

Handover of Family Support Centre for Women's Safety at Overspill Market in Epworth

On 29 May 2023, the handover ceremony of a new Family Support Centre for women's safety was held at Overspill Market in Epworth. The Centre will provide a safe space for women and girls, where they can access various Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, and learn new vocational skills. It will also conduct outreach activities to prevent gender-based violence (GBV) in the community. The project was supported through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Humanitarian Projects (GGP) scheme, with US\$ 90,909 provided in funding, and was implemented by a local NGO, Katswe Sistahood.

The Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr Satoshi Tanaka, handed over the new Centre to the Epworth community. Also attending the ceremony was the Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development, Hon. Dr Sithembiso Nyoni; the Deputy Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development, Hon. Jennifer Mhlanga; the Director of Katswe Sistahood, Ms Talent Jumo; officials of Epworth Local Board and many members of the community.

At Overspill Market in Epworth, many women are involved in informal trading, often accompanied by their children. However, with inadequate safety for them at the market, they all too often became victims of theft or GBV. Katswe Sistahood has been advocating for SRHR for women and girls in Epworth for several years and identified the need for a safe haven at the market.

The new Family Support Centre will provide such a safe space for women working at the market, as well as their children. They will be able to access a comprehensive range of SRHR services, including counselling, medical, psycho-social and legal support. In addition, they will be able to learn skills so that they can support themselves. Furthermore, the Centre will have a police post so that people can report any GBV cases as soon as they occur. Finally, it will conduct outreach activities in the community to increase awareness of GBV and change societal norms. Each year, the Centre is expected to provide support to 3,000 women and girls, and reach 20,000 people through its outreach activities.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Tanaka said he hoped that the new centre would empower many women, and help to change attitudes in the community so that GBV is stopped. Hon. Dr Nyoni expressed her gratitude for Japan's support and said that the new Centre would help to empower women so that they no longer become victims of GBV. Ms Jumo said she hoped the new Centre would be a step towards a safe and inclusive city for women.

(See photos below)



The new Family Support Centre



The Director of Katswe Sistahood, Ms. Jumo; the Minister, Hon. Dr. Nyoni; Ambassador Tanaka; and the Deputy Minister, Hon. Mhlanga



Tour of the new Centre



Group counselling room



Community members at the opening ceremony



Speech by the Minister, Hon. Dr. Nyoni



Speech by Ambassador Tanaka



Speech by Ms Jumo



Some of the beneficiaries of the new Centre



Signboard showing support from Japan