

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

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JAPANESE AMBASSADOR OFFICIALLY COMMISSIONS WATER POINTS IN GUTU DISTRICT

The Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr Yonezo Fukuda, today officially commissioned boreholes in Gutu District. Japan extended a grant of approximately seventy-eight thousand, seven hundred US dollars (USD78, 700) to an international NGO, Action Contre la Faim, in 2010 for the implementation of the project, “Water Sanitation and Hygiene: A Sustainable Approach based on the Development of Local Management Capacity”.

ACF implemented this project with technical assistance from Mvuramanzi Trust, Pump Aid Zimbabwe and Dabane Trust with great input from the local community and other stakeholders.. The project was also implemented in Chivi and Mberengwa Districts.

The grant was used for the construction and installation of 50 boreholes with elephant pumps and the sinking of eight boreholes in the three districts, directly benefiting approximately 9,500 people. ACF intends to increase access to potable, affordable, properly used and stored water for vulnerable rural communities.

This is the second time that Japan as partnered with ACF to alleviate water shortages in the targeted districts. In February 2009, a similar grant of USD 88 thousand was extended to ACF for the rehabilitation of 55 water points and the flushing of an additional 33 boreholes in Chivi and Mberengwa Districts, benefiting approximately 12,000 people.

A community based management approach has been adopted with a strong hygiene promotion and disease prevention component through the development of local capacity for the sustainable operation and maintenance of facilities through the training and equipping of water point committees to ensure sustainability. Local authorities were very much involved throughout the implementation stage.

The project was co-funded with the European Union. The entire programme is aimed to increase access to safe potable water through the rehabilitation/construction of community water points and to improve access to sanitation facilities like latrines in vulnerable households, schools and clinics. This comes in the wake of the devastating 2008 cholera outbreak which greatly affected the three targeted districts.

Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Ambassador Fukuda commended the partnership of the collaborative nature of the project and stressed the importance of sustainability of the boreholes and community ownership of the facilities.