Unitar Online Catalogue

Phase II - Empower Africa Programme: Japan-Africa Partnership for Youth and Women’s Economic Resilience

Prosperity

□□□ : 1 Nov 2026

□□ : Course

□□ : Web-based

□□ : 2 □□ 2026 to 27 □□ 2026

□□ : 4 Weeks

□□□ : Public Finance, Trade and Economic Governance, , Technology, Artificial Intelligence and Digital Policy, , Leadership, , Entrepreneurship, , Gender equality and social inclusion, , Youth engagement

□□ : http://www.unitar.org

□□ : US$0.00

□□□□ email: tftp@unitar.org

□□ : Government of Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1937)

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Sub-Saharan Africa is entering a period of significant transformation shaped by rapid demographic growth, digital disruption, evolving trade opportunities,

climate pressures, food security challenges, and the urgent need for quality jobs and resilient livelihoods. Across the continent, youth and women are increasingly driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and community-based solutions. However, many promising ideas and initiatives struggle to progress beyond early stages due to limited access to networks, investment readiness, strategic partnerships, and market linkages.

At the same time, there is growing interest in strengthening practical and mutually beneficial collaboration between African and Japanese ecosystems in areas such as innovation, technology, sustainable industrialization, agribusiness, digital transformation, clean technologies, manufacturing, and human-centered economic development.

In this context, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research is launching a multi-phase capacity development programme under the framework of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development 9 (TICAD9) to strengthen the capacity of African youth and women to transform innovative ideas into scalable, partnership-ready, and investment-oriented initiatives aligned with national and regional development priorities.

Implemented by the UNITAR with the **support of the Government and People of Japan**, the Programme is designed not only to strengthen entrepreneurial and leadership competencies, but also to support participants in formulating practical, financially viable, and implementation-oriented projects that can engage public institutions, financial actors, ecosystem partners, and responsible private-sector stakeholders. Through structured mentorship, applied learning, ecosystem exposure, and international engagement opportunities, participants will progressively develop projects that are credible, collaborative, and positioned for operationalization and long-term impact.

The initiative contributes to building sustainable Africa–Japan relationships grounded in innovation, shared value creation, responsible investment, technology exchange, and inclusive economic transformation.

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By the end of the Programme, participants will be able to:

- Design innovative, inclusive, and sustainable business or development solutions aligned with national and regional priorities.

- Apply digital technologies, AI, and emerging innovation tools to address challenges related to food security, climate resilience, employment, trade, healthcare, industrialization, and service delivery.
- Develop operationally feasible and financially viable project concepts with clear implementation pathways and partnership strategies.
- Integrate sustainability, gender equality, social impact, and SDG considerations into entrepreneurial and innovation initiatives.
- Formulate partnership-ready and investment-oriented proposals informed by market realities and public–private collaboration principles.

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The Programme will run from August 2026 to March 2027 through four progressive phases combining virtual learning, applied project development, mentorship, and international engagement opportunities.

Phase II – Strengthening Analytics, Partnerships and Japan Readiness (November 2026)

Building on Phase I, participants will receive applied training in:

- Business analytics, AI tools, and data-driven decision-making
- Building a practical analytics framework to support strategy and performance
- Partnership positioning and building a financing ask
- Practising the partnership and investment case in a conversation with a mentor
- Inclusive leadership, training of trainers, and embedding inclusion as a design practice
- Japanese partnership landscape, business etiquette, and high-context communication

Delivery combines self-paced e-learning, live expert deep dives each Monday, and a dedicated Japan Readiness track of live sessions each Thursday. Participants complete module checkpoints, take part in module discussions, and submit a refined portfolio that brings together their work from the four weeks.

Focus: Strengthening participants’ ability to turn information into actionable insights, position their initiatives for partnership and investment, teach and lead inclusively, and prepare to work with partners in Japan. Participants are selected for Phase III on the strength of their Phase II work.

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The Programme is based on the adult learning and instructional design methodologies of UNITAR and combines:

- Competency-based and results-oriented learning,
- Project-based and experiential methodologies,
- Practical application and real-world problem solving,
- Peer learning and collaborative engagement,
- Mentorship and expert guidance,
- Continuous feedback and evidence-based evaluation, and
- Ecosystem exposure and partnership facilitation.

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The Programme targets youth (aged 18–35) and women professionals (aged 18–45) from the following Anglophone Sub-Saharan African countries: **Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.**

Applicants may include:

- Aspiring or early-stage entrepreneurs
- SME founders and innovators
- Professionals and practitioners
- Researchers and technology innovators
- Social entrepreneurs and ecosystem builders
- Individuals developing scalable solutions with economic or social impact potential

Participants working in, or aspiring to contribute to, the following sectors are encouraged to apply:

- Agri-food Innovation and Bioeconomy
- Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Smart Digital Solutions
- Fintech and Financial Inclusion
- Clean Technologies and Strategic Resources
- Climate and Environmental Solutions
- Healthcare and MedTech

- Sustainable Cities and Mobility
- Blue Economy
- Creative Industries
- Light Manufacturing and Industrial Solutions
- Skills Development and the Future of Work
- Social Impact and Essential Services

Selection Criteria

The Programme seeks motivated individuals with strong potential to translate ideas into practical impact. Particular consideration will be given to applicants who demonstrate:

- Innovation and problem-solving capacity
- Leadership potential and commitment to community or economic development
- Clear project or business ideas with implementation potential
- Openness to collaboration and partnership development
- Commitment to learning, mentorship, and long-term engagement
- Potential for scalability, sustainability, and measurable impact

Progression to subsequent phases of the Programme will be competitive and based on performance, engagement, leadership, and the quality and feasibility of the proposed project or initiative. Due to the high volume of expected applications, UNITAR and its partners will carefully review all submissions and select candidates with the strongest profiles and applications.

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Language: English
Delivery Mode: Primarily virtual, with a limited in-person component for selected participants during Phase III
Certification: Certificates of completion will be awarded to participants who complete each phase
Fees: None. Participation is funded by the Government and the People of Japan. Selected participants for the Japan immersion phase may be responsible for limited personal expenses

IMPORTANT - Selection for International Engagement: *Participation in the Japan immersion component will be determined through a competitive evaluation*

process based on implementation potential, practical feasibility, partnership readiness, and long-term impact potential. Due to the limited number of places available, not all programme participants will be selected for the in-person component. By applying to and participating in the programme, participants acknowledge and accept that all selection decisions made by UNITAR and its partners are final.