The construction and renovation of a school project worth 400 million Rwandan francs was this Wednesday inaugurated during a ceremony officiated by U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Peter H. Vrooman and Rwandan Minister of Education Dr. Valentine Uwamariya at Kimihurura Primary School in Kigali.

The Kimihurura Primary School project highlights accessibility as the United Nations marks the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3. In addition to 12 new classrooms, seven renovated classrooms, 30 new latrines, and a comprehensive drainage and water storage system.

Ambassador Vrooman noted that the project also includes important accessibility features. An expansive ramp system and two custom-made accessible latrines will allow equal access for all students and staff.

“Access is the key to getting to the classroom and getting an education,” said Ambassador Vrooman.

The work was funded by AFRICOM, the U.S. military’s Africa command, through the U.S. Department of Defense’s Overseas Humanitarian Disaster Assistance and Civic Aid fund. The Naval Facilities Engineering Command also provided technical support. A separate construction and renovation project at Tyazo Groupe Scolaire in the Western Province will soon bring the program’s total contribution to Rwanda’s education sector to almost one billion Rwandan francs.

“The fact that you are supporting the education sector means that you are supporting the whole country,” said Minister Uwamariya, while thanking the United States for its support of education in Rwanda.

The biggest share of U.S. government investments in education in Rwanda come through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Education is a key component of the 605 billion Rwandan franc commitment that USAID made on July 2 to Rwanda’s development efforts over the next five years.

A major portion of USAID work in education supports the Government of Rwanda to improve early-grade reading outcomes in Kinyarwanda.

To support the acquisition of this foundational skill, USAID works in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Rwanda Education Board to enhance investments in teacher training, teaching and learning materials, assessment, and school-

community partnerships to ensure that all children learn to read within their first few years of schooling.

USAID education investment on display at Kimihurura Primary School included the Kinyarwanda textbooks and classroom libraries in the Primary grade 1 to 3 classrooms, which are among over 6 million textbook and readers which have been distributed through the USAID Soma Umenye project. USAID Soma Umenye has also provided training to all lower primary school teachers about best practices to teach reading. (End)