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## Govt pays tribute to volunteers

By Aaron Chiyanzo

Local and international volunteers in Zambia deserve praise for undertaking works without financial gain, says Minister of Community Development and Social Welfare Emerine Kabanshi has advised.

Speaking at a media breakfast meeting organised by the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Lusaka yesterday, Ms Kabanshi commended volunteers all over the world for their remarkable works.

Ms Kabanshi emphasised the need to applaud volunteers as they are usually the first on the ground and the last to leave in emergency relief efforts.

"Volunteers tend not to leave anyone behind, by reaching out to people, especially the marginalised groups in our societies or in hard to reach areas" she said.

Ms Kabanshi also noted that most of the volunteers in the

country came from far away, leaving behind the comfort of their homes to provide services to needy countries.

"My ministry is aware that Zambia receives JICA volunteers almost on a yearly basis who are deployed in various sectors. They are working towards improving livelihoods of rural communities, nutrition, and food security" said Ms Kabanshi.

Ms Kabanshi also pointed out that volunteers are involved in programmes aimed at improvising the literacy levels, health and social protection.

Meanwhile, JICA Resident Representative Hisanao Noda disclosed that JICA is involved in volunteer works through the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program.

"JICA has been working in Zambia since the 1970s and our very first program involved the dispatch of volunteers. Since then, more than 1,400 volunteers have worked at grass root level. I actually started out as a volunteer, he explained.

Mr Noda said that JICA currently has 76 volunteers in Zambia who are serving in various institutions across the country, and urged Zambians to embrace and support volunteers in the work that they do with limited resources available to them.

"These are men and women who come from faraway countries to answer a calling for the need to help others" said Mr Noda.

Mr Noda explained that JICA is a bilateral organisation supplementing Government efforts in enhancing development in various sectors.

He said that the organisation also provides training opportunities in Japan as part of improving human resource skills.



Ms Kabanshi