A Japanese woman goes into business in Uganda, managing a Japanese restaurant and supporting organic agriculture. Her goal is to generate new value through business and contribute to African development. Her source of energy? The positive attitude of Africans who see hope for the future.

Miyashita’s fascination with Africa began in her college years. As a cultural anthropology major, she was intensely drawn to African culture, which was so different from her own. She had hoped to become a scholar to probe the depths of the land that had captivated her. In 2011, however, just as she was about to begin her graduate studies, the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred on March 11, changing her outlook. Driven by a need to connect with society, she joined a venture company that supports organic farming, using its price list and menu to fit better the needs and tastes of locals, who are more conservative about what they eat. “One popular item is cassava, simmered in dashi (broth) and then fried, similar to the way Japanese potatoes are prepared in Kyoto. Foreigners are also coming back, and the restaurant is now a place for all kinds of people to come together.”

Captivated by Africa, Miyashita is generating value, step by step, thereby contributing to the continent’s development. That is her mission, and she follows her path with light but determined steps.