

## 1. Uganda's JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

This year marks the 60th anniversary since the JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers was established in 1965. Currently, over 30 volunteers are active in Uganda, and by the end of this year, it is expected to be around 40. The first time volunteers were dispatched to Uganda was in 2001. There was a time when over 100 volunteers were active in Uganda, and the fiscal years of 2009-2010, had the highest number of dispatches in the world. This month, we invited the currently dispatched volunteers to the Japanese Ambassador's residence. We also invited people from NGOs active in Uganda, JICA experts, and others to hold a meeting for exchanging opinions and encouragement. Many of the Japanese people active in Uganda have previously experienced being overseas cooperation volunteers. On the day, there was a lively exchange of opinions on the form of cooperation, difficulties, and at the same time, the rewarding aspects, based on everyone's experiences. Many volunteers are still active in places without electricity or water supply. The fields they are dispatched to include rural development, community development, school education, health care, and more. The challenges they face and the problems they are asked to solve are often not easy. There are also cases where cooperation from the people at the dispatch destination cannot be easily obtained. In such situations, each person makes efforts and ingenuity, gaining experiences that cannot be obtained elsewhere. These experiences not only contribute to improving the lives of the people in Uganda but also help solve the challenges faced by Japanese society. In Japan, there is a noted decline in interest in international cooperation, but in Uganda, there are many Japanese people, including NGOs, startups, and individuals, who are challenging social issues beyond the overseas cooperation volunteers. As reported in the special issue of October, seeing the state of TICAD9 in August this year, I felt that the interest in international cooperation is rather broadening. I hope that various people will gain experience in various places and contribute even a little to solving the problems each society faces. I would like to continue providing such opportunities in Uganda as well.



[With the Overseas Cooperation Volunteers]

## 2. Response to Non-Communicable Diseases in Uganda

In the columns of June and September this year, we introduced Japanese medical devices (Olympus Corporation) active in Uganda. This time, we introduce Fujifilm's DryChem. The extension of life expectancy in Uganda has been reported in this column. In Ugandan healthcare, interest in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is increasing. To address non-communicable diseases, testing, prevention, and early treatment are becoming important. Fujifilm signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Toyota Tsusho at TICAD9 to cooperate in the field of blood testing and is trying to address non-communicable diseases in Uganda. As part of this, they are deploying DryChem blood testing equipment in regional core hospitals to meet Uganda's new medical needs. Toyota Tsusho is cooperating with medical-related vehicles to ensure that medical equipment reaches every corner of Uganda. This month, I visited the testing facilities of the Ugandan Ministry of Health and regional hospitals with stakeholders to see the usage of DryChem. The compact DryChem, which does not require the use of peripheral equipment, is a testing device suitable for local conditions. The Ugandan Ministry of Health is trying to build a testing system by connecting hospitals and testing sites in each region. Japanese medical devices are also active in this field, which can be said to be a new demand in Africa.



[Fujifilm's DryChem]



[YAMAHA motorcycles active in medical settings]

### 3. Improvement of Kampala Metropolitan Transmission Network

With economic growth, the demand for electricity in the Kampala metropolitan area is increasing by about 10% annually. Although there are existing transmission lines, they are being replaced with new ones using Japanese technology, and new substations are being developed. This month, I visited the construction site of a substation handled by Toyota Tsusho. About an hour's drive west from Kampala city, you arrive at the construction site of the Buloba substation. This substation, which officially started construction in February 2024, is about 80% complete. This project utilizes Japan's concessional loan cooperation. This project employs over 400 local workers per day. Nearly 20 community engagement sessions have been held to dialogue with local residents. Environmental monitoring is conducted almost weekly, with inspections of water quality, noise, ecosystems, and more. So far, there have been zero major accidents. It can be said to be the result of holding over 150 safety introduction training sessions and workshops. Once the construction of the Buloba substation is completed, there are plans to start improving the transmission network in the eastern part of the Kampala metropolitan area. Uganda's electricity is almost entirely hydroelectric, boasting abundant generation capacity. However, to deliver it to each household and contribute to the development of society, sufficient capacity and efficient transmission are essential. Electricity can be said to be an important part of social infrastructure. I hope that Japanese technology will be utilized and contribute even more to the development of Ugandan society.



[Walking inspection tour]



[Group photo in front of Hitachi transformer]

#### 4. Supply of Propane Gas to Ugandan Households

One of the things I noticed when I was assigned to Uganda is that many households use firewood for cooking. Firewood is also used in public facilities, such as school meals. Smoke rises on street corners during breakfast and dinner, and there is a good smell of food. However, if this is done on a large scale, it can lead to deforestation and cause air pollution. Firewood is also not very energy efficient. In Uganda, there is no city gas supply network. Therefore, the spread of LP gas has finally begun to progress. Alongside mobile phones, private cars, and home appliances, the use of LP gas seems to be one of the new symbols of wealth. The government has also started to implement policies to limit the cutting of firewood from forests from an environmental protection perspective and to encourage the use of LP gas. Japan's major LP gas company, Saisan Co., Ltd., has already started business in Rwanda, a neighboring country of Uganda. It is not easy to start a business that enters each household and makes a profit in developing countries like Uganda. The company is planning to deliver LP gas to each household in cooperation with a company that delivers drinking water to each household. This method has already been adopted in Rwanda. Entering at a stage where household gas is not yet widespread is considered a very important initiative for future marketing strategies.