

Central Province Round up by Arthur Mwansa

JICA invest big at National Science Centre

By Arthur Mwansa

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has invested over K45.8 million towards the implementation of the Sector Wide Approach Programme (SWAP) at the National Science Centre (NSC) in Lusaka.

The three-year phased programme undertaken in the period 2012, 2013 and 2016 is aimed at producing

and delivering of mobile science laboratories (MSLs) and procuring and delivery of chemicals and science apparatus to 343 schools countrywide.

The Japanese Grant aid has also been used for production of mathematical graph boards for primary and secondary school teachers.

This came to light when NSC acting director Sidney Nalube made a presentation on the SWAP during the

press site visit hosted by the Japanese Embassy in Lusaka.

Nalube said in 2016, the Ministry of General Education and JICA mutually decided to start a process of transforming and mobilising the NSC to enhance its capacity to effectively discharge its mandate.

"During the first phase of SWAP or the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Funds over K10 million was spent on

the production of 1,010 MSLs to 200 schools, we also delivered chemical apparatus and equipment, we trained science teachers, procured three buses and produced three machines.

Under phase two over K14 million was used on producing and delivering of 750 to 143 schools, 16,000 mathematical graph boards were also produced and delivered to 8,000 schools and the training of science and mathematical teachers was also done using the same funds," Nalube said.

A total of K21 million has been spent on the construction of two double story science, mathematics and technology laboratory blocks and engagement of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Survey consultancy.

Presenting a paper on Knowledge Co-Creation Programme (KCCP), NSC Senior Education Officer-Programmes

and Coordination Bessie Tembo indicated that a total of 150 participants have attended the training programme for educators in 19 Sub-Saharan African countries since 2016.

And Project for Improvement of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (IPECK) project Coordinator Chanda Sichula said the goal of the project is to ensure quality of education in mathematics and science is improved, adding that he is happy that a total of 5,478 lecturers, teachers, student and pupils have benefited from the programme.

Sichula said, "We are pleased to announce that the quality of teacher education in mathematics and science has improved in most of the colleges of education because of the IPECK project. We give kudos to the Japanese Government through JICA".

'Change for better' philosophy spurs Lukanga water

By Arthur Mwansa

Lukanga Water and Sewerage Company Limited (LWSCL) Managing Director Yoram Sinyangwe says the Kaizen philosophy and methodology for business excellence has over the years contributed significantly towards the company performance through continuous improvement in decision-making.

Kaizen is a Japanese word meaning "Change for better" or simply "Improvement". It is a performance improvement tool adopted from Japanese companies such as Toyota.

"Over the years we have been striving as an organisation to always ensure that we record improvements in whatever we do. Of course we have quite a number of systems that help us to monitor our operations performance and track whatever we are doing.

Fortunately, we have embraced the Kaizen programme, which of course we know that originally comes from the people of the Republic of Japan. We have come to understand that the programme is something that can help us improve in our continuous improvements," Sinyangwe said.

Sinyangwe said during a press tour of Japan's development cooperation in Zambia that it is for this reason that LWSCL embarked on a pro-active programme using the Kaizen approach to improve its operations with regard to quality, cost, delivery, safety and service.

"You will be glad to know that we have won awards to that effect. We have also realised that we do not always need money to improve in various issues. Sometimes we just need to use our brains, hands, legs and basically ourselves to ensure that we move from one level of performance to another.

Since its introduction in 2015 the Kaizen programme has helped us improve, for instance activities in the



Lukanga Water and Sewerage Company Limited (LWSCL) Managing Director Yoram Sinyangwe

billing section, we have also been helped to easily curb various losses that we have been experiencing in the past and are fighting to reduce as a company, by this I am referring to a phrase known as non-revenue water" he explained.

Sinyangwe is also delighted that a number of LWSCL employees have benefited from the kindness of the Japanese Government and the people in of the Republic of Japan.

"I have been to Nagoya the largest city in the Chubu region of Japan, some of the skills and the culture that we learnt from Japan has not only helped us in our carrier but has also helped to develop into professional and leaders we are today. While in Japan I learnt

a culture of continuous improvement in my day-to-day life. This is the culture that as a water utility company we are seeking to embrace so that the challenges that we are experiencing today can be addressed through this programme," he said.

And Nangoma Twaambo LWSCL Kaizen co-ordinator and company Internal Auditor said she is proud to be among the privileged employees that have been trained under the Kaizen Institute programme.

Since inception the Kaizen Institute of Zambia Limited (KiZ) has introduced KAIZEN in 61 organisations. These organisations have improved their operations with regard to quality, cost, delivery, safety and service.

Kabwe Institute of Technology in a Japanese boost

By Arthur Mwansa

Kabwe Institute of Technology (KIT) has applauded the Japanese Government for providing up to K985,591 grant for grassroots human security project to the institution towards the improvement of automotive course facility in Kabwe, Central Province.

Up to 509 graduates have been trained in automotive courses at the KIT.

KIT Principle Rhoda Simwangala said she is happy that using this grant the institution has implemented the construction of a classroom, staffroom, procurement of fifty desks and chairs and other assorted equipment and tools for maintenance.

"We must thank JICA for this assistance; we have achieved high quality learning and teaching environment because students in automotive courses have addition classroom for theory lessons. We have availability of desks and chairs and students no longer get stranded," Simwangala said.

She said this during a three-day media tour of Central Province hosted by the Japanese Embassy in Lusaka and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to appreciate developmental projects being undertaken in the province with support from Japan.

"We have seen high standards of learning and teaching because of the

availability of up-to-date tools and equipment for practical training," the Principle said.

She is also elated that the new staffroom has enhanced lecturer performance because of improved work conditions, further saying that the availability of tools and machinery has resulted in the introduction of a diploma in automotive mechanics and automotive electrical.

Simwangala said, "The improved automotive facility is now linked to a higher pass rate of 87 percent from 78 percent. In addition, the institute has trained 212 Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) students in short intensive courses from 2016 to 2018".

She indicated that about 50 percent of the total graduates usually find employment in mining and other industries whilst about 10 percent will find job in government department and the rest join the informal sector.

And reacting to the request for further assistance to the KIT, outgoing Japanese Ambassador to Zambia Hidenobu Sobashima said he is pleased that his government is a listening cooperating partner to Zambia.

"So if there are further requests for assistance we will certainly listen and take into account and consider. We have other requests from other institutions as well, so certainly we would consider in the total picture, we have to take everything into account before deciding which will be a priority project.

But certainly human resources skills development is important, but industrial development including those related to automobile should be given and receive high priority. I shouldn't be irresponsible before leaving any commitments of my successor, but certainly we should be taking into account the importance of automobile," Ambassador Sobashima said.

He further said, "The training of human resource should have good impact if students who train at the institute will be successful in gaining an income and that will in turn have an impact on society and their families.

Certainly Japan would like to consider assisting the efforts of the government or the Zambian people in attaining economic development. But firstly, we respect the ownership of the Zambian Government and Zambian people and will consider in what manner we would like to cooperate for that effort."

Outgoing Japanese Ambassador Sobashima talks high about Zambia

By Arthur Mwansa

Outgoing Japanese Ambassador to Zambia Hidenobu Sobashima has said that he is optimistic that with determination he has done his best to build upon the long-standing friendly and cooperative relationship that exists between Zambia and Japan.

Ambassador Sobashima is also pleased that during his three-year tenure as Japanese representative to Zambia President Edgar Lungu has been to Japan at the invitation of that country's Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe on two occasions.

In August this year President Lungu was in Japan to attend the seventh edition of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). An initiative that is aimed at Enhanced Trade and Development between Africa and Japanese leaders.

Sobashima told the New Vision in an interview that, "Some of you may be aware that I am leaving soon, I arrived here on October 31, 2016 and I am leaving Zambia on 24 September this

month, so in a few days' time I will be leaving.

Ever since I arrived in Zambia I have said it on various occasions that as Ambassador of Japan to Zambia I am determined to do my best building upon long standing friendly and cooperative relationship between Zambia and Japan, extending from political, economic to culture and other areas".

"And in collaboration with Japanese experts, volunteers, NGOs and other companies in Zambia I am committed to further advance our relations in various fields including Official Development Assistance (ODA), trade and investment, particularly in implementing the TICAD initiatives," he said.

The TICAD is an international conference led by the Japanese government and co-sponsored by the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Union Commission (AUC) and the World Bank.

"I am a very luck person as Ambassador that during my tenure the Head of State in

Zambia President of Zambia visited my country two times. On both occasions agreements were signed including the renewing of the University of Zambia (UNZA) equipment at the veterinary department and before the TICAD meeting we signed agreements for the provision of health centre kits and other essential drugs amounting to nearly US\$3 million," The Ambassador said.

Sobashima is also happy that during one of the meetings in Japan President Edgar Lungu and Prime Minister Abe agreed that the relations between the two countries will enter a new phase of cooperation, including bilateral cooperation and trade and investment in international forums.

He is also pleased Zambia overwhelmingly supported candidature of Japan to host OSAKA Expo 2025. The World Expo is officially known as the Osaka-Kansai Japan Expo, a reflection of the effort to promote the bid as one with the support of the wider Kansai region, including the neighbouring cities of Kyoto, Nara and Kobe.



Outgoing Japanese Ambassador to Zambia Hidenobu Sobashima