

## HANDOVER CEREMONIES FOR JAPANESE GRANT ASSISTANCE PROJECTS IN LIMPOPO

On Friday, the 8th of November 2013, two handover ceremonies took place in Limpopo Province. These were to celebrate the completion of new classrooms and the expansion of a drop-in centre, which were funded by the Government of Japan through its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP).

The first handing over ceremony took place at Mapuso Primary School in Mapela and was attended by Mr Shigeki Omura, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, Mr Ndo Mangala, District Senior Manager at the Department of Basic Education, Mr Simon Maringa, Principal of Mapuso Primary School, as well as learners, teachers and community members. Mapela Primary School was founded in 1983 and is situated in a rural area with high rates of unemployment and poverty.



In order to assist with improving the educational environment of Mapuso Primary School, the Government of Japan granted R666,600 for the construction of a block with a laboratory, a classroom, a remedial teaching centre, a kitchen and storage room for their feeding scheme, toilets and a wellness centre for OVCs.

At the occasion, Mr Omura said that the Government of Japan is “especially keen to assist with improving education in this country, and thereby contribute towards the greater goal of poverty eradication”. He said that it was their wish that the new building will provide Mapuso Primary School with a greater ability to extend knowledge to the youth of its community.



The second handover ceremony took place at the Waterberg Welfare Society (WWS) in Vaalwater and was attended by Mr Shigeki Omura, Ms Elizabeth Lekalakala, the Mayor of Modimolle Local Municipality, Ms Mary Stephenson, Chief Executive Officer of WWS, as well members of staff and the community.



WWS runs a drop-in centre for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), and programmes for youth development. It is situated in an area with high rates of HIV/AIDS and a consequent large number of orphans in the community. In order to assist with mitigating these issues, the Government of Japan granted R688 800 for the construction of a hall room, and the installation of an electronic fence and solar water system.

At the occasion, Mr Omura said that it is the Government of Japan's wish that the expansion "will create a safe and comfortable environment for the youth, where they can learn to lead healthy, successful lives and become part of the greater development of this country". The organisation's beneficiaries showed their gratitude through traditional dance performances.



The Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Programme is intended to assist NGOs, schools and local authorities in addressing development needs in areas such as education, health, sanitation and environmental conservation.

On Friday, 23 May 2014, Mookamedi Secondary School in Jakkalskuil, Limpopo province,



hosted a handover ceremony of four classrooms that were built, funded by the Embassy of Japan through the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Programme. The ceremony was attended by Second Secretary, Mr Shigeki Omura of the Embassy, members of the School Governing Body, the Department of



Education and the local community.

Mookamedi has students ranging from Grade 8 to Grade 12, with the total number of 292 students. It was established in 1985 as a farm school, but was later adopted by Government and became a government school. Parents and the community contributed in building the existing two blocks of six classrooms. Five

classrooms were used to accommodate learners during learning and teaching time, whilst the remaining classroom was used as a multifunctional facility as a staffroom, library and a store-room. Although water through a borehole and electricity was available, the infrastructure at the school was at a low level. The school had an acute shortage of classrooms due to overcrowding by learners and the situation became so serious that during some periods learners had to leave their classroom and go outside to learn when they had to split because of the different subjects they were taking. Consequently the school became dependent on social grant aid to build another block consisting of four classrooms, in order to relieve the congestion inside the classrooms.



The Government of Japan decided to support this school through grant assistance amounting to R499 440.00 for the construction of the four classrooms. The extra classrooms have aided in providing an environment where quality learning and teaching can take place effectively.

Education and economic empowerment are some of the priority areas for the Government of Japan in its extension of GGP assistance to South Africa. The GGP is intended to assist NGOs and local authorities in addressing development needs in a prompt and comprehensive manner in areas such as education, health, water supply, climate change and in a variety of other local needs. The GGP scheme was first introduced in 1989, and prioritizes human security for vulnerable and marginalised people within society. Since 1990, 573 GGP projects have been implemented in South Africa. In the Japanese Fiscal Year 2013 (April 2013–March 2014), the Embassy of Japan extended GGP assistance to 11 projects, amounting to approximately R11 295 000.00.