

Special Feature

A Journey of Culture, Education, and Friendship



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Welcome to the October edition of AfriMag, your window into the vibrant cultures, innovations, and stories shaping contemporary Africa. This issue celebrates the resilience, creativity, and dynamism of the African continent, shedding light on the achievements, challenges, and opportunities that define Africa today.

We are proud to report that the African Association of Miyagi (AFAM) actively participated in the recent thematic event organized by JICA for TICAD9. This engagement underscores AFAM's ongoing commitment to fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and dialogue between Africa and Japan. In this edition, we highlight selected insights and discussions from the event, showcasing Africa's approaches to human security, sustainable development, and innovation.

Our coverage of the Ghana-Rifu cultural and educational exchange further demonstrates the power of cross-cultural dialogue in building mutual understanding and collaboration. These initiatives not only celebrate Africa's rich heritage but also inspire Japanese communities and youth to engage with the continent in meaningful ways.

This issue also explores Africa's role in the global economy, technological innovation, and sustainable development. From youth-led enterprises to industrial partnerships under frameworks such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Africa continues to demonstrate its capacity to lead, innovate, and contribute to global progress. Inclusive growth—particularly the empowerment of women, youth, and marginalized communities—remains central to this journey.

At AfriMag, our mission is to challenge stereotypes, celebrate African excellence, and provide a platform for dialogue that informs, inspires, and connects communities. We strive to bring stories that educate, entertain, and spark curiosity about the African continent, its people, and its future.

We hope this edition encourages readers to engage with Africa not only as a land of opportunities but also as a dynamic, evolving, and creative space brimming with stories that matter. Together, let us continue to learn from each other, celebrate diversity, and strengthen the bridges connecting Africa with the world.

Thank you for journeying with us, and we look forward to sharing many more stories of Africa's achievements, innovations, and potential in the months ahead.

Isaac Yaw Asiedu

Editor-in-Chief, AfriMag



Africa and Japan Working Together for a Bright Future

TICAD9 - Yokohama

August, 2025, the city of Yokohama in Japan hosted TICAD9 – the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development. TICAD is a big meeting where African countries, Japan, and other international partners come together to talk about how Africa and Japan can work together on important issues like education, technology, trade, and the environment.

One of the most exciting events on August 19, was a thematic session titled:

「Opening the Road to a Single African Market – 6 Years of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and What Comes Next.」

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is like a giant club for African countries that helps them trade with each other more easily. Imagine if every school in Japan could share books, sports equipment, and resources without extra rules or complicated fees. That's what AfCFTA does for African countries. It helps businesses grow, creates more jobs, and allows people to share ideas and products across the continent.

In the session, experts talked about:

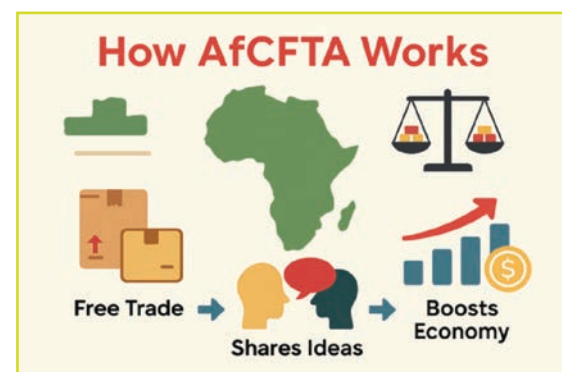
- How AfCFTA has been helping African countries trade with each other for the past six years.
- Ways Africa and Japan can cooperate to make trade even stronger.
- How young people, women, and small businesses can benefit from this new system.

It was very interesting for the audience because they could see how Africa is becoming stronger and more connected. It also showed how Japan and Africa can work together to support growth, innovation, and opportunities for everyone.

For students, the big lesson is this: working together across countries can create more opportunities for everyone. Just like in school, sharing knowledge and helping each other leads to success.

TICAD9 is not only about government leaders and businesses—it's about everyone, including young people, learning about Africa's potential and how international cooperation can make the world a better place.

Let's watch closely how AfCFTA grows and how Africa continues to open new doors for trade, technology, and friendship!



Africa's Women Building the Continent's Future

Africa is a continent full of energy, creativity, and potential—and at the center of it all are its women. From mothers and daughters to students and leaders, women shape the lives of nearly 750 million people across Africa. Yet, despite their vital role, many African women still face daily challenges that limit their opportunities and freedom.

Even today, women in Africa often carry heavy responsibilities. In many regions, they have more children than the global average, face restrictions from traditions or religious practices, and sometimes experience violence that is rarely recorded. Laws exist to protect them, but in reality, equality remains a goal still out of reach.

But there is hope. Across Africa, women are leading a quiet revolution. In rural areas, they grow much of the food that feeds their communities. In cities, they run businesses, work in offices, create art, write books, and influence culture and politics. Women make up a large part of Africa's workforce and are increasingly taking part in decision-making, challenging old norms, and showing the world that change is possible.

Empowering women is more than a matter of fairness—it is essential for Africa's growth. When women can work, study, and make choices about their lives, families benefit too. Children are healthier and better educated, and communities grow stronger. Women also bring extra income to households, invest in businesses, and help the economy thrive.

Education is a key step. Millions of girls still do not go to school or drop out too early because of early marriage or cultural traditions. When girls have access to education, they gain the knowledge, confidence, and skills to shape their own futures—and the future of Africa.

African women are strong, talented, and ready to lead. They are already making a difference in every part of society, from farms to factories, classrooms to governments. Africa's progress depends on them—and the more opportunities we give them, the brighter the future of the continent will be.

Japanese Heroes in Africa

There were four amazing Japanese heroes who decided to help make Africa a better place for everyone. They didn't just visit, they worked hard to make lasting changes that would help people for years to come. Here are their stories!

Dr. Jiro Kondo - The Water Hero

In a small village in Kenya, there was no clean water for the people. They had to walk miles to find it, and often it wasn't even safe to drink! That's when Dr. Jiro Kondo, a smart Japanese engineer, heard about their problem. He decided to help by building clean water wells and teaching people how to take care of their water. Thanks to Dr. Kondo's hard work, thousands of people now have clean, safe water to drink every day!



Dr. Hideki Takahashi - The Green Earth Hero

In another village in Tanzania, Dr. Hideki Takahashi, a Japanese professor, loved nature and wanted to protect it. He went to Africa to teach kids how to take care of the environment. He showed them how planting trees, saving water, and keeping the earth clean could help the whole world. His lessons helped young African leaders take care of the land and make their communities better for everyone!

Dr. Tetsuya Tashiro - The Farming Hero

In some villages in Ghana, farming was hard. The soil was dry, and the crops weren't growing well. Dr. Tetsuya Tashiro, a Japanese farming expert, brought new ways to help the farmers grow more food. He taught them how to use special tools and take care of the soil so the crops could grow strong and healthy. Thanks to Dr. Tashiro, many farmers now have bigger, better harvests, and they can feed their families and communities!



Dr. Yuji Sato - The Health Hero

In some parts of Uganda, people were getting sick and didn't have enough doctors to help them. That's when Dr. Yuji Sato, a kind Japanese doctor, went to work. He taught local doctors and nurses how to take care of people with diseases like HIV. He even helped build hospitals and health centers in remote places where people couldn't easily get medical help. Thanks to Dr. Sato's work, many lives were saved, and more people in Africa could get the medical care they needed.



JICA - The Helping Hands Team

There's also a big team called JICA (the Japanese International Cooperation Agency), which works all over Africa. They help with building roads, schools, and hospitals. They also help farmers grow food, clean up the environment, and make sure everyone has enough water to drink. They've been working together with many African countries—including Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Mozambique—to make life better for everyone.

These Japanese heroes didn't just give gifts—they worked with the people of Africa to build a better future. From clean water to farming tools to protecting the earth, they showed that when people unite, amazing things happen. Their bonds will last, and the future is brighter because of them!

Now, just like these heroes, YOU can make a difference too—by sharing kindness, helping others, and caring for our world!

GHANA MEETS RIFU

Special Feature



In August 2025, Rifu Town warmly welcomed a Ghanaian delegation of students, educators, and officials as part of the Osaka Expo initiatives. Coordinated by AFAM and supported by the Japanese Cabinet Ministry, the visit fostered cultural exchange through club activities, calligraphy, and kendo, creating laughter, curiosity, and mutual respect. Mayor Yutaka Kumagai's welcome highlighted the success of the program, marking a proud milestone in Japan–Africa friendship and paving the way for future student exchanges.

Kendo meets Kente The Power of Shared Discipline



Ghanaian girls in kente joined Japanese students in kendogi for Kendo training—a powerful blend of martial discipline and African elegance, showing sport as a language of peace and respect.

Courage and Curiosity Kendo in Action



In a symbolic match, a Ghanaian student in kente sparred with a Japanese kendo master, embodying courage, humility, and respect through martial arts.

“Akwaaba” to the Ghanaian Delegation A Ceremonial Welcome



Akwaaba, Ghanaian word for ‘Welcome’ set the tone as Rifu Town warmly received the Ghanaian delegates under both nations’ flags, marking the start of a cultural bridge across generations and futures.

A Bond Beyond Language Youth Connecting



Youth connected through peace signs, laughter, and selfies—proof that friendship transcends language, thriving on goodwill and authenticity.

Cultures in Rhythm Drums and Dance Uniting Hearts



Ghanaian dance and Japanese taiko drumming merged in a powerful performance—more than entertainment, it became a living dialogue between two cultures.

Moment of Reflection Uma-no-se Scenic View



On Uma-no-se, a horseback-shaped natural bridge, delegates reflected amid pine islets and calm waters, appreciating nature's beauty and cultural bonds.

Introducing Republic of Malawi

LAKE MALAWI, BLUE ZEBRA LODGE - MALAWI

Warm Heart of Africa

Malawi, famously known as the Warm Heart of Africa for its friendly people, is a landlocked country in Southeastern Africa with over 22 million residents. Its capital is Lilongwe, and other key cities include Blantyre, Mzuzu, and Zomba. Once a British colony called Nyasaland, it gained independence in 1964 under Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. English is the official language, and Chichewa is widely spoken.

The economy relies heavily on agriculture—especially tobacco, tea, sugar, coffee, and groundnuts—while tourism is growing, with highlights like Lake Malawi, Liwonde National Park, and Mount Mulanje. Hydropower provides most of the electricity, though rural access remains low, and mining potential remains largely untapped.

Where is Malawi?



Visit Malawi

Lilongwe



Lilongwe is political and administrative capital of Malawi. It is divided into old town which hosts marketplaces, shops, bus stations, residential areas and new town which hosts government buildings, embassies, modern offices and hotels.

Mount Mulanje



Mount Mulanje, named ‘The Island in the Sky’ due to its dramatic rise from surrounding plains. It is located in southern Malawi in Mulanje district. Highest peak is Saptwa at 3,002 meters and is on tentative list for world heritage site by UNESCO.

Lake Malawi



Lake Malawi, 580km long, up to 75km wide, up to 706m deep covering 29,600 sqkm lies along Malawi's eastern border with Mozambique and Tanzania. It has a remarkable ecosystem known for its incredible biodiversity, especially fish species. It is home to over 1,000 species of cichlid fish, many found nowhere else in the world. Activities such as swimming, snorkeling & diving, kayaking, boating, sailing, fishing and sunset cruises are popular in this beautiful lake which is the 3rd largest lake in Africa. Its waters feed south zambezi river home to victoria falls through Shire River.

Malawi

Food Culture

Nshima, a thick porridge made from maize flour and water, is the national staple food of Malawi. It is typically served with a variety of accompaniments such as vegetables, beans, different kinds of meat or fish dishes. The versatile nature of Nshima makes it a central element of Malawian cuisines.



Let's Cook Nshima!

Ingredients for 4

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Maize flour: | 2Cups |
| Water: | 4Cups |
| Salt: | Optional |

【Equipment for cooking】

- Large cooking pot
- Wooden spoon (traditionally called a “limo”) or any sturdy spoon
- Bowl of water (to dip spoon or hands for shaping Nshima)

Instructions

【Step 1】 Boil Water

Pour 4 cups of water into the pot. Bring to a rolling boil over medium-high heat.

【Step 2】 Make a Porridge Base (Phala)in a small bowl

Mix about ½ cup maize flour with cold water to make a smooth paste (this prevents lumps). Slowly pour this slurry into the boiling water, stirring constantly. Let it cook for 3–5 minutes until slightly thickened.

【Step 3】 Add Remaining Flour

Slowly sprinkle the rest of the maize flour into the pot, stirring vigorously. The mixture will thicken—keep stirring to avoid lumps. Reduce heat to medium-low.

【Step 4】 Stir and Cook

Keep stirring and folding the nsima for 5–10 minutes. It should become smooth, thick, and hold its shape. Add a little water if too thick, or more flour if too soft.

【Step 5】 Shape & Serve

Wet your spoon or dip your hand in water. Scoop and shape nsima into rounds or mounds. Serve hot with a relish (e.g., beans, greens, chambo, beef stew)

Note: Nshima hardens as it cools so serve immediately. Eat it with your right hand, rolling into small balls to scoop up the relish. For Variation, try using Cassava flour or sorghum

The Talking Drum and the Moonlight Dance



Once upon a time, in a small African village, there was a magical Talking Drum. This drum had the power to call the whole community together, bringing everyone to celebrate under the bright moonlight. The village had a special tradition called the Moonlight Dance, where families and friends gathered to dance, sing, and share joy. The beat of the Talking Drum was the heart of the celebration, and without it, the dance couldn't happen.

One day, disaster struck—the Talking Drum went missing! The villagers searched high and low, but it was nowhere to be found. The Moonlight Dance, which was supposed to happen that very evening, seemed like it would never happen.

But there was one clever girl who wouldn't give up—her name was Ama. Ama loved the Moonlight Dance and couldn't bear the thought of missing it. So, she decided to go on an adventure to find the missing Talking Drum.

Ama walked through the village and out into the forest. As she walked deeper into the trees, she could hear a faint sound—thump, thump, thump. It was the beat of the Talking Drum, calling her! Ama followed the sound, pushing through the thick bushes until she came upon an old tortoise sitting by the drum.

The tortoise looked wise and gentle, and Ama asked, "Please, kind tortoise, can I take the Talking Drum back to the village? We need it for the Moonlight Dance!"

The tortoise nodded slowly and said, "This drum will only return to the village for those who promise to share joy and kindness. It does not play for those who are selfish or unkind."

Ama thought for a moment, then smiled and said, "I promise to share happiness and kindness with everyone I meet."

The tortoise smiled back and, with a slow nod, handed the drum to Ama. "You have proven yourself worthy," the tortoise said.

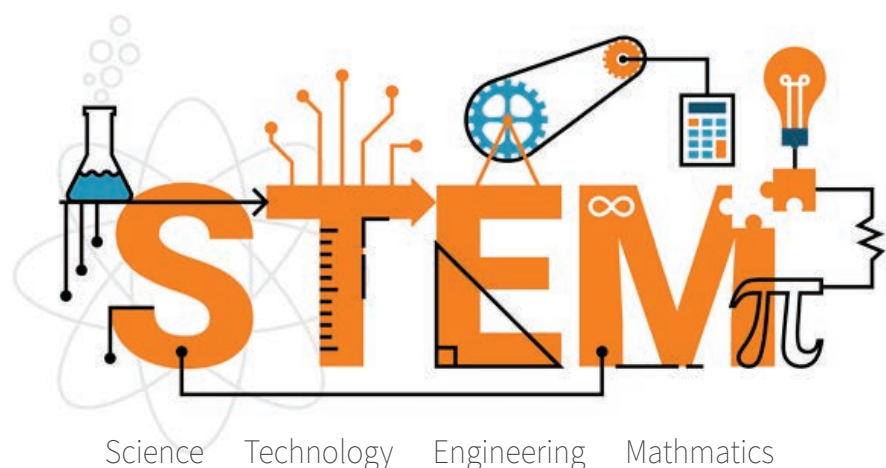
Ama hurried back to the village with the drum in her hands. When she arrived, she played the drum, and its powerful beat filled the air. The villagers came running from every direction, drawn by the sound of the magical Talking Drum.

That night, the Moonlight Dance was the happiest the village had ever seen. The people danced under the full moon, their hearts full of joy and laughter. Ama's promise of kindness had brought the drum back, and its music reminded everyone that happiness, just like the drum's rhythm, is meant to be shared with others.

And so, the Moonlight Dance became even more special that year—filled with love, unity, and the beautiful sound of the Talking Drum.



***Happiness grows when it is shared,
and kindness brings people together.***



Ghana's STEM Education

In Ghana, a country in West Africa, something exciting is happening in schools. The government has introduced STEM education, a program that focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. This is helping young Ghanaians learn the skills they need to become leaders in technology and solve problems that the world faces today.

STEM Education in Schools and Universities

Ghana's schools are now teaching students to build robots, create apps, and understand how technology works. Ghana National STEM School in Accra is one of the top schools where students use computers, 3D printers, and other tools to learn about technology. The students here even compete in competitions around the world, showing their inventions and ideas.

Universities like Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) are also preparing students to work in fields like computer science and renewable energy. These students are becoming experts in technology and science, ready to help solve important problems in Africa and the world.

A Global Impact

Ghana's students are now winning international competitions with their creative ideas. For example, a student named Ama Asante developed a solar-powered irrigation system to help farmers in Africa grow more food with less water. Her invention is just one example of how Ghana's new STEM education is helping students come up with solutions that can change the world.

Young Entrepreneurs and Innovators

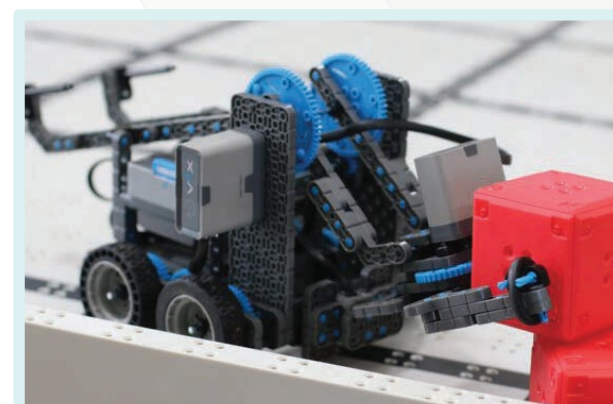
Many Ghanaian students are not just looking for jobs—they are creating their own businesses! Young entrepreneurs like Kwabena Osei have used their STEM knowledge to start companies that help people. Kwabena's company, TechLab Ghana, creates mobile apps that make it easier for people to access education and healthcare.

The Future of STEM in Ghana

As Ghana continues to invest in STEM education, the country is becoming a leader in technology and innovation. The government is working to make STEM education even better by providing more resources for students and expanding access to tech tools, especially in rural areas.

Conclusion: A Bright Future

Ghana's focus on STEM education is giving young people the chance to dream big and make a difference. With the skills they are learning, students in Ghana are ready to take on the world and shape the future of technology. Ghana's STEM education is not only changing the country—it is taking the world by storm!





Africa’s Green Revolution: Farming the Future

Across Africa, farmers and innovators are rethinking agriculture to meet the demands of a growing population while protecting the environment. In Ghana, sustainable cocoa farming projects are helping farmers earn fair incomes while preserving rainforests.

Sustainable Cocoa Farming in Ghana

Ghana is leading the way in sustainable cocoa farming with innovative projects that help both the environment and farmers.

One project, called the Farm of the Future, is located near Kumasi. It combines trees, crops, and special soil treatments to help the land stay healthy and increase cocoa yields. The farm also teaches local farmers how to use these methods.

Cocoa Life, a program by Mondelez International, works with over 200,000 farmers. It promotes good farming practices, including planting shade trees and giving farmers ownership of the trees they plant.

Another project from the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana helps improve soil using compost and biochar, which are made from farm waste.

In addition, the Asaase Pa project turns cocoa farm waste into biochar, which helps the soil and earns farmers money from carbon credits. The Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program encourages farmers to plant trees and improve their farming methods, which helps the environment and generates carbon credits for Ghana.

These efforts are making cocoa farming in Ghana more sustainable, helping farmers, and protecting the planet for future generations.



Innovative Urban Farming Solutions

In Kenya, innovative urban farming solutions like vertical gardens and hydroponic systems are transforming small spaces into productive green areas, enabling residents to grow vegetables in urban apartments.

Drones Empowering Farmers

Rwanda has emerged as a leader in integrating drone technology into agriculture. In the Northern Province, drones are utilized to monitor potato farms, capturing aerial images that help identify optimal maturity, nutrient deficiencies, and disease presence. This data enables farmers to make informed decisions, improving crop yields and reducing costs.



“
Innovation
Growth
Sustainability

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- ※ 1口以上、何口でも結構です。

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- 団体会員 アフリカ出身のAFAMメンバーが講師として、ご要望のテーマで出前授業。

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