

# **\$165,000 Japanese grant to boost education quality, access to water**

By: **JEAN D'AMOUR MUGABO**



Munyurangabo (L) and Sakamoto exchange a contract after the signing at the Embassy of Japan in Kigali yesterday. (Doreen Umutesi)

The Japanese government has agreed to a \$165,250 (Rwf120 million) grant toward two local organisations, with the funding to go into improving quality of education and access to safe, clean water for residents of Gatsibo, Gicumbi and Rwamagana districts.

Speaking at the grant signing ceremony at the Japan embassy in Kigali, yesterday, the Chargé d'Affaires, Tomio Sakamoto, said the grant would help support Rwanda's ambitious development vision as outlined in the second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRSII).



Tomio Sakamoto (R) Japan's Embassy Chargé d'Affaires signs a contract with Jean Munyurangabo, the Executive Director of ARDR yesterday at the Embassy of Japan.

“This grant is delivered under Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project to support in the construction of six classrooms at Groupe Scolaire Gahengeri in Rwamagana District as a way of reducing the number of students per classroom and improve learning environment for the school’s 1,790 students,” he said.

The funding was split between the Rwandan Rural Development Association (ARDR) and Movement for the Fight against Hunger in the World (MLFM) with \$82,198 and \$83,052, respectively.

Sakamoto said the \$83,052 portion for MLFM will help in providing access to safe and clean water to more than 15,000 people in Gatsibo and Gicumbi districts.



Tomio Sakamoto (R) Japan's Embassy Chargé d'Affaires signs a contract with Omar Fiordalisio, the Country Manager of MLFM.

He said, since 1996, Japan has been committed to supporting grassroots activities in the country through Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project and has so far offered about \$6 million, especially in the areas of education, water, sanitation, and agriculture.

Under EDPRSII, the government seeks to give all rural areas residents access to an improved water source within 500 metres from homesteads by 2018.

Jean Munyurangabo, the executive director of ARDR, commended the Japanese embassy for the funding, saying this will solve the issue of students who have been studying while sitting under trees.



Tomio Sakamoto (R) Japan's Embassy Chargé d'Affaires exchanges the contract with Omar Fiordalisio, the Country Manager of MLFM. (All photos by Doreen Umutesi)

Omar Fiordalisio, the country manager of MLFM, commended the Japanese government on a fruitful collaboration in increasing access to safe and clean water and pledged to embark on an enormous water supply project in Gicumbi and Gatsibo districts as early as next month.

“This grant is a vital support representing more than a third of the project budget which stands at Euro 220,00 (about Rwf170 million), seeking to provide clean water to at least 15,000 people (more than 3,000 families) in both districts,” Fiordalisio said.

“We will start the project implementation at the beginning of the new year and it will be completed by December next year.”

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