

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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JAPANESE AMBASSADOR COMMISSIONS SAFE WATER AND FARMING SKILLS PROJECT IN CHIPINGE

The Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr Yonezo Fukuda, has today officially commissioned “the Project for Supplying Safe Water and Supporting Training to Improve Cultivation Skills in Chipinge District” which was implemented by international NGO, Mercy Corps.

A grant of USD 122,372 (one hundred and twenty-two thousand, three hundred and seventy-two dollars) was extended to Mercy Corps in September last year for the project.

The overall objective of the project is to sustainably improve agricultural production and nutrition levels of targeted households in seven wards in Chipinge District by providing necessary inputs and training in improved resource management, improved farming practices and capacity building to vulnerable rural families. A major component will be the training of Water Management Committees and Village Pump Minders to ensure sustainability of the project. A total of 2,520 households are expected to directly benefit from the nutrition garden project. Furthermore, the local community will benefit from improved access to safe potable water for domestic consumption. The district was hard hit by the cholera outbreak due to the community accessing water from unprotected sources.

More specifically, the project will see the rehabilitation of 40 water points as well as the establishment of an additional two water points. Ten new nutrition gardens will be established. Recent history clearly demonstrates that rain-fed agriculture is no longer a viable option in certain regions. Produce from gardens will not only improve household food security and lead to improved nutritional diversity, but excess produce can be sold to local communities and finance generated can be used for necessities such as school fees.

Earlier in the day, H.E. Ambassador Fukuda commissioned a similar project in the district undertaken by Africa 2000 and expressed satisfaction that local communities are benefitting from Japanese assistance. He again stressed the need for maximum use of facilities provided.