

## 【Japan and Nigeria Collaborate to Foster Innovation Through Incubation Program】

On 9 August 2024, Ambassador MATSUNAGA Kazuyoshi attended the iHatch Incubation Program's Third Cohort Demo Day, organized by Office for Nigerian Digital Innovation (ONDI) and its parent organization, the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), with ongoing support from JICA since 2021, was held in Abuja. The event was honoured by the presence of Senator SALISU Afolabi Shuaib, Chairman of the Senate Committee on ICT and Cyber Security, Mr. ABDULLAHI Kashifu Inuwa, Director General of NITDA, and other esteemed guests.

The program supports early-stage start-ups focused on addressing social issues through innovative technologies and ideas. At the Demo Day, the 10 finalist ventures presented their start-ups to judges and the audience, competing for cash prizes. Director General Abdullahi expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan for their support through JICA and announced plans to expand the program to additional Nigerian states.

The event showcased the vibrant entrepreneurial spirit of young Nigerians across various sectors. The winners were Northinho (EdTech start-up), Dopals Technologies (Ride-sharing start-up), and Connected (Communication-based start-up), securing first, second, and third places, with prize amounts of USD 15,000, USD 12,000, and USD 10,000, respectively.

