

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

September 14, 2012

JAPAN SUPPORTS FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS IN CHIPINGE

At a signing ceremony held in Harare today, the Embassy of Japan extended a grant of one hundred and twenty-two thousand, three hundred and seventy-two dollars (USD 122, 372) to Mercy Corps for the implementation of the “Project for Supplying Safe Water and Supporting Training to Improve Cultivation Skills in Chipinge District”.

The Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr Yonezo Fukuda and the Country Director of Mercy Corps, Mr David Brigham, officiated at the ceremony formalising the grant.

The overall objective of the project is to sustainably improve agricultural production and nutrition levels in seven wards in Chipinge District by providing necessary inputs and training in resource management and capacity building. A total of 600 villagers and 2,520 households are expected to benefit through gardening projects and improved access to safe water respectively. Training of Water Management Committees and Village Pump Minders will ensure sustainable management of the resources.

Forty water points will be rehabilitated and an additional two will be newly installed. Ten new nutrition gardens will be established. Food insecurity for the 2012-2013 consumption year is comparatively worse than that in the last three years in some districts, particularly those in the southern regions, including Chipinge. Produce from gardens will not only improve household food security, but excess produce can be sold to local communities and the income generated can be used for school fees and other basic needs.

The community will contribute locally available material and labour while government stakeholders such as the DDF will provide technical support. Beneficiary selection for the garden groups will be based on vulnerability criteria which aims to support people living with HIV/AIDS, the chronically ill, the disabled and OVCs.