

14 February 2024

Government of Japan strengthens health services delivery in Chipinge District

The Government of Japan, represented by the Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr Shinichi Yamanaka, today handed over an ambulance to the Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care, the Honourable Sleiman Kwidini. The ambulance is one of three ambulances that were procured along with a GeneXpert PCR machine under the Japan-funded project to equip medical facilities in Manicaland Province with emergency services.

The ambulance comes as the country marks one year since the first cholera case was reported on 12 February 2023, and will assist in strengthening disease surveillance and case management at the beneficiary facility - Chipinge District Hospital. The hospital requires a reliable fleet of ambulances for transfer of patients between the district hospital and the provincial hospital in Mutare. Transfer of patients has been a challenge due to the remoteness of some communities and the poor state of the roads, worsened by the floods and landslides caused by Cyclone Idai in 2019.

Chipinge District Hospital serves a population of over 410,000 people, covering Chipinge Rural, Chipinge Town and neighbouring Mozambique. The project procured four-wheel drive vehicles that can manoeuvre the steep and wet roads in Manicaland.

"Procurement is more than supplying goods and services. It is about ensuring that partners have the resources they need to achieve their development goals, and if done well, seizing it as an opportunity to maximise impact on the people they serve," explained Mr Clement Mhlanga, Officer in Charge *a.i.* for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Zimbabwe Office.

UNOPS was responsible for procuring the vehicles and equipment on behalf of the Government of Japan. UNOPS also facilitated training of laboratory technicians, ambulance drivers and ambulance technicians to ensure that the equipment is fully utilised.

"As the country fights the cholera outbreak, I trust that this donation funded by the Government of Japan will strengthen the efforts of the Ministry of Health and Child Care towards equitable, appropriate, accessible, affordable and acceptable quality health services for all," said Mr Mhlanga.

The Government of Japan has been a close ally of Zimbabwe, especially in the health sector. "I am convinced that this project will contribute greatly to the Ministry's efforts to improve emergency medical services in Manicaland Province and achieve Universal Health Coverage, so that no one is left behind," said Mr Yamanaka, speaking at the handover ceremony.



Ambassador Yamanaka making his remarks



Ambassador Yamanaka handing over the ambulance keys to the Hon. Deputy Minister Kwidini



Group photo in front of the new ambulance donated by Japan