

## **KIGALI HOSTS CEO'S AND DG'S OF WATER UTILITIES FROM 7 AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

The first edition of Regional Executive Forum on Urban Water Supply was launched in Kigali on Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> 2019.

Organised by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in partnership with Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC), the three-day forum brought together water utility heads and sector professionals from 8 African countries; Rwanda (host) Nigeria, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan and South Africa.

With the theme “the enhancement of sustainability of urban water services in Sub-Saharan Africa”, the forum will discuss financing capacity of water supply institutions, non-revenue (wasted) water reduction, technology, to mention but a few.

Addressing the media about the forum, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Infrastructures, Patricie Uwase, disclosed that the forum’s first edition was brought to Rwanda because “it has been working with JICA and Rwanda’s vision and efficient planning attracted them.”

Yuko Hotta, the Chargé d'affaires in the Japanese embassy in Rwanda told the media that Rwanda has proven its efforts to reduce non-revenue water rate from the current 38 per cent.

“As a country with the lowest non-revenue water rate [3 per cent], Japan is willing to support and share its experience with Rwanda, we see it as an emerging model for Africa,” she said.

### **Water-Related Problems Prioritized**

Rwanda still has 38 per cent of water wastage rate with [86 per cent of Rwandans with access to clean water](#). By 2020, all Rwandans are expected to have access to clean water, according to the [5th integrated household living conditions survey](#). For this to become reality, Aime Muzola, chief executive officer of WASAC, said that the efforts being invested and the outcomes are promising.

“The government has a 5-year-plan to address water wastage. Some of the strategies involve upgrading water infrastructures and water surveillance system. Through platforms like this forum, we will gain experience and technical assistance to execute strategies in place,” Aime Muzola told the media.

As part of the forum, participants will visit Kanzenze Water Treatment Plant that is expected to supply 40,000 cubic meters per day for Kigali and urban areas. This is one of the mega water projects that will increase access to clean water from 86 per cent to 100 per cent by 2024.

Asked what it takes to have the best non-revenue water rate, Ms. Yuko Hotta said that Rwanda needs to invest more in water infrastructures.

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“There is a need to realise that water is not free. We can only have good quality of water if we invest in infrastructures. Good quality of water comes with good investment,” she added.

Throughout the forum, sector stakeholders are expected to forge partnership in policy formulation, adoption planning and knowledge sharing. The partnership aims at serving SDGs 6th goal, which is to fill the 40 per cent gap between water supply and demand.

In January this year, President Paul Kagame visit Japan. He met Prime Minister Shinzo Abe where the two leaders confirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral ties. [JICA has been working with Rwanda](#) for 14 years. The partnership revolves around providing assistance in economic infrastructure, promotion of value added agriculture, water and sanitation, and human resource development.

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