



**From
the People of Japan**

Japan extends support for the construction of a child helpline call centre at Childline Botswana

Gaborone, 21st May 2025 - The Government of Japan and Childline Botswana today celebrated a significant milestone with the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a child helpline call centre. This initiative underscores the continued commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government of Japan awarded Childline Botswana a grant amounting 85,113 USD through a grant scheme called the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)* for this project. The child helpline call centre will be constructed on the premises of Childline Botswana located in Gaborone.

An investment in child protection interventions such as these is a key step toward building a just and inclusive society where every child can be safe. Childline Botswana has been at the forefront of tackling the escalating child abuse cases in the country, consistently providing critical support and intervention to safeguard children's wellbeing. Despite its crucial role, the organization has operated over the years without a dedicated child help line centre. With the support of the Government of Japan, it will now establish a dedicated call centre. The new facility will feature two call rooms each equipped with an advanced telecommunications system, a meeting room, two offices, kitchen, bathrooms, and a welcoming reception with waiting area.

When delivering his remarks, Mr. Olebile MACHETE, the Executive Secretary for Childline Botswana, stated that the grant came at the right time coinciding with BOCRA's recent designation of 116 as a toll-free emergency contact, significantly expanding Childline's accessibility across the country and an expected substantial increase in reported cases. He said the new facility will enhance their operational efficiency with an anticipated 50% increment in the cases handled. He showed great appreciation for the continued support of the Government of Japan for the new facility and the previously donated Counselling facility in 2011. With the provision of the upgraded facility and technology, Counsellors will be better equipped to address cases in real time and offer timely child protection interventions.

In delivering his keynote speech, H.E. Mr. SHINDO Yusuke, Ambassador of Japan to Botswana, highlighted the significance of the project, stating, "Protecting children from all forms of violence is a fundamental right, as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This inclusion of a specific target (SDG16.2) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development to eliminate violence against children gives a renewed impetus on the global commitment to ensuring that every child can live free from fear, neglect, abuse, and exploitation." In addition, Ambassador SHINDO further underscored the importance of the project in strengthening child protection interventions and

improving support for vulnerable children in Botswana.

In her address, Ms Malebogo MODIAKGOTLA, Head of Child Protection Services at the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, highlighted that Botswana as a signatory to United Nations Convention on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), has domesticated the provisions of these international instruments through the Children's Act of 2009, making child protection a national agenda. She emphasized the need for strong partnership with focus on technical, programmatic, financial, and service delivery reforms to fully support children. Ms Modiakgotla also expressed great appreciation for the continued financial support from the People of Japan in advancing children's agenda in Botswana.

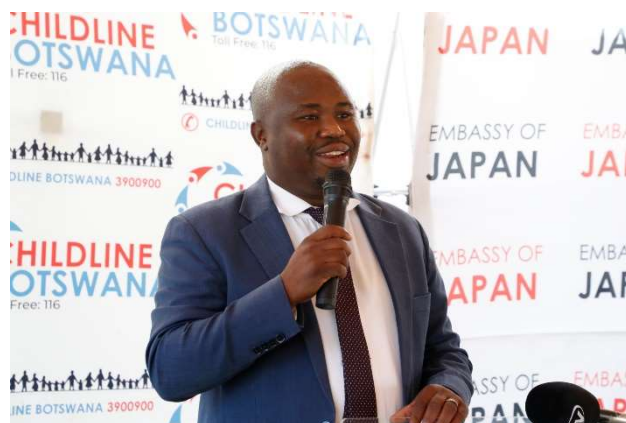
When delivering her remarks, Ms Thapelo MOALUSI, Deputy Director Learner Support Services at the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education, reiterated the growing statistics of child abuse cases stating, "Globally, 1 billion children experience some form of violence each year, and in Botswana, the statistics are sobering – there is a significant increase in cases of rape, defilement, and violence against children." She emphasized the critical role of the Call Centre as a resolute response to crisis on abuse cases serving as a lifeline for children and families across the nation. The Call Centre will ensure effective and swift action to reports of abuse, neglect, and other emergencies.

Through the GGP scheme, Japan has supported more than 60 projects in Botswana that address human security issues. This is in line with the Botswana Government's aspiration, envisaged in Vision 2036, particularly under the pillar of Human and Social Development, to achieve a moral, tolerant, and inclusive society that provides opportunity for all.

*GGP is a grant scheme which supports projects addressing social challenges and/or aiming at community development at grass-roots level and supports people-centred development projects which have a direct and immediate impact on the well-being of disadvantaged communities. These projects include rural developments such as the construction of pre-schools, classrooms for students with disabilities and vocational training institutions.



Remarks by Ambassador Mr. SHINDO



**Remarks by Mr. MACHETE,
Executive Secretary Childline Botswana**



**Remarks by Ms. MODIAKGOTLA,
Head of Child Protection Services, Department
of Social Development, Ministry of Local
Government and Traditional Affairs**



**Remarks by Ms. MOALUSI, Deputy Director
Learner Support Services, Ministry of Child
Welfare and Basic Education**



Groundbreaking attendees



Groundbreaking by Ambassador Mr. SHINDO