

# PRESS STATEMENT

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## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023: #EMBRACEEQUITY

On occasion of International Women's Day 2023, there is much to celebrate and even more to be done still. Running under the global campaign theme #EmbraceEquity, this year's recognition underlines the need to separate equity and equality as the former considers that provision of equal opportunities (equality) is not enough as women are starting off from different places. Equal employment opportunities today disregard the women who were left behind by the education system ten years ago. Following, if we genuinely want to address the fate of women comprehensively, gender EQUITY is a must have! ZIMCodd is particularly concerned with the social, economic, cultural and political barriers to women's equity for which we believe the following actions will address.

**Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery (GRPSD):** Women disproportionately face the burden of poor services such as potable water. They lose significant productive time lining up for water in unsafe environments, exposed to harassment as a result. The Ministry of Local Government must liaise with the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) and ensure adequate dams are constructed for optimum water supply.

**Education:** The Ministry of Education must see to it that the "education for all" concept that has been the hallmark of the Zimbabwean education system is re-ignited and implemented. An inclusive education system must be visible in rural and peri-urban areas with adequate teachers and infrastructure.

**Health Care:** The Ministry of Health must increase its operations and management capacity to ensure viable service of existing equipment and infrastructure, offer competitive remuneration and establish primary health care services that are gender sensitive with working maternal healthcare systems. The Ministry of Finance should also ensure that adequate resources are availed.

**Civil Amenities:** Local authorities must prioritise servicing civic amenities such as public toilets, community halls, community grounds etc. as they enable women's community-based groups to utilise them and help each other in their capacity building activities.

**Employment:** Zimbabwe has set groundwork for inclusive participation in digital employment and development for women through implementation of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program that has quickly gained traction. More resources should be availed to ensure the program is able to capture as many young girls as possible.

**Politically conducive environment:** There is need for safe spaces for women's participation in politics as threats of violence, for example, cause apathy from political processes. Political violence amounts to systemic & structural exclusion!

**Guarantee and protect women's property rights:** The Constitution already recognizes and protects women's rights. Respecting rule of law and adherence to constitutional provisions is a step towards social, economic and political emancipation of women, especially land rights.

**Curbing gendered corruption:** Anti-Corruption institutions should do more against sextortion and related gendered offenses against women.

With the above addressed, young girls and women's potential will be harnessed for not only their development but for the development of the country as well! Only then can we #EmbraceEquity.