

PLACE

Addis Ababa

DATE

17 July 2025

eCentre Africa Concludes 2025 Programme, Celebrating Local Leadership in Emergency Response Prior to TICAD 9

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – June 17, 2025 — The eCentre Africa, a flagship learning platform launched in 2024 with the support of the Government of Japan, is concluding its 2025 English-language programme with a closing ceremony in Addis Ababa. The event brought together 31 participants from 13 African countries, representing local authorities and non-governmental organizations at the forefront of emergency preparedness and response.

The ceremony was honored by the presence of **H.E. Ambassador Amma Twun-Amoah**, African Union Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, and **H.E. Ambassador Nakagawa**, representing the Mission of Japan to the African Union. Their participation underscores the strong partnership between the African Union and the Government of Japan and their expectation to the eCentre Africa in advancing locally led humanitarian action across the continent in the spirit of **Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9)**.

“The African Union Commission fully supports a localization model of humanitarian action, one that invests in and empowers the capable, knowledgeable first responders within our communities” said **Ambassador Amma Twun-Amoah**. “We recognize that one of the persistent challenges to humanitarian action remains access to populations in need, particularly in conflict and hard-to-reach areas. The AU Commission stands ready to work with the global humanitarian community, including through the eCentre, to ensure that localization is not only a principle, but a practice”.

Launched as a multi-year commitment announced by Japan’s Foreign Minister at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, the eCentre Africa has already reached over 900 first responders through inclusive and participatory learning programmes.

“Local actors like yourselves are at the frontlines – you know the needs, the people, the realities on the ground”, said **Ambassador Nakagawa**. “That is why Japan strongly supports localization, and why we stand with UNHCR in its recognition that protection, assistance”, he added.

The initiative is inspired by the success of UNHCR’s eCentre for Asia and is implemented by UNHCR’s Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS), in close collaboration with its Regional Bureaus in Africa.

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“Across the continent, you have a network of practitioners those who have graduated from eCentres. This network allows them to exchange their experience and expertise across the continent” highlighted Mr Ayaki Ito, Director DESS, UNHCR.

The 2025 programme featured a six-month curriculum combining online and in-person workshops, peer coaching, and self-directed learning. Participants explored themes such as leadership in emergencies, humanitarian negotiation, climate-related emergencies, and Women, Peace and Security —ensuring that women, girls, and refugees themselves are empowered as key actors in crisis response.

“This should not be a one-off training, but rather a continuous effort to reach others and support them in your emergency preparedness and response”, said Mr Martin Manteaw, UNHCR East, Horn and Great Lakes Bureau Head of Strategic planning and Management Services. “For instance, the 2024 eCenter participants shared their knowledge with more than 600 fellow first responders. The 2025 participants are also expected to do the same and encouraged to reach even more”, he added addressing the participants.

“Over the last three years, UNHCR has engaged in nearly 150 emergencies, of which more than half were in Africa. At present, Africa hosts nearly 23 million forcibly displaced and stateless persons, fully one-third of the displaced and stateless population in the world. When emergencies happen, local authorities and non-governmental organizations are the first to respond, and often partner with UNHCR, offering their knowledge, local connections and leadership in the collective response”, said Mr Herve Kuate, UNHCR Representative to the AU and ECA.

This year’s closing ceremony leads up to **TICAD 9**, to be held in Yokohama, Japan, from 20–22 August 2025. The eCentre Africa aligns closely with TICAD’s vision of promoting peace and stability in Africa through sustainable, locally driven solutions, under the approach of Humanitarian-**Development-Peace Nexus**, championed by the Government of Japan.

As the eCentre Africa looks ahead, it will continue to deepen its collaboration with regional institutions and expand its reach to ensure that emergency preparedness and response in Africa is truly “**as local as possible, as international as necessary**”, upholding the vision of TICAD 9.

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Quotes from participants:

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- **Ms. Taysier Musa, a doctor who heads Mental Health Voluntary Youth Organization in Sudan attests:** "[The eCentre] supports me a lot because I have many doctors in my organization, and they need more skills in negotiation and emotional intelligence, because we are the first responders." I organize workshops in Sudan with my colleagues. Whatever I receive, I share it with them. I now have 50 qualified doctors well-prepared for emergencies."
- **Mr. Johannes Chiminya, Humanitarian Policy and Program Manager of Action Aid in Mozambique says:** "The eCentre learning is very effective. Since I started in March with the LeadER training, I have managed to set up a humanitarian response team in my organization Action Aid in Mozambique. With the knowledge I got from the training, I did 'step on' [knowledge sharing] training to the humanitarian team. After the Emotional Intelligence training, the way we relate to communities has significantly improved. With this training of humanitarian negotiation, I already received request from the program management team at my organization, that when I get home, I should organize training for all the leadership team management which will trickle down to other colleagues in the humanitarian response."
- **Mr. Jon Bosco Ssentamu, Settlement Commandant / Emergency Coordinator, Department of Refugees, Office of Prime Minister, Uganda:** "This learning has been in very important to me. When we are looking at refugee programs in Uganda, we are advocating for localization. Localization means empowering local actors to take the lead in the refugee response. But these local actors, they need to be trained in areas of negotiation. how best they will negotiate with international actors, with the funders. so that they can have better understanding when they are lobbying for funds, when they are utilizing funds, when they are accounting for funds. So, this is very insightful, meaningful course to me. I'm going to disseminate this information to the local actors, to my junior staff and to my colleagues at the department, because as government, we are ever in negotiations."