Press release

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Strengthening health delivery in disaster prone communities of Zimbabwe

UNOPS and Government of Japan deliver life saving ambulances and testing machine to disaster prone communities in Manicaland province of Zimbabwe

Clement Mhlanga, officer in charge a.i. for UNOPS Zimbabwe (right) looks on as H.E. Ambassador Yamanaka hands over ambulance keys to the Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care Mr. Kwidini @UNOPS/ Munyaradzi Arufaneti

- UNOPS procured and delivered ambulances and equipment for the Ministry of Health and Child Care 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.
Training of technicians and drivers aligns with the UNOPS approach for national capacity building.

The Government of Japan, represented by the Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr Shinichi Yamanaka, today handed over an ambulance to the Minister of Health and Child Care, the Honourable Dr. Douglas Mombeshora. 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, a distance of approximately 180 kilometres. 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 three four-wheel drive vehicles that can manoeuvre the steep and wet roads in Manicaland. Two of the ambulances were handed over in February 2023 to Hauna Hospital in Mutasa District; and Chikore Mission in Chipinge District. Under the same project, Nyanga District Hospital received a GeneXpert PCR machine.
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.

Speaking about the subject, Mr Clement Mhlanga, Officer in Charge a.i. for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Zimbabwe Office said:

“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. 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,”
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About UNOPS

UNOPS mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement in an efficient way. Read more: www.unops.org

In Zimbabwe, UNOPS is helping build the foundations to support the country's development agenda with a focus on sustainability and national capacity development. In close collaboration with the government, UN organizations, non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions, UNOPS manages funds for disaster recovery and implements infrastructure projects with a focus on resilience and building back better communities. Through a range of services as outlined above, UNOPS helps to accelerate the delivery and quality of humanitarian and development projects across the country.