

JICA RWANDA News

JULY – DECEMBER 2020 • NUMBER 43 • KIGALI

Amb. Dr. Murigande Commends Japanese Education

INSIDE PAGES



Rwanda's Ex-Ambassador to Japan Dr. MURIGANDE in a Meeting with JICA Rwanda Officials.

- This is a second article in a series of articles written from an interview JICA news had with the Dr. Murigande Charles, the former Ambassador of Rwanda to Japan. In the previous article, he spoke about Cooperation before and after COVID-19.

- In the third article, which is the last, Ambassador Murigande will be speaking about his first encounter with JICA and the role the bilateral cooperation played in the aftermaths of the Genocide against the Tutsi until the establishment of Embassies in Tokyo and Kigali.

- The articles are appearing consecutively in our Newsletter Number 42, 43 and 44 that can be accessed on our online

platforms and on request at JICA Rwanda Office.

1. You have worked as an Educationalist, Mathematician and Diplomat, what are the good memories behind a career so diverse and a legacy to the next generation? (What has been the overall target/ purpose? Are there any achievements in this respect?)

During my career, I have had the privilege of working for 11 different institutions or agencies, giving me a diverse and rich experience. Each of the job positions I have occupied has left me with good memories to the extent that it would take a book to recount them all.

I believe that it is important to rather highlight what has driven

my life during that career because it is what generated any of the good memories that I carry with me.

I grew up as a refugee in Burundi at a time when even Burundi citizens did not have easy access to education, let alone the refugees. Therefore, to have been able to study to the point of obtaining a PhD in mathematics was for me a tremendous blessing miracle from God and I learnt to value and learn from all those who contributed to my education.

I will cite two groups of people who contributed to it and have tremendously inspired me. I attended in a secondary school created and run by young Rwandan refugees. They would sacrifice 2 or 3 years of their professional life to educate their young brothers and sisters without getting a salary.

When I graduated from secondary school, I wrote a letter to an organization based in Geneva, which was called "Fund for International University Exchanges (FIEU)" applying for a university scholarship and got a positive response that enabled me to undertake and complete my undergraduate studies.

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COVID-19 Response: Japan Provides Seeds Worth US \$ 950,000



Mr. Jean Claude MUSABYIMANA and Mr. MARUO Shin during the Signing

My Walk with JICA Along the Ladder of My Career , WASAC Ex-CEO Eng. Muzola



Eng. Aime Muzola, the ex-CEO of WASAC

An ex-Volunteer's Testimony and Her Views on the Future of JICA



Mrs. OE, her husband and their son

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I was deeply marked by these acts of generosity in a way that I have always considered every job that I have had as an opportunity to serve other people and have always asked God to help me carry out my responsibilities to my best and with integrity, honesty and fairness so as to make an impact in the lives of people.

When I retired, I received many messages from people I worked for or with during my career, expressing appreciation of how I have been a role model and an inspiration for them in all those various aspects. To me those are my main achievements. I could give specific important projects I initiated, negotiated and concluded in my various positions of responsibilities, but for me those are not as important and long lasting achievements as the mindset, behavior and vision shaping that I may have caused in my colleagues and people I served.

2. Basing on your education- alist profile and your Expe- rience in Japan, how could JICA contribute to the edu- cation sector in Rwanda?

What has impressed me tremendously is how the Japanese society has great esteem for educa-

tion and takes it seriously and ensures that children from the youngest age appreciate education and take it seriously. In addition to imparting knowledge, the society expects the education to play an important role in moral and character development of the students. Japan has one of the best and most performing education systems in the world and it has been democratized to allow access by all while remaining very meritocratic as evidenced by various entrance exams into universities and professions.

JICA can contribute to the modernization of the Rwandan education by facilitating our education to learn from the Japanese education, borrow lessons on how to improve both the access and quality of education by integrating educational approaches and content from other countries while at the same time retaining the fundamentals of our culture and values. Thus far, JICA has been contributing to the human resources development focusing mainly on the development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as well as to improving the teaching of mathematics and sciences through (The Project for Strengthening Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE)).

Though there is a desire to cooperate on the part of educational institutions from Japan and Rwanda, the link between the education systems of Rwanda

and Japan remains a bit weak. The University of Rwanda has engaged many Japanese universities and signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with many of them (8 universities) and is also in discussions with 4 others additional, lack of funding has not allowed concrete collaboration such as exchange of students, lecturers and researchers, joint research, exchange of best practices in university and management leadership, to cite some examples of areas of cooperation.

Therefore, one area in which JICA can contribute to Rwanda's education would be to take a leaf from what SIDA has been doing in funding the collaboration between the University of Rwanda and Swedish universities aimed at developing University of Rwanda's research capacity. The collaboration may focus on some key areas where Japan has an internationally recognized competitive edge such as in science and engineering, especially Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Mechatronics, Bioscience to name just a few.

Another area where JICA can contribute to Rwanda Education would be to facilitate officials of the Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board to spend time within the Japanese Education system to learn from Japan's rigorous and systematic management of teacher's career from recruitment through various certifications up until retirement. ●

COVID-19 Response: Japan Provides Quality Seed Worth US \$ 950,000 to Farmers to Impact Vegetable Production

On October 6, 2020, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) agreed with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) to support the Economic Recovery Plan of the Government of Rwanda, through the provision of quality vegetable seeds worth US \$ 950,000 USD to Rwandan farmers as response to COVID-19 impact on vegetable production. The support is part of JICA's contribution to home grown

solutions promoted by the Rwandan Government, and will target vegetable value chains that are subject to price volatility and are the most purchased in rural and urban markets. Vegetables targeted include: French beans, onions, tomatoes, carrots, cabbages, green peppers, eggplants and amaranths. Quality seeds of these vegetables have been distributed for season A to support vegetable growers to cultivate on approximately 2,100ha across the country in 18 districts identified by Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources

(MINAGRI) and Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB).

During the signing, Permanent Secretary MINAGRI, Mr. Jean Claude MUSABYIMANA said "This is a support from the Japanese people in the field of vegetables planting. As you know, farmers have had difficulties in finding quality seeds for vegetables. JICA will provide 50% of seeds needed and farmers provide the remaining 50%.

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Mr. Jean Claude MUSABYIMANA, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) and Mr. MARUO Shin, the Chief Representative for JICA Rwanda Office during the signing ceremony.

Especially in helping talented farmers. As you all know, there has been a scarcity of seeds, and seeds are hard to store, and this will help farmers continue with their farming businesses”

As he was speaking to media, the Chief Representative of JICA Rwanda Office, Mr. MARUO Shin stated “The support is for the Recovery Plan and alleviating COVID-19’s impact. We are not only providing seeds for

this project but also through this project we want to encourage ordinary farmers to use quality seeds which will contribute to the productivity and the quality of final production. And through the project, we expect ordinary farmers to contribute to nutrition improvement. Nutrition is indispensable to strengthen immunity that is necessary for the fight against COVID-19”

In order to promote farmers’ self-reliance and scale up the benefits of this support, JICA will provide seed for a half

of the area farmers intend to grow vegetables, and farmers will commit to purchase seeds for the remaining half, resulting in a total of 4,200 ha being cultivated. The beneficiary farmers were intended to be given technical guidance from extension officers in each district, using the experiences and technical skills gained through Smallholder Market-oriented Agriculture Project (SMAP).

For the last 10 years, JICA has been promoting smallholder market-oriented agriculture across the country, which has significantly increased farmers’ income. Providing quality vegetable seeds to smallholder farmers, amid the disruption of supply chains caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, will contribute to the economic recovery of the country as well as to stabilize market prices for both rural and urban consumers. Moreover, through this support, JICA and MINAGRI expect to raise awareness of farmers about the importance of the use of quality seeds for improving the productivity and quality of vegetables and to maintain and sustain farming businesses. ●

15 Years Celebrations Series: Former-WASAC CEO, Eng. Aime Muzola Narrates his Walk with JICA Along the Ladder of His Career

It has been 15 years since JICA resumed its activities in Rwanda. Since the resumption, the Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) has been operational and contributed to water access in Rwanda.

JICA News had an interview with one of key persons who worked closely with JICA in Water and Sanitation sector, Eng. Aime MUZOLA, the former CEO of WASAC. He has more than 20 years of comprehensive infrastructure execution and

management experience across Rwanda. he has had with the Agency.

Having taken on successive management roles in technical engineering tasks, he is an engineer affiliated to the Institute of Engineers of Rwanda. He represented the Ministry of Infrastructure in Southern Province from 2000 to 2005. As JICA Rwanda Office celebrates its 15 years of service to the people of Rwanda, MUZOLA who has been with JICA through that Journey and in various position, spoke to about the enriching experience

1. When did you encounter JICA for the very first time?

I met JICA for the first time in 2010 when I was advisor to the Minister in the Ministry of Infrastructure.

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Eng. Aime MUZOLA, the ex-CEO of WASAC

2. When did your journey with JICA start and how far is it now?

My journey with JICA started when I was in charge of water and Sanitation in the Ministry of Infrastructure and later on as the Director General of Policy and Planning, and later in WASAC as potential partner in water sector. JICA has been our key partner at all stages. Starting from planning phases up to completion of projects as well as elaboration and establishment of strategic documents for the sector. This has been done through different projects implementation under MININFRA (The Ministry of Infrastructure) and WASAC (Water and Sanitation Corporation) in both rural and urban areas. So far the relationship between WASAC and JICA is neat (perfect) “*Ntamakemwa*”

3. You have worked with JICA at MININFRA and WASAC, from both institution; what are the unforgettable memories you keep of such a unique experience?

I have got different opportunities to work with JICA in different activities since I was at the Ministry of Infrastructure and now at WASAC. Activities ranged from

projects initiations and their implementations, technical assistance, sector coordination, national and international meetings to name but a few. Each experience is unique in its kind and they left me with very good memories. It is also very difficult to rank memories, but there those which always come in mind whenever I think about JICA: One is the results achieved when JICA was co-chairing the sector coordination. We have seen great achievements across the sector during that period and which none can forget. The second memorable event is the conclusion of JICA grant Project for Nzove-Ntora Pipeline of more than 3 billion Japanese Yen. Not only that the grant is a great contribution to the sector objectives, it is also a manifestation of strong relationship of Japan and Rwanda.

4. JICA has conducted various projects with WASAC and in infrastructure sector, are you the initiator of the partnerships, or started somewhere in the middle?

It has been an honor and good experience to be involved in different projects under the partnership with JICA. In most cases, my position would not facilitate to be the initiator of projects but I am proud

of my contributions along the way. Especially, the partnership projects with WASAC have been a result of discussions and common view on possible solutions to the challenges at hand.

5. From where did the partnerships between JICA and WASAC started, where do see it going in COVID-19 and Post-COVID-19?

The partnerships between JICA and WASAC started a long time ago when JICA started to intervene in water sector. WASAC has inherited the good relationship which was built by its predecessors (EWASA and ELECTROGAZ) and it has been characterized by results driven mindset.

Now that COVID-19 experience has strengthened the understanding of the core role of water in our livelihoods than ever, we have much appreciated the continued support by JICA in these challenging times of the pandemic especially with ongoing project to supply water in different critical zones of the City of Kigali. Going forward, we see this partnership growing stronger to enhance the reliability of our services against the pandemic and other challenges *that one might expect such as climate change.*

6. What did you hope to seeing achieved during your term (in relation with JICA)?

We have made good progress in the sector together with JICA. We have also started a number of projects which are still ongoing and others are at the initiation stage. During my term, I hoped to see more achievements and I preserve an optimistic view towards overcoming more sector challenges together with JICA.

7. If you were to meet an ordinary Rwandan citizen who doesn't know about JICA, what would you tell them about JICA's action in Rwanda?

Simply I will tell him or her that JICA is an exemplary partner for infrastructure development in Rwanda and with whom we are striving to shape the sustainability of water supply. •

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An ex-Volunteer's Testimony and Her Views on the Future of JICA

Her name is Ms, Satoka OE. She was born in Aichi prefecture, Japan. In Rwanda as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, she worked as a JICA long term volunteer from July 2014 to July 2016. She went back to Japan and thereafter returned to Rwanda as a short-term volunteer from January to December 2017.

Prior to that, she had lived her entire life in Japan. Now she is married to a Rwandan national Ibrahim BINEGO and she is a mother to a boy. She is a freelancer consultant in water and sanitation sector. Satoka who speaks Kinyarwanda with an unusual ease for an expatriate, provides Kinyarwanda-Japanese translation services.

As JICA celebrates 15 years since the time it resumed its activities in Rwanda, Ms. Satoka spoke to JICA News she spoke about how she started a new life in a different culture and professional growth with JICA and her views on the role of JICA and the future of agency's impact in Rwanda



OE Satoka, Her Husband. Mr. Ibrahim BINEGO and Son Aiman

<Satoka's Background and Her Experience With JICA>

1. **Coming to Rwanda as a JOCV was your choice or you were assigned a country in which you should go?**

I had previously come to Rwanda when I was in 3rd grade of university, for my studies project. I wanted to come back to Africa but I rather wished to focus on the type of assignments than countries. However, I think JICA chose to assign me to Rwanda due to my previous experience here.

2. **We hear about culture shock whenever new people start their life in a different country, how did you go over it and get used?**

Due to differences in culture and language, it took some time before I could communicate with Rwandan people well. During that period, there were many misunderstandings and conflicts. However, it

turns out that it is not only language barriers alone, but also our ways of thinking differ due to a different environment and background in which we live. People have their conception depending on their own cultures and upbringing, and it is important to listen, respect and understand each other.

3. **What is your best experience as a JOCV in Rwanda? And how did JICA sharpen your perspective to your social and professional life?**

After working for 3 years as JOCV in Water and Sanitation Sector, I came to understand and would transfer skills properly since I acquired an enriching experience working with local authorities and water staff. It was not easy to work in Rwanda as an individual local consultant without belonging to an organization, and I was very anxious at first. How-

ever, when I started working as a local staff member on a JICA water sector project and went to the site, the knowledge and experience I had gained during JOCV period was very useful, and my anxiety faded away.

<Satoka's opinion and viewpoints on JICA>

4. **What kind of family oriented role do you think JICA has been playing here in Rwanda, from your perspective of mother raising your child here in Rwanda?**

JICA is working on activities for nutrition and hygiene improvement. As a mother, I feel that it is very important for JICA to support the nutrition and hygiene management of children, not only in their own homes but also in the local community as a whole.

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With regards to future aspirations, emotional education is not yet developed in Rwanda. That way, I think that there is a need for support of the education sector based on Japanese education, which values emotional education of each child and incorporates ideas that enrich creativity and emotions. This could play a major role in Rwanda.

5. Do you see any other opportunities in which JICA could expand its activities and that would bring Japan and Rwanda more close in the future?

JICA has provided development assistance to Rwanda in various fields, and

built a solid foundation of trust with Rwandans. In the future, I feel that deeper mutual friendships can be built by providing opportunities to deepen cultural understanding and the purpose of interacting with people from both countries beyond projects and businesses.

6. Where do you see JICA in the future? (achievements in Rwanda.)

It is not in my reach to estimate the future of an institution like JICA with various sectors and different projects in Rwanda. If I can speak as an ex-volunteer in water sector; I see sustainability

in what JICA is doing for Rwanda. Contrary to other agencies which only offer infrastructures, JICA prepares two components and that the infrastructure (building) side of the project and then also the trainings on how to sustain and maintain the constructed or renovated facilities. That way I would say that JICA's future in Rwanda will be filled with achievements. ●

MEET JICA STAFF RWANDA STAFF



Ms. KOBAYASHI Megumi

Muraho! My Name is KOBAYASHI Megumi, I arrived in Rwanda in January 2020 as a new Health Advisor. This is my first time to work in Africa. My first impression of Rwanda is that Rwanda is a beautiful and clean country. I enjoy walking around beautiful and safe city every morning. I have been working as a Clinical nurse in Japan for 15 years. In Rwanda, my main role is to support JICA staff members and JICA volunteers. I desire to learn about Health system, culture and people in Rwanda. I am very happy to be one of members of JICA Rwanda office. ●



Mr. YAMAMOTO Yasuo

Hello! My name is YAMAMOTO Yasuo. I started working in March 2020 as a volunteer coordinator in JICA Rwanda office. I'm very happy to contribute to the development of Rwanda through JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer) program. After working for nine years as a high school teacher in Japan, I was a JICA volunteer in Kenya from July 2014 to November 2016. During my assignment in Kenya, I took care of children who committed crime or were protected in Juvenile Detention Center. It was my pleasure to be involved in the growth process of those youngsters. I hope I can support people in Rwanda and Japan to make their lives better through work. ●



Ms. KAWASAKI Ayumi

Muraho! My name is KAWASAKI Ayumi. I joined JICA Rwanda in March 2020 as a new volunteer coordinator. I was a JICA volunteer in Sudan from 2017 to 2019 and taught handicraft in vocational training school for the disabled children and supported their basic education. Due to COVID-19 prevention measures, I spent sometime working remotely in Japan but I recently arrived in Rwanda. I also hope that JOCV will be reassigned in Rwanda and I would like contribute to the Rwandan community through supporting their activities. ●

15 Years Celebrations Series: A Decade Journey At JICA



Madeline YAMBABARIYE

It has been more than ten years since I started working in JICA Rwanda Office. Before joining JICA, I was a field officer in African Right Rwanda Office and I used to collect data information all around the country. As I was planning to get married and thinking about family responsibilities, I started to look for a job that would give me more time in Kigali. Through my searches, I came across a JICA Rwanda offer to which I applied successfully.

As I entered JICA, the person who called me for the job interview said: "The office is still small, but worry not, you are joining a fast growing organization". I wasn't assured. You can imagine the feeling from a young ambitious lady doing her masters course filled with expectations of working in one of those highly reputed international organizations. The panel and I exchanged questions answers and both sides were satisfied.

At that time, the operational sectors in JICA Rwanda were just Volunteers' Sector and Training Sector with few projects, and a limited number of staffs: just three national staff and five Japanese staff. I was an administrative officer in charge of general affairs including all administrative related work, logistics and ICT. Contrary to my impression, with such a limited staff, the administration was busy a multitude of urgent tasks in way that prioritization was not easy.

JICA Rwanda and I grew together. In other words, in my 10 years, I have seen JICA Rwanda growing from just a starting organization to a

leading organization that impacted the citizens. I have seen this through development activities like agriculture, education, infrastructure, water and sanitation, ICT and many others. I have seen it growing from first projects concepts and explaining its relevance to partners and stakeholders to bold and renown achievements such as various roads construction, Rusumo Bridge and One Stop Border Post and much more.

The Japanese are process oriented and meticulous; as a result whatever project they approve, has high possibilities of being impactful. Besides, the Japanese have a working culture that breaks hierarchical barriers at work. All along with their culture of information and consultation, supervisors seat together with employees in an open space. Additionally, for team work purposes, there is shared folder system was established to enable access to each staff's work.

Through a periodic rotation, JICA gives, opportunities to its staff to know the activities that are done in its different sectors to enhance the employee's capacity building. That is how from 2013, the management proposed me to shift from administration to the training sector. Changing positions within the same organization gave me a new exposure, as I cooperate with counterparts in Rwanda and Japan at the same time.

Completing a decade in JICA Rwanda office has been unequalled learning opportunity and a professional growth with an exposure to people from diverse cultures and backgrounds and a contribution to the development of my country. ●

JICA IN THE MEDIA

28 Million USD To Rwanda By Japan To Assist Nutrition Improvement Through Agriculture Transformation (EABW 23/07/2020)

Japan Disburses US\$28M To Assist Rwanda Fight Malnutrition (Taarifa 23/07/2020)

Covid-19 affected vegetable farmers to get seed subsidies (The New Times 07/10/2020)

JICA Inaugurates US\$20M Irrigation Dams In Eastern Rwanda (Taarifa 06/11/2020)

Contact Us

JICA RWANDA News is a quarterly newsletter, which focuses on JICA's international perspectives and its involvement in local economic development. This newsletter details the work of JICA in Rwanda.

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JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) is the world's largest bilateral aid agency providing various forms of assistance in over 150 countries around the world.

<https://www.jica.go.jp/english/index.html>

Rwamagana Rice Farmers Expect To Increase Productivity Up To 7MT Per Ha



H.E. IMAI Masahiro (2nd from right) Ambassador of Japan, Fred MUFURUKYE (1st from right) The Governor of the Eastern Province, MARUO Shin, JICA Chief Representative (3rd from right) and Mr. Jean Claude MUSABYIMANA, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (1st from left) with Mr. Radjab MBONYUMUVUNYI, the Mayor of Rwamagana District.

On November 5th, Rwamagana District was handed of 3 irrigation dams and 23.5 km long irrigation canal constructed through the Grant Aid worth approximately 20 million USD by JICA.

The handover ceremony was attended by HE Ambassador of Japan to Rwanda, The Governor of Eastern Province, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), Chief Representative of JICA Rwanda and other senior government officials as well as representatives of farmers.

The Project covers three marshlands totaling 170 hectares and located between three sectors namely Kigabiro, Mwulire, and Rubona in Rwamagana District. It will help to continuously irrigate rice farms for more than 1,174 farmers hence increase

productivity of their rice. Farmers are grouped in three-rice cooperatives including COCURICYI, COCURIGA and COCURIBU.

Mr. Jean-Claude MUSABYIMANA, Permanent Secretary of MINAGRI stated that “Rwamagana rice farmers are expected to increase rice productivity to at least 7 Metric Tons per ha” Mr. MUSABYIMANA encouraged farmers to use the dams to maximize productivity stating “the land in our country does not increase, but there is a way to increase productivity, which is the efficient use of inputs combined with better crop management, and both lead to larger productivity” he said.

MARUO Shin, the JICA Rwanda Chief Representative re-emphasized the contribution to the agriculture sector. “Agriculture is one of key pillars of JICA’s cooperation in Rwanda. As for Rwamagana Irrigation Scheme Development project, JICA also provides capacity development on irrigation water management and proper operation

and maintenance of the facilities through the Technical Cooperation project called WAMCAB (Project for Water Management and Capacity Building). The Irrigation scheme facility is key for climate smart agriculture and productivity increase”, he highlighted too.

Climate change and unpredictable weather patterns seriously affect the agricultural production in Rwanda. These irrigation schemes will contribute to the Priority Area 2 “Productivity & Resilience” of the Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation (PSTA) IV, by building resilience against the climate

change, supporting food security and increasing farmers’ income. Moreover, it will contribute to the Economic Recovery Plan set out by the Government of Rwanda to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, which has slowed down economic activities including agriculture. ●



The Newly Constructed Bugugu Dam