



JICA BURUNDI - Newsletter

April–May 2026 • Bujumbura

Broadening Horizons: When Women Are Free to Dream Beyond Borders

Thursday, April 21, 2026 marked a highlight of sharing and inspiration during the session organized by U-Invest as part of the Tuyagwize Women Network. On this occasion, JICA Burundi had the honor of presenting participants with concrete scholarship opportunities offered by Japan, notably the ABE Initiative and SDGs programs, as well as MEXT scholarships from the Japanese Embassy.

In a room filled with ambitious women, entrepreneurs, and dreamers, the exchange quickly went beyond the scope of a simple presentation. It evolved into a genuine dialogue about the future, possibilities, and the courage to dare to cross boundaries—both geographical and personal. Many participants discovered, sometimes for the first time, that they could access scholarships in Japan while developing their skills to actively contribute to the development of their communities.

JICA’s presentation highlighted not only the application criteria and procedures but also the profound impact these programs have on the life paths of those who participate. Through concrete examples and interactive discussions, a key message emerged: these opportunities are not reserved for an elite; they are accessible to all who dare to believe in them and prepare for them.

Through this initiative, JICA Burundi reaffirms its commitment to promoting women’s empowerment by facilitating their access to education, skills, and international opportunities. By collaborating with dynamic platforms like U-Invest, it helps bring these opportunities closer to the women who need them most.

There is still a long way to go, but one thing is certain: when women are informed, supported, and encouraged, they no longer hesitate to aim higher. And sometimes, that “higher” takes them all the way to Japan.



“Ms. Nina NGARURA, of JICA Burundi, was honored with the Mimosa Award for her commitment to promoting women’s participation in training programs, instilling hope and inspiration through her work throughout 2025.

This award celebrates not only her dedication but also a promising step toward a more inclusive society, where every woman can fully find her place.”



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Celebrating Progress: 5S, a Lever for Transformation at the HPRC

The 5S competition held at Prince Regent Charles Hospital from April 20 to 29, 2026, was much more than a moment of competition. It revealed, with emotion and pride, the remarkable achievements of JICA’s “Project to Strengthen Maternal and Child Health Services” in training and support for 5S Kaizen. Behind every transformed department, every reorganized space, and every mobilized team lies the fruit of patient, structured, and deeply human work.

Since its launch, the project has gradually helped establish a genuine culture of continuous improvement within the hospital. The training provided has reached all categories of staff, from healthcare providers to administrative and technical staff, as well as support teams. This inclusive approach has fostered a collective ownership of 5S Kaizen, transforming a method into a true shared mindset.

Over time, the pilot departments have played a key role by becoming concrete examples of what 5S can deliver in terms of efficiency, organization, and quality of care. Their commitment has inspired other departments, which—even though they were not initially involved—have chosen to adopt these best practices as well. This spontaneous movement reflects a profound shift in mindset, where everyone feels they are an active participant in improving their work environment.

The competition also provided an opportunity to celebrate the teams’ efforts through an awards ceremony for the winning departments, held in the presence of the Hospital’s Medical Director. The awards presented to the Archives and Statistics Department and the Nursing Department highlighted the concrete results achieved through training, supervision, and team motivation.

Through these achievements, the JICA health project confirms that the sustainable improvement of health services relies above all on strengthening human capacity and the involvement of everyone.



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