

More residents in E. Province get access to clean water under JICA

By: THEOGENE NSENGIMANA



People fetch water from a public tap in Bitoma I village. The water supply system was built with the support of Japan International Cooperation Agency. (Theogene Nsengimana)

Residents from Rwamagana, Kayonza and Kirehe districts have lauded the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for funding water projects in the area.

They expressed their appreciation on Thursday during a media tour organised by the Japanese Embassy in Rwanda to show journalists projects supported by Japan in Rwanda.

Projects supported by JICA include the Rwakibogo water project that provides clean water for over 43000 people in Mwulire, Kigabiro and Munyaga Sectors in

Rwamagana District. Others are the Gatore project which provides water for Kayonza District and Kigina, Gatore, Mushikiri and Gahara sectors in Kirehe District.



Kiyokazu poses for a photo with beneficiaries in Bitoma I in Kirehe district with Japanese volunteers.

Madeleine Mukankurunziza, a resident of Bitoma I village in Gatore Sector, Kirehe District said a public tap established in their village has improved their standards of living.

“We used to fetch water from swamps. Today, this has changed,” she said.

Other area residents shared similar sentiments.

“Since I was a child, getting water was a challenge. We used to buy a jerrycan of water at Rwf200. We are therefore, excited that this problem is no more,” said Emmanuel Nzirorera, a resident of Bitoma II village.

However, André Sibobugingo, who manages a public tap, complained that the cost of a jerrycan of water is too high.

“Rwf30 per jerrycan is too high for people in this area. We wish the price could drop. With the current price, some people prefer to go back to the wells instead of paying the Rwf30,” she said.



Water pumps in Rwakibogo pumping house. The pumps feed three sectors in Rwamagana districts.

Claude Kabanda, in charge of water and environment in Kirehe District, said the high cost of water was due to the high cost of pumping water using a diesel pump. He promised that the price would fall as soon as the district connects the pump to national electricity grid.

Kiokazu Ota, the Japanese ambassador to Rwanda, said Japan wanted to help Rwanda achieve universal access to safe water.

“My country also passed through the same situation. But we are now one of the cleanest countries in the world.

We want to help you achieve the same for your nation. That’s why we are here as JICA and the embassy to work with you and for you,” he said.



Kiokazu Ota , the Japanese ambassador to Rwanda speak to media after the tour.
(All photos by (Theogene Nsengimana)

Ongoing JICA-funded initiatives include phase three of the Rural Water Supply Project that aims to construct four water distribution systems expected to supply 33,000 people.

Japanese volunteers have been dispatched to help in operating and repairing hand pumps, support water management cooperatives facilities, help laboratory staff to improve the quality of water and carry out hygiene campaigns.

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