

PRESS RELEASE

Completion Ceremony for “The Project for Enhancing Nutritious Conditions of Children and Vulnerable People”

On Wednesday March 25, 2026, His Excellency Dr. UMEZAWA Akima, Ambassador of Japan, attended a completion ceremony for the project “Enhancing Nutritious Conditions of Children and Vulnerable People” at the Wi! Uma Fu Sranan facility in Suriname. The main component of this project was the procurement of agricultural processing equipment. Approximately, \$162, 950 US dollars was provided by the Government of Japan under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGP) scheme.

Present at the event were Her Excellency Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, President of the Republic of Suriname, Mrs. Elizabeth Bradley, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and Cooperation, Mr. Jayant Anilkumar Padarath, Honorary Consul General for Japan, Ms. Tania Lieuw-A-Soe, Chair of the Agriculture Cooperative Wi! Uma Fu Sranan, and various stakeholders.

Ambassador Umezawa began his speech by underscoring the privilege of being present today to celebrate the completion of this project on the commemoration of fifty (50) years of diplomatic relations between Suriname and Japan. Regarding this project, he noted that it was symbolic in embodying the continuous support Japan has put forward in the area of economic cooperation in Suriname. He affirmed his confidence that this project which strengthens female entrepreneurship will continue to support the improvement of viable life and vulnerable people, including children.

Her Excellency Jennifer Geerlings-Simons likewise congratulated both countries on fifty (50) years of diplomatic relations. She recounted her personal experience that Japan has always supported Suriname as a long time ago she was part of project in which Japan supports the youth through knowledge centres in coastal area and still meet people today who has the first experience of using the computers donated by Japan. She expressed her gratitude for both past and present areas of support and looked forward to continuing the relationship with Japan in support of the people of Suriname.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bradley, Permanent Secretary with the portfolio for Cooperation, delivered remarks on behalf of His Excellency Melvin Bouva, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business and Cooperation, who unfortunately was unable to attend. She conveyed her deep appreciation to the women of Wi! Uma Fu Sranan for their tremendous efforts and perseverance and congratulated them on this milestone. Furthermore, she expressed her deep gratitude and thanks to the Government of Japan for their continuous support in Suriname.

Ms. Lieuw-A-Soe, Chair of Wi! Uma Fu Sranan delivered powerful remarks on what it truly meant for her organization to be a recipient of this grant including the impact it has made and

will make on the lives of people in vulnerable communities. At the focal point of this project, a mother will no longer have to choose between what she can afford and what is nutritious. She stated that in agriculture, with women at its core, it is not just a sector but a foundation for food security, resilience, and growth. She expressed her deepest gratitude to the people and Government of Japan, not only for their financial assistance, but for their trust and belief in the vision of Wi! Uma Fu Sranan.

The Government of Japan is committed to its support in agricultural and public welfare initiatives and welcomes further opportunities to work in other areas of interest with the Government and People of Suriname, with a view to strengthening the bonds of mutual understanding which exist between the two countries.



Ambassador UMEZAWA giving his speech



Her Excellency Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, President of the Republic of Suriname giving her speech



Ambassador Umezawa and Her Excellency Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, President of the Republic of Suriname together with specially invited guests listen on at completion ceremony



Ambassador Umezawa and Her Excellency Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, President of the Republic of Suriname together with specially invited guests receive a guided tour and explanation on the usage of the agricultural equipment