

JAPAN TO FUND CONSTRUCTION OF MATERNITY WAITING HOMES IN MOUNT DARWIN DISTRICT



On 18th February, the Embassy of Japan has decided to extend a grant up to ninety-nine thousand five hundred and fifty-eight dollars (USD 99,558) to a local NGO, Outcome Community Network, for the implementation of “The Project for Construction of Maternity Waiting Homes in Mount Darwin District”.

The Grant Contracts to this effect were signed by the Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr. Yoshi Hiraishi and the Director of Outcome Community Network, Mr. Offias Mutoro at Mount Darwin District Hospital.

The grant is to be used for the construction and furnishing of maternity waiting homes in 5 health institutions in Mount Darwin District, namely Mount Darwin District Hospital and 4 rural clinics in Bandimba, Mutungagore, Mukumbura and Dotito. These 5 sites were selected based on the assessment which showed their highest demand of such facilities in the District in terms of higher number of deliveries at institution as well as higher number of reported home deliveries.

It is expected that the number of delivery at health facilities will be increased in the District. Statistics shows Mashonaland Central Province records the

highest home delivery rate among all the provinces. Through the implementation of the project, we hope it contributes to the targets of the Milenium Development Goals (MDGs), 'Reduce Child Motality' and 'Improve Matrnl Health'. In the present circumstances, many pregnant women cannot access health institutions on time due to long distance from home, resulting in high rate of home deliveries. This often prevents mothers from having safe deliveries and from reducing the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The facilities, once completed, will provide safe and comfortable environment for pregnant women where they can access appropriate health service on time.

Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Mr. Hiraishi noted that Japan had actively supported the construction of such homes throughout the country in collaboration with UNFPA and that Japan would continue support to Zimbabwe's health sector. At the signing ceremony held at Mout Darwing District Hospital, more than 20 officials attended including the Honourable Minister of State for Provincial Affairs, Mashonaland Central, Mr. Martin Dinha.