

# Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects

## Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for the Project for Construction of Irrigation Facilities and a Kitchen for School Meals at Machentche Primary School In Lilongwe District – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019



**Left:** (From left) Mr. Kondwani Charles Nanchukwa, Board Chairperson of FIRD), Her Excellency Kae Yanagisawa, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi

**Right:** (From left) Ms. Virginia Kachigunda, Director of School Health Nutrition, Mr. Kondwani, Ambassador Yanagisawa

On Tuesday, 5th March 2019, Her Excellency Kae Yanagisawa, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi, signed a grant contract with Mr. Kondwani Charles Nanchukwa, Board Chairperson of Foundation for Irrigation and Sustainable Development (FIRD), for the Project for Construction of Irrigation Facilities and a Kitchen for School Meals at Machentche Primary School in the Lilongwe District.

The challenges faced by Malawi are multifaceted and therefore single-issue approach does not work in many cases. In primary education, while Malawi has made progress in increasing enrolment over the past years, children are often suffering from lack of adequate food, leading to high rate of absenteeism and low level of performance. Machentche Primary School is not an exception. Due to lack of financial resources, most learners are forced to absent from school to seek for piece works to be able to buy food, especially during the lean season from December to March.

In this regard, the Government of Japan decided to provide a grant amounting to **USD\$40,971** under the Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects to FIRD for the Project for Construction of Irrigation Facilities and a Kitchen for School Meals at Machentche Primary School in Lilongwe District. The funding will be used to install a solar powered irrigation system, water tank, fencing a school garden and a kitchen.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, Ambassador Yanagisawa emphasized that having the solar powered irrigation system is not the ultimate goal of the project, but rather utilizing these facilities to produce cash crops and profits from the sales will in turn be used to purchase food commodities for school meals. She also appealed that the project requires clear market linkages and business-oriented mind-set on the part of the participating community members. Therefore, FIRD needs to ensure that the committee entrusted to manage the project is appropriately capacitated to ensure project sustainability. In conclusion, she kindly appealed FIRD will deliver this project within the proposed timeframe so that intended impacts of the project will come out in due course.