The Government of Japan has announced a generous contribution of USD 1.35 million (approximately 2 billion Rwandan Francs) to support UNICEF Rwanda's efforts in providing essential Health, Nutrition, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services to communities in Rwanda affected by floods, landslides, and the mpox outbreak. This funding will be allocated over the next 12 months to assist vulnerable populations in six border districts of Rwanda.

Rwanda, like many countries, has been severely impacted by the effects of climate change, with rising floods and landslides exacerbating the vulnerability of its communities. In particular, the natural disasters have damaged key infrastructure, including health facilities and water supply systems, leaving thousands at risk of waterborne diseases such as diarrhea and facing ongoing health challenges, including the recent mpox outbreak.

Last year, floods and landslides caused an estimated US\$193.32 million in economic losses and a projected 0.4 percentage point dip in GDP growth, while at least 130 people died in the floods and landslides.

Ms. Min Yuan, UNICEF Rwanda's Country Representative expressed profound gratitude to the Government of Japan for their timely and impactful donation. "We are deeply grateful to the Government of Japan for their generous support of USD 1.35 million towards this programme. This funding will be instrumental in addressing the urgent needs of communities impacted by natural disasters, ensuring they have safe access to essential health and WASH services," she said.

The project will have a significant impact on more than 300,000 people in six border districts in Rwanda's Western Province. These districts have been disproportionately affected by recent floods and landslides, which have led to widespread damage to vital infrastructure. With the funding, UNICEF will work to restore essential services, repair water systems, and provide medical and nutritional support to mitigate the health risks posed by the environmental crisis.

The Embassy of Japan in Rwanda highlighted the importance of the partnership between Japan and UNICEF, emphasizing Japan's commitment to "Human Security," a core principle of its foreign aid philosophy. "Human-centered cooperation and solidarity with various actors are at the heart of this partnership," stated a representative from the Embassy. "Japan highly values the unwavering efforts and

commitment by the Government of Rwanda and UNICEF in addressing urgent humanitarian needs.”

Japan’s involvement in Rwanda’s relief efforts is a continuation of its broader humanitarian and development strategy in Africa, focusing on the well-being and safety of vulnerable communities. The Embassy reiterated Japan’s long-standing support for Rwanda’s efforts to overcome challenges posed by climate change and natural disasters.

The support comes at a time when Rwanda is seeking $451m for post-flood rehabilitation as the impact of climate-related disasters affects the fiscal deficit that rose to nearly 7 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2023/24.