

## PRESS RELEASE

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Embassy of Japan in Botswana

### **Handing over STBs to Botswana through Japan's grant assistance completed**

The Embassy of Japan in Botswana is proud to announce that all the STBs of 15,000 initially planned to be delivered, have been handed over to the Government of Botswana from the Government of Japan on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

The handover of the STBs follows a decision taken by the Government of Botswana in February 2013, when it announced that it would adopt the Japanese standard for its Digital Terrestrial Television (DTV) to be first broadcast by Botswana Television (BTV). It is notable that Botswana is the first country on the African continent that adopted the Japanese standard for its DTV. Since then, the Botswana Government has been making efforts to shift from analogue broadcasting to DTV and Japan has been assisting Botswana's digital TV transition. After analogue switch-off, there will be vacancy of frequency band, which can be used for 4G, 5G, IoT (Internet of things) etc. in order to shape Botswana as a knowledge-based economy in the future.

Moreover, the Botswana Government has also been working on the utilization of data broad casting. Through data broadcasting services, people can watch real-time traffic news, weather forecast, information on public safety, natural disasters, etc. while watching TV.

Furthermore, another remarkable feature of the Japanese standard DTV is the emergency warning broadcasting system (EWBS) function. With EWBS, an emergency alert goes off and announcement automatically comes out of STB from its built-in speaker even when a TV itself is switched off.

Whilst, recognizing there was a concern that vulnerable people such as persons who are economically underprivileged or those living with disability may have not been able to purchase STBs to access digital TV services, the Government of Japan decided to provide STBs for aforementioned people in Botswana last year.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, the Government of Japan and the Government of Botswana signed the grant aid agreement amounting to 150 million yen (approx. 17 million Pula) for distributing 15,000 STBs (i.e. receivers) for the deployment of DTV in Botswana.

Since then, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> deliveries of STBs were already made from Japan to the Department of Broadcasting Services, the Ministry for Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Service, and approximately 1,700 devices have already been distributed to households in TSABONG, MAUN, GANTSI and KASANE, and with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last dispatch this time, all remaining will be distributed to other families in Botswana by December this year.

It is expected that this cooperation will contribute to mitigating information disparity caused by income inequality, so as to lead to improvement of quality of life in Botswana.

The Ambassador of Japan in Botswana, H.E. HOSHIYAMA Takashi has expressed hope that good relations between Japan and Botswana will be enhanced through Japan's ODA (Official Development Assistance) as well as other forms of cooperation at the time of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

For further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Embassy of Japan in Botswana (Tel: 391-4456).