



# Joint News Release

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## **JAPAN HELPS SUPPORT HUNGER RELIEF IN ZIMBABWE**

**HARARE** – The Government of Japan has announced a contribution to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) of more than US\$4.2 million to boost food and nutrition security among some of the poorest families in Zimbabwe.

Japan's support comes at a time of looming food crisis in the southern African country. Some 2.2 million people will need food assistance between January and March 2014, according to a recent study undertaken by the Government of Zimbabwe in partnership with the United Nations and other organisations. The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) Rural Livelihoods Report estimates that one in four of the rural population could face hunger during the coming lean season.

Japan's contribution will help fund various WFP initiatives including programmes to assist vulnerable rural households until the next harvest and malnourished HIV/TB patients, women and children.

“Unfavourable weather patterns continue to have a negative effect on harvests, resulting in widespread food insecurity,” says the Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr. Yonezo Fukuda. “Our support is designed to sustain the most vulnerable and make them better able to cope during difficult times.”

WFP and partners are preparing to assist some 1.8 million vulnerable people through food distributions and cash transfers beginning in October.

“Japan's support enables WFP to increase its assistance to people most at risk so they can lead more productive lives,” says WFP Country Director Sory Ouane.

At this year's Tokyo International Conference on African Development, Japan reaffirmed its commitment to fostering development in Africa by pledging contributions of \$32 billion to the continent over the next five years.

The Government of Japan has been funding food assistance to developing countries since 1968. In the past decade, Japan has contributed more than US\$35 million to WFP's operations in Zimbabwe.

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide. Last year, WFP reached more than 97 million people in 80 countries with food assistance.

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For more information please contact:

(Email addresses: [firstname.lastname@wfp.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@wfp.org)/[firstname.lastname@mofa.jp](mailto:firstname.lastname@mofa.jp))

Tomson Phiri, WFP/Harare, Tel. +263 4 252471, Mob. +263 772 911 519

Victoria Cavanagh, WFP/Harare, Tel. +263 4 252471, Mob. +263 778 620 233

Yoshitake Tsuzuki, Embassy of Japan, Tel: +263 4250025-7, Mob: +263 712 201 574

Yumi Sakata, Embassy of Japan, Tel: +263 4250025-7, Mob: +263 712 201 579