



**From
the People of Japan**

Japan extends support for the Project of the Extension of the Botswana Karate Association Dojo

Gaborone, 24th April 2024 - The Government of Japan and the Botswana Karate Association celebrated the successful handover of the Botswana Karate Association (BOKA) Dojo extension, funded by Japan's Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects (GCGP). The Ambassador of Japan to Botswana H.E. OHMORI Setsuo and the Minister of Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture, Honourable Tumiso Rakgare officially opened the second phase of the Botswana Karate Association's Training Hall. The representatives of Botswana National Sports Commission were also present.

The first phase of the Karate Training Hall was also constructed through GCGP and was officially opened in 2011. The extension was constructed following a grant contract signing agreement between the two organizations in February 2018, when BOKA received an amount of USD 80,969 from the Government of Japan through its Embassy in Botswana.

Speaking during the ceremony, Ambassador OHMORI expressed his hope that this karate hall will play a major role in youth development, as in the past BOKA depended on the use of various community and private halls. He said he believes this dojo will be made available for consistent national trainings and play a crucial role in realizing excellence in karate. Ambassador OHMORI applauded the Botswana karate team for its achievement and qualification in the upcoming World Championships saying that someday some Botswana karatekas will participate in the Olympic games.

Minister Rakgare thanked the Government of Japan for its support towards the construction of the first and second phases of the BOKA dojo. He appreciated the sound bilateral relations and bond between Japan and Botswana, mentioning that access to good sport facilities is fast shifting from a privilege to a right for the citizens of Botswana. He urged the BOKA executive committee to ensure that this upgraded facility is well taken care of and used for the benefit of both the young and the elderly in Botswana.

Through the GCGP scheme, Japan has supported 5 projects in Botswana that has contributed to sports, including equipment and facilities. This is in line with the Botswana Government's aspiration, envisaged in Vision 2036, that states that sports is an area that has the potential to contribute to economic development in the priority area of sustainable economic development.

* Cultural Grant Assistance is a scheme whereby funds are granted to cover the cost of procurement, transportation and installation of equipment and construction or restoration of facilities used for various cultural and higher educational activities and the preservation of cultural heritage. From the start of this scheme in FY 1975 to FY 2022, Japan's Cultural Grant Assistance has supported a total of 1,450 projects, disbursing 70.7 billion yen. The equipment and facilities provided to developing countries through Cultural Grant Assistance are used in a wide range of activities, including Japanese-language study and the study of Japan at various colleges and universities; promotion of sports, such as traditional Japanese martial arts like judo, etc.



**Ambassador OHMORI
delivering his remarks**



**Shihan Bakwadi, BOKA President
giving welcome remarks**



**Minister Rakgare
delivering his remarks**



Official opening



Demonstration of Karate Kata



Karate Dojo