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to chair the UNWTO the priority areas for

1,700 Mwense farmers diversify crops

By KASONDE
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ABOUT 1,700 farmers in Mwense district have diversified from growing maize to tomato production under the water irrigation project funded by the Japanese government.

Japanese Ambassador to Zambia Hidenobu Sobashima said his government had embarked on a water irrigation project in Mwense and Mansa districts of Luapula Province to help farmers diversify from maize growing to production of other crops in a bid for sustainable development.

Mr Sobashima said his government had embarked on formation of Technical Cooperations on Community Based Small holder Irrigation project (T-COBSI) an initiative that was viable and sustainable.

He said the purpose of the project was to promote and increase irrigated land through the provision of irrigation infrastructure for

smallholder farmers in the target areas.

"Luapula Province is endowed with water bodies which we believe can be utilised to improve crop production at the same time empower the small scale farmers to become self-reliant," Mr Sobashima said.

The ambassador said this yesterday when he toured farms in Mwense that were under the irrigation water system.

And Allam Kaunda one of the beneficiaries of the project, said through the water project he was able to cultivate tomatoes, which he was selling to customers from as far as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Mr Kaunda said the tomato business was booming and he was able to make up to K10,000 from the sales, which had improved his livelihood.

He said through his business he was able to send his children to school and had managed to build a house for his family.

Mr Kaunda thanked the Japanese government for the project and appealed to other stakeholders to come on board and help

the farmers through the provision of good road network and readily available market for the produce.

SESTUZ to empower members

By ESTHER
NG'ANDU

THE Secondary School Teachers Union in Zambia (SESTUZ) has embarked on a countrywide land empowerment for its members.

SESTUZ General Secretary Sitibekiso Wamuyuwa said the union wants to empower its members with land, hence coming up with a land empowerment Initiative.

Speaking in an interview yesterday, he said the initiative has an ability to improve teacher retention especially in rural areas.

"We as SESTUZ are very committed to uplifting the welfare of our members and in ensuring that they have access to land just like any other person needs land, we have embarked on a countrywide land empowerment Initiative for our members," he

said.

Mr Wamuyuwa said the union will continue to motivate its members stating that production is assured with a motivated workforce.

The SG added that the union is acquiring huge pieces of land from local authorities, traditional leaders and private developers that have no use for the land.

He, however, emphasised that the members are not paying any extra expenses to acquire the pieces of land, but that the monthly membership fee they pay is what is being used for land acquisition.

He said SESTUZ is indebted to the local authorities and other stakeholders who can come on board to support the idea which he said would transform the lives of the general

He praised Zambia's continued leadership in the organization and implored Dr Kaseba-Sata to work closely with the UNWTO secretariat to see how the organisation could help promote Zambia as a tourist destination.

Mr Pololikashvili enjoyed a special relationship with Zambia

membership.

He said the idea would also massively contribute to increasing national housing to cushion the national housing deficit as well as at a personal level.

Accommodation teachers, especially in rural setup is a challenge hence I such an initiative will positively add their accommodation challenges.

Govt to set up fruit nurseries Muchinga P

By JAMES KUNDA
THE Government is in the process of establishing citrus fruit nurseries in all districts across Muchinga Province to promote local production of fruits and reduce on imports from countries such as South Africa.

Muchinga Province Permanent Secretary Jobbicks Kalumba told journalists in Lusaka on

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