

**MOUSE**

...But Kapiri DC says it is not possible for foreigners to benefit from the programme **Story on page 3**



Japanese ambassador Heinobu Sobashima inspects the Musangu tank house in Mwense.  
Pictures by MUKOSELA KASALWE. (Story on page 2)

**R; BUILDING THE NATION WITH REAL ISSUES**

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## JICA irrigation scheme empowers Mwense farmers

By MUKOSELA KASALWE in Mwense

THE Munwa irrigation project in Mwense funded by the Japanese government has enabled beneficiaries to grow tomatoes which are on high demand from Congolese buyers who offer a higher price for the commodity, says project chairman Alarm Kaunda.

The water irrigation scheme, which started in 2013, was funded by the Japanese Government through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at an initial investment of K 198,000.

Japanese ambassador to Zambia Heinobu Sobashima, who toured the project on Tuesday, said Japan was determined to help Zambia diversify its economy from reliance on diminishing resources like copper to agriculture as outlined in the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP). The Munwa irrigation project draws water from Munwa stream and, through a canal, distributes it throughout the year to 17 farmer households who grow tomatoes, cassava and maize. Mr Kaunda said the project had empowered the beneficiaries who sold as much

as K7, 000 to K 10, 000 worth of tomatoes to Congolese buyers. "We would like to thank the Japanese Government for bringing such a project which enables us to make money which in turn helps us send our children to school.

Meanwhile, the construction of Musangu ground water tank (MGWT) with a 120, 000 litre capacity which serves about 32, 000 people has elated the beneficiaries.

The water tank project was under phase three Sustainable Operation and Maintenance Programme (SOMAP).

MGWT, chairman, Gibson Chipili said the water tank project had had not only reduced the long distances people covered in search of water but that it had minimized the risk of the outbreak of water-borne diseases. MGWT treasurer Hellen Mumba said each household promptly paid a monthly fee of K5 to access water, adding that the money was banked for use in case the tank needed repairs.

She said the community had a sense of ownership and responsibility to take care of the water tank.

And headman Chisonge in whose area a water pump was situated said the project had excited the community.