

I hear that Japan has entered a heatwave after the end of the rainy season, and I extend my deepest sympathies. Here in Uganda, we are in the midst of the dry season. After mid-July, it sometimes rains for two or three days, perhaps as a prelude to the rainy season. When that happens, the temperature at dawn drops below 20 degrees Celsius, making it chilly. The rain stops after one or two hours at most. After that, strong sunlight returns, so it seems to be a perfect climate for plants.

1. Public Viewing of the FIFA World Cup Japan vs. Brazil Match

The World Cup match between Japan and Brazil kicked off at 8:00 PM on June 29th, Kampala time. The local Japanese Association suggested holding a public viewing, as it was a rare opportunity and they hoped for a victory. So, we held a public viewing in the official residence garden.



Scenes from the viewing

About 30 Japanese residents gathered. The result was as you know. Especially the first half was truly the best view. Although we couldn't see a better view than that, it was a valuable opportunity for Japanese residents to unite and cheer for the Samurai Blue. We don't know if we will have another chance to play against a wonderful team like Brazil until the next World Cup. I hope to share the best view with everyone in four years.

Unfortunately, Uganda was eliminated in the African qualifiers for this World Cup. It has not yet participated in the World Cup. In the latest FIFA rankings, Uganda is ranked 89th. Uganda is also putting effort into soccer. It is scheduled to co-host the Africa Cup of Nations in 2027 with Kenya and Tanzania. The nickname of the Ugandan team is "The Cranes" (a name derived from the crested crane depicted on the national flag). The main host countries for the FIFA World Cup in four years are Morocco, Spain, and Portugal. We may also see full-fledged activity from African teams, including Uganda.

2. Launching of Skeepon (Bio-Stimulant)

The launch event for Ac-Planta's Skeepon was held on June 30th at the Agricultural Festival in Jinja. We have previously covered the progress of Skeepon in the August 2024 and June 2025 issues. This time, it's the final stage, and sales of Skeepon for the Ugandan domestic market will finally begin. The launching event for this purpose was held at the Agricultural Festival.

The Agricultural Festival is an annual comprehensive exhibition with an agricultural theme. In addition to agricultural products and machinery, there were also exhibits of livestock and marine products. Among them, experiments were conducted with corn and other plants treated with Skeepon and untreated plants. The difference between the treated and untreated ones was obvious at a glance. The Skeepon-treated ones showed visibly abundant yields.

Prime Minister Nabbanja, who has been personally deeply involved with Skeepon as a representative of President Museveni, attended the launch event. Although it was originally an exhibition of general Ugandan agricultural products, thanks to the launch event, the focus was placed on cooperation with Japan. Japanese officials, including Mr. Osaki, the head of JICA in Uganda, and the author who attended, frequently mentioned Japan's contribution to Ugandan agriculture, and we felt greatly honored.

On this occasion, the author also mentioned the Project for the Reconstruction of Karuma Bridge, a highlight of Japan's infrastructure cooperation in Uganda this year, and Lot 2 of the Kampala Flyover Construction and Road Upgrading Project, for which Japanese cooperation is anticipated. Then, a spontaneous "Thank you, Japan!" call erupted from the audience. (People chanted "Asante (thank you) Japan!" and clapped.) Even when the author left the event and returned to the car, several Ugandans spoke to him, and some said that they really liked Japanese Ambassador's presentation earlier.

To Associate Professor Kim, Specially Appointed at the University of Tokyo Graduate School, who serves as the representative of Ac-Planta, and all the staff, thank you very much for your hard work. Ac-Planta is expected to continue its dissemination events within Uganda. Furthermore, inquiries and expansion from Uganda to other African countries are also expected. We hope that this will contribute to food security in African countries and, by extension, to the stability of the international community, including Japan.

3. The Project for the Construction of Classroom Blocks at Amorigoga Primary School in Kwanja District

Uganda's development is remarkable, but the field of primary education still requires support. It is said that one-third of children still live without access to school. Especially in areas far from large cities or roads, the construction of infrastructure such as schools is not easy. Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects aims to provide support that can reach such areas. Education and human resource development are fundamental to a nation's development. Helping to nurture even one excellent human resource who will bear the future will, in the long run, benefit the international community, including Japan. In Uganda, nearly 300 projects have been implemented through long-term efforts.

This project completed construction within a rapid six months from the signing of the grant agreement, and the handover ceremony was recently held. Mr. Yoshida, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Japan in Uganda, attended the ceremony.



Scenes from the ceremony

With the construction of two classroom blocks and three toilet blocks, the average number of students per classroom has reportedly decreased from the current 135 to 81. Even so, it is still overcrowded with over 80 students. Ironically, there is a dilemma that if the environment is improved, the number of children who wish to attend school will also increase. I would like to express my deep respect to the school officials and local government officials who applied for and implemented this project. There is a verse in the Bible that says, "You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world." This is a verse that the author often quotes in presentations at the local site. I hope that such initiatives will spread even deeper and wider throughout Uganda.

(End)