



# Press Release

## European Union announces a €13.5 million grant to improve education and nutrition for Zimbabwe's children

**Harare, 21 May, 2013:** The European Union has today announced a €13 million (US\$17 million) grant to the second phase of the Education Transition Fund and an additional €500,000 (USD 640,000) from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) to nutrition activities in the country.

Speaking at a press conference in Harare today, the EU's Head of Delegation in Zimbabwe Ambassador Aldo Dell'Araccia said the contribution was an acknowledgement of the strong partnership that existed between the Government of Zimbabwe and development partners to improve the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans, especially the children.

"This contribution reaffirms our support for the Government's priority to revitalise the education sector and ensure that every Zimbabwean child has access to quality education", he said. "It is also in line with Millennium Development Goal number 2 to ensure that, by 2015, all Zimbabwean boys and girls will be able to complete a full programme of primary education."

Development partners in the Education Transition Fund have pledged US\$123 million to improve the education sector over the next four years through, among several interventions, improving sector planning, providing grants to financially constrained schools to meet their non-salary resource needs, strengthening school monitoring and supervision, improving the quality of teaching and learning, and reviewing the curriculum. Other interventions include providing teaching and learning materials, assessing student learning outcomes, and providing second chance learning opportunities to out-of-school children.

Senator David Coltart, the Minister of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, commended the EU for the contribution.

"The Government of Zimbabwe is extremely grateful for this further generous contribution by the EU towards the Education sector," he said. "Since the establishment of the ETF in 2009 the education sector has been stabilised and is now poised to start improving steadily. Without the generous assistance of the EU to the ETF since 2009 we would not have been able to achieve what we have done. As I have said often before the stabilisation of the education sector goes way beyond simply improving education; happy children in school lead to happy parents and guardians which in turn promotes peace throughout an entire nation. Accordingly, in making this investment the EU is playing a profound and remarkable role in ensuring that the peaceful transition of Zimbabwe to a more democratic and accountable era is supported."

Acting UNICEF Representative to Zimbabwe Gianfranco Rotigliano commended the EU for the contribution, saying it marked yet another milestone in Zimbabwe's efforts to restore the education sector to its former status as the leading educational system on the African continent.

Furthermore, the ECHO contribution to nutrition focuses on 10 high risk districts and will be used to provide high impact nutrition services, support sector coordination, and activate sub-national structures to monitor food and nutrition security issues.

“We would like to express our gratitude for the support received from ECHO,” said Director of the Food and Nutrition Council Mr. George Kembo. “This support will go a long way towards complementing government effort to resuscitate the food and nutrition security committees at provincial and district level. Thus we find such support a good step towards implementing the recently launched food and nutrition security policy, specifically the commitment to enhance national capacity for food and nutrition security.”

The contribution brings to USD 34 million the total EU contribution to the education sector since the launch of the Education Transition Fund in September 2009.

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