

Quality Work on Port Construction Opens African Gateway

Japan has developed “quality infrastructure investment” in response to the pressing need to support quality growth in developing countries. A good example of this is the development of Nacala Port, the gateway to Mozambique’s inland economy.

Located in the northern part of Mozambique, the Port of Nacala is the country’s third most important commercial port. It is a natural deep-water harbor sheltered from high waves. The Port of Nacala is an important logistics base for the surrounding economy, including inland states.

It is at this port that large-scale construction is underway by a major Japanese construction company. This construction project forms part of the “quality infrastructure investment” that Japan is promoting to strengthen Japanese ties with Africa.

Built 40 years ago, the Port of Nacala has been in a state of

deterioration in recent years, but in 2014 urgent rehabilitation of the port was carried out with the help of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan. Penta-Ocean Construction Co., Ltd., which has considerable expertise in large-scale offshore civil engineering work around the world, undertook



As with construction sites in Japan, all workers do traditional Japanese morning exercise.



Endo says that building a sense of comradeship is also a way to help ensure safety.

part of the port’s rehabilitation. And since 2018, a joint venture led by Penta-Ocean Construction has been carrying out a planned three-year development of the port.

Main construction work involves marine driving of steel pipe sheet piles into the seabed for construction of a 400m quay. ENDO Yuichi, senior manager of the International Civil Engineering Divisions Group, says, “Because the water depth will be deeper than the existing quay, the harbor will be able to accommodate larger ships. There will also be container yards to handle the increase in cargo.” With consideration of the environment being key, construction of a disposal site is also underway to contain contaminated soil, which

has been generated during dredging of the newly built quay wall.

Nacala is a sheltered port, but sometimes the harsh weather conditions, such as torrential rain and windstorms, can hinder construction. On those occasions, more flexible handling is required. The technology and knowledge cultivated over many years’ experience in port construction have been indispensable in ensuring the safety of workers, keeping to construction timelines, and executing design plans down to the very last detail. Japanese companies have a reputation for being good at coordinating with each organization, in consideration of the construction schedule, and responding to troubles.

“Equally as important as achieving high-quality construction is the establishment of easy-to-maintain and lower operational costs after completion” continues Endo.

In order to improve construction quality, it’s important to gain the trust of local workers and strengthen feelings of togetherness. The Penta-Ocean Construction site

has therefore incorporated a very unique Japanese custom - morning exercise. Each morning, everyone stretches and moves in tune with Japanese exercise music to build a sense of comradeship and improve concentration. Meetings are also held regularly to share ideas on ensuring worker safety. “The people of Mozambique are congenial once a relationship of trust has been established,” remarks Endo. “They are very friendly and make serious efforts in following instructions. I feel like their composed character is similar to that of Japanese people.”

Once the port has been fully equipped, not only will it help to expand trade, but all sorts of benefits can be expected, such as wider utilization of Mozambique’s high-quality natural resources and development of fertile agricultural land. The port will contribute to the economic development of northern Mozambique, helping to narrow the gap between rich and poor. Japanese companies will continue their endeavor to realize such a sustainable future. ✨



Driving in of steel pipe sheet piles at Nacala Port for new quay construction. Large cargo vessels will be able to enter the port, bolstering the sea transport capacity of northern Mozambique.



The establishment of a container yard is also planned in this renovation project. Serving as a gateway, Nacala Port is expected to lead to economic development of the surrounding area.