

The Japanese Embassy and Society for Family Health (SFH) Rwanda have signed a \$138,706 grant agreement to improve access to clean water for 15,000 residents in Gatsibo District, marking a new step in the two countries' long-standing development partnership.

The project, funded through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP/KUSANONE), will install the Yamaha Clean Water Supply System, a modern water purification technology powered by solar energy. Community water collection points will also be constructed in Gakenke Cell, Kiramuruzi Sector.

Japanese Ambassador to Rwanda Nakajo Kazuya and SFH Rwanda Executive Director Manasseh Gihana Wandera signed the agreement, describing the initiative as part of more than four decades of cooperation between Japan and Rwanda.



Nakajo said the project reflects Japan's commitment to human security, which prioritizes protecting people's lives and dignity. He noted that access to safe water is central to sustainable development and public health. The Yamaha system, being introduced in Rwanda for the first time, is expected to reduce waterborne diseases and significantly cut the time residents spend fetching water.

Currently, about 72% of Gatsibo's population has access to clean water. District Executive Secretary Frank Ibingira said the new project will help raise that percentage while improving living standards.

Residents in the target area spend up to two hours daily collecting water. Once operational, the new system is expected to reduce that time to about 20 minutes per day, allowing families to focus on income-generating activities, education and other essential tasks.

SFH Rwanda said the project aligns with its mission to advance community-centered health solutions and pledged timely implementation to ensure residents quickly benefit.

Officials described the initiative as a significant step toward expanding universal access to safe water and strengthening sustainable development efforts in eastern Rwanda.