



# NEWSLETTER



## Kaizen is coming to life in Zimbabwe's industry!

On 13 May 2026, JICA together with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) conducted a factory visit at Glytime Foods Zimbabwe, not just to see a factory, but to see continuous improvement in action.

After attending the Quality and Productivity Improvement for Enterprise Competitiveness (Basic Kaizen) course in Japan under JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Program, Mr. Lesly Marange, CEO of Glytime Foods, is now actively applying Kaizen principles on the ground showing what is possible when knowledge is turned into action.

JICA recognizes the critical role of the Ministry and CZI in driving the adoption of Kaizen across the industrial sector. Importantly, graduates of the Basic Kaizen training in Japan, like Mr Marange, are now leading by example, translating knowledge into real improvements and championing wider uptake of the Kaizen philosophy within Zimbabwean enterprises.

## ● Team Spotlight

JICA Zimbabwe welcomed the new Resident Representative, Mr. Hiroyuki Takada, to the team in April 2026.

Mr. Takada brings with him a wealth of knowledge, experience, and a deep dedication to advancing development efforts.

He is no stranger to Africa, having previously served as a volunteer in Zambia, led country offices in Botswana and Rwanda, and having contributed his deep expertise within the Africa Department at JICA Headquarters.

As he begins this new chapter in Zimbabwe, we look forward to his leadership, insights, and the positive impact he will bring to our work and partnerships.





## Rice Harvest & Post Harvest Training

Extension Officers from ten irrigation schemes participated in a Harvest & Post Harvest Handling training held at the Department of Research, Education and Specialist Services (DR'ESS). The workshop was facilitated by JICA Rice Expert Dr. Shunsuke Matsumoto, together with researchers from DR'ESS, and attended by Extension Officers from targeted Irrigation Schemes, Researchers and Technicians from three Research Stations.

The training combined classroom sessions and practical field demonstrations to strengthen skills in harvesting, post-harvest handling, milling, and value addition for the harvesting season that was conducted in April.

Looking ahead, the training is a critical step towards improving rice quality, reducing post-harvest losses, and enhancing farmer incomes. By strengthening the skills of frontline Extension Officers, JICA and DR'ESS continue to support sustainable rice production and value addition across irrigation schemes.



**Rice harvest and post harvest training**



**JICA provided rice threshers to ease post-harvest processes**



## 5S-KAIZEN-TQM Project: A Great Success Story

Be inspired by the successful completion of the Project for Quality Improvement of Health Services through the 5S-KAIZEN-TQM Approach (ZIM-QIPS). In this volume, discover how you can sustain the KAIZEN spirit and continue striving for continuous improvement - Getting Better every day!

[https://www.jica.go.jp/oda/project/201902918/en\\_news/newsletter.html](https://www.jica.go.jp/oda/project/201902918/en_news/newsletter.html)



**JICA team at the 2026 ZITF**

JICA showcased its activities at the 2026 ZITF in April, with strong interest shown in the KCCP, JOCV and NERICA programmes, opening the door to future collaborations.



## Introducing Our New JOCVs

Hello everyone!

My name is Chiyoko Kawamura, and I arrived in Zimbabwe in April 2026 as a JICA volunteer.

I am based in Bulawayo, the second-largest city in Zimbabwe, where I work as a Community Development Volunteer, supporting agricultural activities at a nursing home.

In my free time, I enjoy cycling and exploring coffee beans, and I'm especially excited to discover the variety of herbs, beans, and tea leaves available in local markets. Every day has brought new discoveries, for example, recently, I learned that coloured rice, similar to multigrain rice, is sold in the local markets, which I found fascinating. Since sadza (a staple food made from maize) is commonly eaten here, I'm very curious about how rice is used and enjoyed in daily life.

My work goes beyond rice or specific crops - it involves supporting everyday life through agriculture and engaging closely with people's livelihoods. Through these interactions, I hope to deepen my understanding, not only of food culture, but of daily life as a whole, while reflecting on how I can best contribute to the community.

I hope to cherish the connections I make in Zimbabwe during my two-year assignment.

Thank you very much!

**Chiyoko  
Kawamura**



My name is Ayako Okeya. Please call me Aya.

I'm from Hokkaido, Japan, and I previously worked as a Public Health Nurse in Japan. I serve as a Nurse at Victoria Chitepo Provincial Hospital in Mutare.

I'm really looking forward to learning more about Zimbabwe, meeting new people, and making wonderful friends here. I also hope to share my experience while learning a great deal from the local staff.

I'm very happy and grateful to be here in Zimbabwe, and I'm excited about this new journey!

Nice to meet you all!

**Ayako  
Okeya**





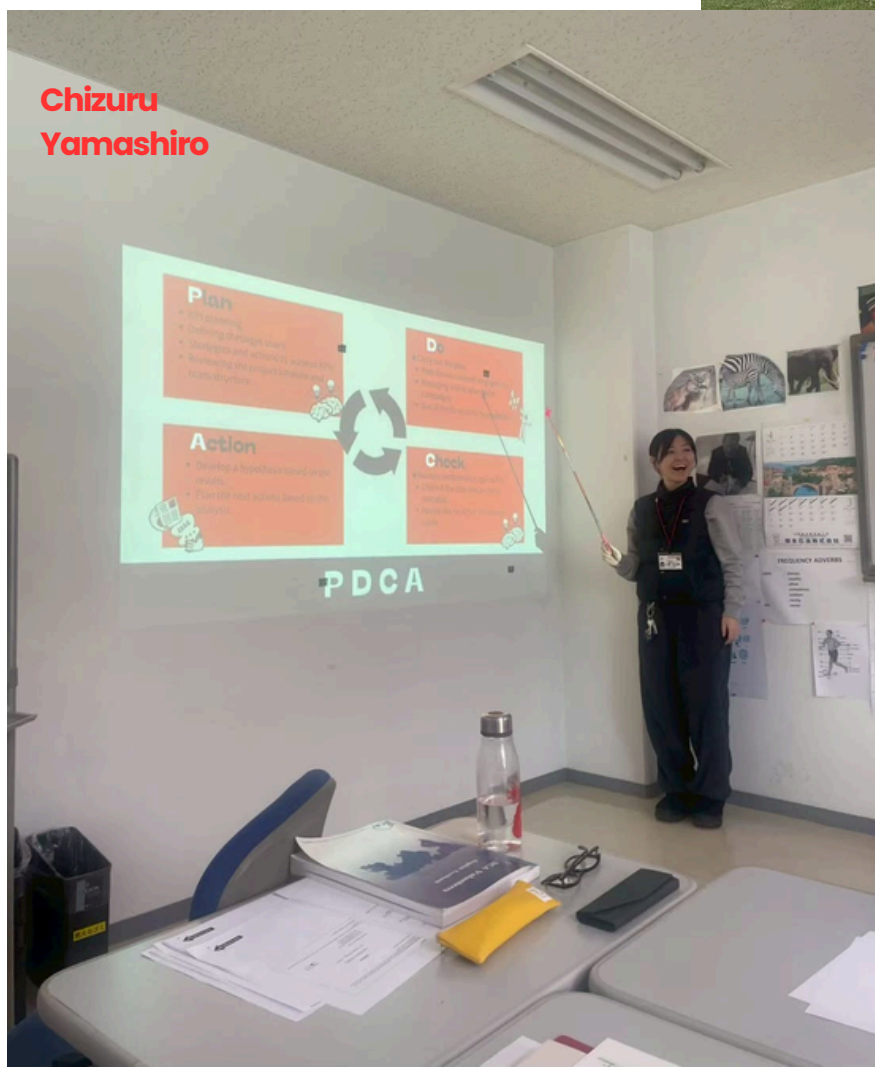
## Introducing Our New JOCVs

Mhoroi! Nice to meet you all!  
My name is Chizuru Yamashiro.  
I am a volunteer at Mutare Polytechnic as a Marketing Officer. My main work focuses on digital marketing, including public relations and sales promotion. I also hope to support digital marketing classes for students and teachers and share practical skills with them.  
Before coming here, I worked at an advertising company as a Web Marketer, where I created content and advertisements for different companies. I look forward to communicating and working together with people at my workplace and in the community.  
I'm also excited to learn more about Zimbabwe's culture, history, food, and nature, and I hope to create value through my activities here.  
I'm very excited to meet you all and begin my new life in Zimbabwe.  
Maita basa!

Hisato  
Yoriki



Chizuru  
Yamashiro



Mhoroi! Hello!  
Ndinonzi Hisato Yoriki. Ndiri Rugby Volunteer. (My name is Hisato Yoriki. I am a Rugby Volunteer.) I applied for the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program as a recent university graduate, and I'm truly honoured to have the opportunity to be involved in rugby here in Zimbabwe, Africa, a sport I have dedicated myself to for many years.  
I hope to learn as much as possible and to grow both personally and professionally, through working together with the local people to address various challenges. Zimbabwe has qualified for the Rugby World Cup 2027 for the first time in 36 years, and the enthusiasm for rugby among local people, is growing. I am very grateful to be assigned here at such an exciting time.  
I will do my very best to further strengthen this momentum by promoting rugby and supporting the development of players in Zimbabwe.  
Thank you very much!



# Digital Transformation Training in Sapporo, Hokkaido – A Truly Transformative Experience!

by **Lillian ZINYEMBA**

ICT Officer

Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion

I had the honour of completing a three-week Digital Transformation (DX) through ICT training programme in Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan, an experience that was both professionally enriching and personally inspiring.

This programme offered powerful insights into Japan's long-term, people-centred approach to digital transformation in the public sector. I learnt that DX is not just about adopting technology; it is about building strong governance frameworks, ensuring institutional readiness, developing human capital, and driving effective change management.

One of the biggest takeaways was that “digital is only a tool - change is the real goal.” Technology alone doesn't transform organisations; hence technology adoption itself is not the objective.

Courage, flexible thinking not bound by conventions, and a culture that does not fear failure are key. Many organisations stall not because they lack tools, but because they fear the effort change demands. Creating environments that tolerate experimentation, failure and learning is crucial, especially since many attempts may not succeed at first. We also explored Japan's own challenges. Local governments often prioritise efficiency, yet there is an urgent need to shift towards value creation, especially in this AI-driven era. The training emphasised that value-creation ability is now more important than digital capability alone. Successful DX requires a clear vision, strong leadership, and consistent policy alignment, especially in areas like smart public services, interoperability, and e-government systems.

## Beyond the classroom

My time in Sapporo allowed me to experience Japan's culture of discipline, efficiency, and continuous improvement. The city demonstrated how digital solutions can coexist beautifully with environmental sustainability and high quality of life. Interacting with participants from 15 different countries added an enriching global dimension, as we shared common challenges related to legacy systems, limited resources and the need for inclusive, citizen-focused digital services.

## Opportunities for Zimbabwe - Japan Cooperation

This training opened my eyes to immense potential for collaboration between Zimbabwe and Japan, especially in public finance management systems; digital government platforms; cybersecurity capacity development; smart city initiatives; and skills transfer and innovation ecosystems.

Japan's phased approach to system modernisation, their standards-based ICT architectures, and their strong public-private partnerships offer valuable lessons Zimbabwe can adapt. Strengthening cooperation through JICA-supported projects and knowledge-exchange programmes could significantly accelerate our national digital transformation agenda. This programme has strengthened my commitment to supporting digital reforms in Zimbabwe's public sector. The lessons from Sapporo will guide my work towards improving service delivery and promoting innovation through technology-driven solutions. I am excited for what comes next!

