

Ogongo Campus Annual Rice Harvest Festival

Event Theme: "Promoting wetland-rice culture among smallholders for enhanced livelihoods"

Date held: 10 July 2023

Venue: UNAM Ogongo Campus, Omusati Region, Namibia

H.E. Ambassador Nishimaki was gracefully invited to the University of Namibia's Ogongo Campus Annual Rice Harvest Festival. He was asked to deliver a message on the importance of international collaboration in advancing good bilateral relations using the backdrop of the growing wetland-rice culture in Namibia which came about as a direct result of the long-term cooperation between Japan and Namibia on the Japan-Namibia Rice and Mahangu Project.

The event was graced by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, who lauded the Japanese government for their longstanding support to Namibia and her people in many areas particularly in agriculture and education. In her own words Hon. Nandi-Ndaitwah said, **"Before I conclude, allow me, to express sincere gratitude, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and to acknowledge the contribution of the Government of Japan, through JICA and its Embassy in Namibia, in promoting rice production in Namibia to improve food security. We have just heard that this Campus has been able to execute most of its farm and academic activities due to the capacity created by JICA during the Namibia-Japan Rice and Mahangu Project phase. Thank you, Your Excellency Ambassador Nishimaki, and convey our appreciation to the Government and people of Japan."**

The event was attended by the host Governor of Omusati Region Hon. Erginus Endjala, amongst other regional governors and councilors, as well as the top officials of the University of Namibia; Prof. Kenneth Matengu – Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ellen Ndeshi Namhila – PVC Administration and Finance, Prof. N.M. Nickanor – Executive Dean: Faculty of Agriculture, Engineering & Natural Resources and Dr. Chris Mbrema – Ogongo Campus Director amongst many other UNAM staff hosting the activities and in attendance.

Also present at the event was Mr. Willy Mertens the CEO of DEBMARINE Namibia which donated equipment to UNAM for expanding and furthering rice cultivation and poultry production at Ogongo Campus. The event was also attended by a big number of smallholder farmers some of whom are already producing rice and others who are eager to learn about wetland-rice culture as well as enthusiastic learners from nearby village schools, not to mention delegates from various stakeholders across ministries, UN agencies, NGO's and civil society as well as academia.



H.E. Mr. Nishimaki delivering his message at the Ogongo Campus Annual Rice Harvest Festival at the University of Namibia's Ogongo Campus, Omusati Region, Namibia.



