high-level governmental engagements alone.

In practice, these hometown initiatives help Japanese citizens to better understand Africa beyond stereotypes while enabling African communities to engage with Japan's cultural and technological ecosystems. They also generate subnational diplomacy, allowing cities and towns to function as independent actors in international cooperation. For Nigeria, this opens up new avenues for decentralized collaboration in education, innovation, and tourism. The “hometown” framework thus bridges the gap between international relations and local identity, reinforcing Japan's soft power by cultivating bonds of familiarity and emotional connection. It embodies the human face of diplomacy, a fusion of friendship, learning, and shared progress that transcends geographical boundaries.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Soft Power Theory**

This study is anchored on Joseph Nye's Soft Power Theory, which argues that states can advance their foreign policy goals not only through coercion or material incentives but through attraction, persuasion, and cultural appeal. Soft power emerges from a country's cultural heritage, political values, educational systems, and diplomatic practices, all of which shape how it is perceived on the global stage.<sup>11</sup> In the context of Japan–Nigeria relations, JICA functions as one of Japan's most effective channels for projecting soft power. Rather than relying on force or economic pressure, Japan leverages cultural exchanges, knowledge transfer, educational programs, international training schemes, and grassroots

partnerships to cultivate lasting goodwill. These initiatives foster admiration for Japanese discipline, innovation, and social values while simultaneously addressing development needs in Nigeria. JICA's soft power strategy is therefore twofold: it enhances Japan's global image and influence while building tangible benefits for Nigerian communities and institutions. By deepening cultural understanding, improving human capital, and promoting people-to-people connections, JICA strengthens bilateral relations through attraction rather than coercion. This aligns with Nye's central argument that soft power creates a more sustainable and mutually respectful foundation for international cooperation.

### **JICA's Local-Level Initiatives and Partnerships in Nigeria:**

#### **Community-Based Technical Cooperation**

Through community-based technical cooperation, JICA has made remarkable contributions to Nigeria's socio-economic development, particularly via the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV).<sup>12</sup> The JOCV program operates as a grassroots extension of Japan's foreign assistance, emphasizing hands-on collaboration between Japanese experts and local Nigerian communities. Volunteers are dispatched to various regions across Nigeria to provide technical and advisory support in key sectors such as agriculture, education, health, rural development, and environmental management. In the agricultural sector, for instance, JICA volunteers have assisted smallholder farmers in improving crop yield through the introduction of sustainable farming methods, modern irrigation systems, and improved post-harvest handling techniques. In education, Japanese volunteers work closely with teachers to strengthen science and mathematics instruction, curriculum development, and classroom management practices. In the health sector, JOCV volunteers engage in maternal health education, sanitation campaigns, and primary healthcare delivery, especially in rural areas where access to formal health facilities remains limited.

Beyond technical contributions, the JOCV initiative promotes cross-cultural understanding and mutual learning.<sup>13</sup> Volunteers live within host communities, learn local languages, and participate in communal activities, thereby fostering interpersonal bonds and trust. This approach aligns with Japan's broader development philosophy of "cooperation through mutual learning", ensuring that knowledge transfer occurs in a culturally sensitive and contextually adaptive manner. By merging technical expertise with empathy and community engagement, JICA's grassroots cooperation reflects the synthesis of practical development support and cultural diplomacy.

#### **The "Hometown" Initiative for African Countries**

The "Hometown Initiative" represents another dimension of JICA's innovative diplomacy in Africa, and Nigeria has been one of its key beneficiaries. This initiative builds on the traditional Japanese concept of *furusato* meaning "hometown", as a platform for local-to-local diplomacy. It aims to connect Japanese municipalities with African communities in mutually beneficial partnerships. For Nigeria, this initiative has led to a variety of cross-cultural and development-oriented exchanges between Japanese cities and Nigerian local governments.

These exchanges have manifested in youth leadership development, where young Nigerians are hosted in Japan for leadership workshops, civic engagement seminars, and intercultural training. Similarly, sports diplomacy has been promoted through community-based sports programs, fostering teamwork and mutual respect between young people of both nations. Community festivals and cultural exhibitions have also served as vibrant platforms for promoting Nigerian art, music, and cuisine in Japan while introducing Japanese traditions, such as tea ceremonies and calligraphy, to Nigerian audiences.<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, at the municipal level, the initiative facilitates economic and technical cooperation, such as small-scale industry development and urban planning exchanges.<sup>15</sup> Japanese local governments, often in collaboration with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), engage in projects that support Nigeria's drive toward industrial diversification and community-led entrepreneurship. The "Hometown Initiative" thus transcends traditional diplomacy by humanizing state-to-state relations through direct people-to-people contact. It contributes to a synthesis between cultural diplomacy, grassroots partnership, and sustainable local development, thereby advancing Japan's broader soft power strategy in Africa.

### **Partnerships with Local and State Governments**

Beyond grassroots programs, JICA maintains strategic partnerships with Nigeria's local and state governments, emphasizing the localization of technical cooperation and the institutional strengthening of governance structures.<sup>16</sup> These partnerships are particularly visible in states such as Lagos, Kano, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Kaduna, where JICA implements projects tailored to local developmental priorities. In Lagos State, JICA has supported transportation planning and urban infrastructure development, contributing to the formulation of the Lagos Urban Transport Master Plan and the introduction of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. In Kano State, the agency has invested in water resource management projects, focusing on efficient distribution systems and maintenance capacity. The Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) benefits from JICA's assistance in healthcare system strengthening and hospital management, while Kaduna State has partnered with JICA to modernize education through teacher training and digital learning initiatives.

These collaborations demonstrate JICA's multidimensional approach, integrating technical expertise with cultural respect.<sup>17</sup> Japanese experts prioritize participatory dialogue with local stakeholders, ensuring that interventions align with community values and needs. Through this method, Japan does not merely transfer technology—it co-creates knowledge systems that reflect local realities and aspirations.

### **Integrating Cultural Diplomacy with Economic and Workforce Development : Human Resource Development and Training Programs**

At the core of JICA's soft-power toolkit is human resource development. Programs such as the ABE Initiative (African Business Education Initiative) and the Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP) provide Nigerian professionals with sustained, sector-specific training in

engineering, business management, public administration, ICT, agriculture, and health systems.<sup>18</sup> Mechanics and modalities: these programs combine classroom instruction, on-the-job training in Japan, and follow-up support in Nigeria. Trainees gain not only technical competencies but also first-hand exposure to Japanese organizational practices, work ethics, and modes of collective problem-solving. Upon return, alumni act as cultural and institutional bridges, introducing Japanese methods, advocating bilateral linkages, and often serving as interlocutors for future cooperation. Because these professionals embody both competence and relational ties, they function as living embodiments of soft power; their admiration for and adoption of Japanese methods increases Japan's attractiveness and influence in Nigerian professional circles.<sup>19</sup>

Development impact: workforce programs strengthen institutional capacities (e.g., improved hospital administration, more efficient municipal planning, or better management practices in SMEs). They also improve employability and create networks of Japan-oriented professionals who can catalyze technology adoption and partnerships. Challenges and caveats: sustainability depends on post-training integration, availability of relevant roles, enabling institutional incentives, and mechanisms for alumni engagement. Without adequate follow-up (mentoring, research collaborations, seed funding), the "soft-power dividend" may dissipate as trained individuals face bureaucratic constraints or brain-drain risks. The strategic implication is clear: training must be embedded within longer-term institutional support to convert attraction into durable development outcomes.

### **Technology Transfer and Industrial Development**

JICA's support for industrial modernization through Kaizen productivity methods, quality control training, SME development, and vocational training systems represents a material complement to human-capital work.<sup>20</sup> Kaizen, in particular, exemplifies the diffusion of a Japanese managerial culture: incremental improvement, employee participation, and systematic problem-solving. JICA transmits not only techniques but also workplace values; discipline, teamwork, attention to process that resonate culturally and institutionalize Japanese norms.<sup>21</sup>

Mechanics and outcomes: technology transfer often takes the form of trainer exchanges, demonstration factories, curriculum reform in TVET (technical and vocational education and training) centers, and joint pilot projects with SMEs. The immediate benefits include productivity gains, improved product standards, and enhanced competitiveness of Nigerian businesses. Over time, these practices can shift organizational cultures within partner firms and public institutions, creating a receptive environment for further Japan-led partnerships and investment. Soft-power linkage: when local businesses attribute improvements in performance to Japanese practices, admiration and trust grow. This positive association facilitates market entry for Japanese firms, encourages joint ventures, and opens channels for sustained economic diplomacy, again, attraction rather than coercion. However, successful transfer requires adaptation to local contexts; rigid transplantation of Japanese practices without contextualization can prompt resistance or underperformance.

Institutional constraints: effective technology transfer needs supporting policies (e.g., SME financing, standards regulation), functioning supply chains, and absorptive capacity among firms and training institutions. JICA's role therefore must include policy dialogue and systems support to ensure that transferred technologies and processes stick.

### **Cultural Diplomacy as an Economic Tool**

Cultural programming; festivals, arts and performance exchanges, language instruction, and public diplomacy events does more than create goodwill; it lays the affective foundation upon which economic relationships can grow. Cultural activities reduce information asymmetries, humanize foreign partners, and create narratives of shared interest that facilitate trade and investment.<sup>22</sup>

Mechanics and examples: cultural festivals showcasing Japanese crafts and cuisine, joint film screenings, or Japanese language scholarships create public familiarity with Japan. Language training, in particular, lowers transaction costs for business engagement and enables smoother collaboration. Firms and investors often prefer partners with whom they share communicative competence and cultural understanding, thus cultural diplomacy becomes a market-enabler. Soft-power rationale: attractive cultural presence increases Japan's reputational capital. When consumers, entrepreneurs, and public officials view Japan sympathetically, it becomes easier for Japanese products, services, and ideas to gain traction. This reputational advantage rooted in culture and people-centred exchange translates into tangible economic benefits stronger trade ties, more trust in partnerships, favorable investment climates.

Limitations and mitigation: cultural diplomacy must avoid being superficial or tokenistic. Authentic, reciprocal cultural engagements, those that also spotlight Nigerian culture in Japan are critical to avoid perceptions of cultural one-wayness. Joint cultural programming that foregrounds mutual respect will produce deeper soft-power returns.

### **Youth and Educational Exchanges**

Investing in youth and educational exchanges is a forward-looking soft-power strategy. By bringing young Nigerians into contact with Japanese institutions and peers, JICA and allied Japanese organizations embed values of cooperation, discipline, and collaborative problem-solving among future leaders.<sup>23</sup>

### **Conclusion**

JICA's engagement in Nigeria has evolved into one of the most comprehensive examples of how development cooperation can be strategically intertwined with cultural diplomacy to advance mutual interests. Through a combination of educational exchanges, professional training schemes, community-based interventions, and cultural programs, JICA has positioned itself as a central actor in shaping the landscape of Japan–Nigeria relations. The agency's local-level partnerships ranging from grassroots volunteer deployments to municipal collaborations have deepened interpersonal connections and reinforced social trust between the two societies. Equally, its innovative “hometown” initiative has provided

a culturally rich platform for long-term social, economic, and youth-focused exchanges that transcend conventional diplomacy. Viewed through the lens of Soft Power Theory, JICA's work exemplifies how states can cultivate legitimacy, attraction, and influence through non-coercive means. Japan's investment in Nigeria's human capital, technological upgrading, public-sector modernization, and cultural engagement demonstrates that development assistance can simultaneously serve diplomatic, economic, and socio-cultural purposes. The agency's emphasis on values such as discipline, cooperation, and mutual respect has further strengthened Japan's image as a reliable partner committed not only to economic growth but also to human-centered development.

Nevertheless, the full potential of JICA's contribution remains contingent upon deeper institutional coordination, expanded cultural immersion opportunities, and more robust monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure long-term sustainability. Strengthening these aspects will amplify the transformative effects of Japan's soft power projection while supporting Nigeria's pursuit of skilled manpower, modernized institutions, and globally competitive communities.

In sum, JICA's role in Nigeria stands as a testament to the power of culture, collaboration, and knowledge exchange in building durable interstate relationships. Its continued evolution will shape not only bilateral cooperation but also the broader future of development-driven diplomacy in Africa.

### **Recommendations**

1. **Expand Cultural Exchange Programs:** Increase the frequency of cultural festivals, student exchanges, and bilateral arts collaborations.
2. **Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation:** Ensure sustainability and measurable outcomes across JICA projects.
3. **Enhance Local Government Participation:** Deepen partnerships with Nigerian municipalities to maximize grassroots impact.
4. **Improve Workforce Development Alignment:** Tailor training programs to Nigeria's contemporary economic challenges, especially in technology and innovation.
5. **Institutionalize the "Hometown" Initiative:** Establish formal sister-city agreements between Nigerian and Japanese municipalities.

### **ENDNOTES**

1. Tunde, Adeshokan. *Japan–Africa Relations in the 21st Century*. (Lagos: Centre for African Studies, 2021).
2. Kayode, Adebayo. "Japan's Soft Power in Africa." *Journal of International Affairs* 15, no. 2 (2020): 44–59.
3. Ojo, Aluko. *Development Cooperation and Foreign Policy*. (Abuja: Office of Strategic Studies Press, 2019).

4. Francis, Amoah. "Hometown Diplomacy and African Engagement with Japan." *African Review* 28, no. 1 (2022): 75–92.
5. Samuel, Asante. *Cultural Diplomacy in East Asia*. (Accra: Heritage Publishers, 2020).
6. Natsumi, Asuka. "JICA's Capacity-Building Programs in Africa." *Tokyo Policy Review* 12 (2018): 101–121.
7. Ibrahim, Bature. "Cultural Diplomacy as Soft Power." *African Journal of Political Science* 17, no. 2 (2021): 89–104.
8. Chukwuemeka, Eze. *International Economic Cooperation*. (Enugu: Maduka Press, 2020).
9. Yoshio, Fukumoto. "Local Partnership in Japan–Africa Relations." *JICA Occasional Paper* 44 (2019): 26–39.
10. Babangida, Haruna. "Grassroots Diplomacy in Nigeria." *Nigerian Institute of International Affairs Monograph*, 2022.
11. Joseph, Nye. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004).
12. JICA. *JOCV Annual Report*. (Tokyo: JICA Publications, 2021).
13. JICA. *Nigeria Country Development Cooperation Policy*. (Tokyo: JICA Press, 2020).
14. JICA. *Hometown Initiative Report for Africa*. (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022).
15. Haruto, Kaneko. "Japan's Evolving Aid Strategy." *Journal of Asian Studies* 58, no. 4 (2019): 433–450.
16. Lagos State Government. *Technical Cooperation Report with JICA*. (Lagos: Ministry of Budget and Planning, 2021).
17. Chidiebere, Mbah. "Japan–Nigeria Economic Relations." *Nigerian Journal of Development Studies* 19, no. 3 (2020): 112–130.
18. Amara, Okechukwu. *The ABE Initiative and Human Resource Development*. (Abuja: NEDC Publications, 2021).

19. Emeka, Onwudiwe. "Education Diplomacy and International Training." *African Review of Education* 7, no. 1 (2022): 14–29.
20. Mohammed, Oseni. *Industrial Development in Nigeria*. (Kano: Arewa Press, 2018).
21. Shinji, Sakamoto. "KAIZEN and African Industrialization." *Asian Economic Review* 34, no. 2 (2021): 87–104.
22. Toyosi, Salami. "Cultural Engagement as Economic Strategy." *West African Journal of International Studies* 6, no. 2 (2020): 66–83.
23. Hiroaki, Shiraishi. "Youth Exchange Diplomacy." *Japan Foreign Policy Review* 10 (2019): 55–78.
24. Yahaya, Suleiman. "People-to-People Diplomacy in Africa." *African Diplomacy Journal* 4, no. 1 (2021): 23–41.
25. Minoru, Takada. *Japan and Africa: A Development Partnership*. (Tokyo: Japan Foundation Press, 2020).