

PRESS RELEASE

Government of Japan Donates \$6 Million to UNICEF Ethiopia for Children Affected by the Global Food Crisis

ADDIS ABABA, 15 April 2009 – The Government of Japan today announced a \$6 million donation to UNICEF Ethiopia for reducing the vulnerability of children to the impact of rising food prices.

This contribution, one of the largest from the Government of Japan to UNICEF Ethiopia, comes as Ethiopia confronts the impact of the global economic crisis. The food price inflation particularly affected the poorest people who do not have enough land to grow all the food they need in this subsistence agriculture dominated economy.

“Rising prices have added to the daily survival challenges faced by vulnerable communities in Ethiopia,” said Kinichi Komano, Ambassador of Japan to Ethiopia. “The Government of Japan recognizes these pressures and is providing this support through UNICEF to help mitigate the effects on the most vulnerable victims, the children.”

The Japanese donation will support:

- 870,000 children living in food insecure districts of Oromia and Amhara Regions through the Ethiopian Ministry of Health’s community-based nutrition interventions.
- Families of eight thousand particularly vulnerable children living in the food insecure districts through social protection programmes providing cash grants and revolving credit to set up small businesses.
- Delivery of basic health services to over half-a-million children through the roll-out of urban health extension programme in Addis Ababa.

“The global economic crisis need to be confronted to maintain the child survival gains achieved in Ethiopia over the past decade,” said Ted Chaiban, UNICEF Representative to Ethiopia. “This support from the Government of Japan will help the country address the risks and ensure that it consolidates and sustains its achievements on behalf of Ethiopia’s children.”

Under-five mortality rate in Ethiopia have gone down over 40 per cent since 1990 and the roll-out of the Government of Ethiopia’s health extension programme, which provides basic preventative health, nutrition and sanitation interventions at the community level, holds promise for continued improvement in child health, provided it is adequately supported.

“UNICEF applauds the Government of Ethiopia for its commitment to improving child health and nutrition, and the Government of Japan for its continued support to this sector in Ethiopia,” said Chaiban. “Children should not be further disadvantaged by the global recession. This donation sets a positive precedent for substantive investments in Ethiopia’s development, particularly during this difficult period of economic crisis which is also affecting Japan.”

The Japanese donation to UNICEF is part of a larger \$13 million allocation for Ethiopia by the Government of Japan to tackle the impact of food price increases and climate change on children.

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