

More Ugandans get Japanese scholarships

By Andrew Masinde
and David Lumu

It was all joy as Kazuaki Kameda, the ambassador of Japan to Uganda, welcomed students who were returning from Japan after completing their master's degree and internship programme under the African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE initiative).

The same event was used to see off another team of students who were heading to Japan on the same scholarship.

In his speech, the ambassador congratulated all the returnees for having successfully completed their programme, despite the various challenges that could have come their way during their stay in Japan.

He revealed that at the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) held in 2013, the Japanese government emphasised its policy of promoting support for the dynamic growth of Africa with stronger public-private partnership.

"At the same event, the Japanese

The programme is a strategic five-year plan providing 1,000 youths in Africa with opportunities to obtain master's degrees and internship from Japan

prime minister, Shinzo Abe, announced the ABE initiative is a strategic five-year plan providing 1,000 youth in Africa with opportunities to obtain master's



Kameda (third-left, front row) having a light moment with the students who returned from Japan

degrees at Japanese graduate schools and to do internship at Japanese companies," he said.

The ABE initiative is a government of Japanese programme aimed at supporting young personnel who have the potential to contribute to the development of industries in Africa.

The participants are supposed to have a strong motivation to strengthen economic ties between Japan and Uganda.

Over 26 Ugandans have participated under the Abe programme in the past four years

in the areas of agriculture, public health, electrical and mechanical engineering, business administration and international development.

The state minister for trade, Micheal Werikhe, in his speech read by Raymond Agaba, the acting permanent secretary in the trade ministry, said Uganda has shared a long bilateral relationship with Japan, especially in the field of health, infrastructure, agriculture and education.

Werikhe said Japan has assisted Uganda in human resource development for a long time through

the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA). "Since 2015, Japan, through ABE initiative, has offered education at master's degree level in different fields," he said.

Yutaka Fukase, the chief representative of JICA in Uganda, explained that the ABE initiative was launched basing on the need to increase the number of Africans visiting Japan.

The programme also aims at increasing awareness among Africans regarding the efficiency of Japanese technologies and systems of enterprises.