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Upgraded **power** substations to increase electricity supply

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Isumbingabo (2nd L) and Ogawa (C) inaugurate a substation in Musha. (Stephen Rwembeho)

The Energy, Water and Sanitation Authority (EWSA) has inaugurated improved electricity substations and distribution network in various parts of the country.

The project was funded by a \$25 million grant (about Rwf17 billion) from Japanese International Cooperation Agency (Jica).

It involved upgrade of Huye electric distribution network from 6.6 kilo volts to 30 kilo volts, upgrade of Musha and Rwinkwavu substations from 70 kilo volts to 110 kilo volts, rehabilitation of Jabana and Gikondo substations and expansion of Kigali distribution network.

Speaking at the launch in Musha, Rwamagana District, Emma Francoise Isumbingabo, the minister of State for energy, said the project was in line with government strategy to promote efficient use of energy and reduce losses in the power network system.

“There was great need for stable supply of power. The population increase over the years overwhelms demand. The upgraded voltage will provide a stable supply of power,” Isumbingabo said, adding that the recent spate of power blackouts is because of the ongoing installations.

The substations replace the old ones constructed in the 1980s by the Belgian administration.

“Rwamagana is among the districts with high accessibility, yet energy access remains only at 36 per cent. Jica is supporting us where we need most, and, ultimately, this will help in realising Vision 2020,” the minister said.

Kazuya Ogawa, the Japanese ambassador to Rwanda, said his country remains committed to accelerate the development of key infrastructure in both rural and urban areas.

Ogawa said Japan was pleased to extend support to boost the energy sector in Rwanda as it is prioritised in the second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The envoy also emphasised the role of energy in promoting industries, new markets as well as employment.

“Japan has established long and cordial relationship with Rwanda and has been supporting its agenda of transforming the country into middle income economy through grants, aid and technical assistance in economic infrastructure development,” he said.

The government plans to increase electricity generation in the country from the current 110 megawatts to 563 megawatts by 2017.