



THE WEEKEND READER

"Your Weekly Read on Debt, Development & Socio-Economic Justice"

A Call for Food Security and Poverty Eradication in Zimbabwe on International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

World Food Day (October 16) and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (October 17) are recognised in Zimbabwe at a time when the country faces critical challenges that expose the deep link between hunger and poverty. These global observances serve as a reminder of the need for urgent, sustained action to ensure food security and poverty alleviation, especially in light of the country's persistent droughts and economic instability.

Zimbabwe has long struggled with the devastating impacts of drought, and the situation is expected to worsen as the El Niño weather phenomenon brings erratic rainfall patterns and prolonged dry spells. In response to these developments, President Emmerson Mnangagwa recently declared hunger a pressing national issue, estimating that almost US\$2 billion will be needed to address food insecurity and provide relief to those affected by the drought. This declaration shows the seriousness of the situation, with more than 5 million people projected to face food insecurity by the end of the year.

The El Niño effect, which has severely affected Southern Africa, is already causing crop failures, particularly in rural areas where communities rely heavily on subsistence farming. With agricultural output expected to decline, food shortages are anticipated increasing the vulnerability of the country's poorest households.

The Zimbabwean government in collaboration with international partners has implemented several drought relief measures including food aid distribution and financial support for affected communities. These interventions are critical for addressing immediate food shortages. However, such short-term measures do not address the structural issues that perpetuate food insecurity.

The country requires a comprehensive strategy that not only provides relief but also strengthens the agricultural sector's resilience to future climate shocks. ZIMCODD continues to advocate for agricultural policies that focus on sustainable practices, climate-smart technologies and equitable resource distribution to ensure that food insecurity does not remain a cyclical issue.

Zimbabwe's high poverty levels, particularly in rural areas, are inextricably linked to food insecurity. A significant portion of the population relies on agriculture for both food and income, making them highly vulnerable to the effects of drought. Inflation and rising food prices have further exacerbated this vulnerability, making it increasingly difficult for families to afford basic food staples. The World Bank reports that nearly 40% of Zimbabwe's population is living in extreme poverty.

ZIMCODD has consistently emphasized the need to address the root causes of poverty in order to effectively tackle food insecurity. We also call for debt relief, arguing that Zimbabwe's debt burden severely limits her ability to invest in agriculture, social services, and other critical sectors that could help reduce both hunger and poverty.

Recommendations for Ensuring Food Security in Zimbabwe

- **Investment in Climate-Resilient Agriculture:** Zimbabwe must prioritize investment in climate-smart agriculture to adapt to changing weather patterns. This includes promoting the use of drought-resistant crops, conservation agriculture techniques and irrigation systems that reduce dependence on erratic rainfall.
- **Diversification of Food Sources:** There is an urgent need to diversify food production in Zimbabwe. ZIMCODD recommends promoting the cultivation of small grains such as sorghum and millet which are more drought-tolerant than maize. Diversification would make the country less susceptible to food shortages caused by climate change.
- **Social Protection Programs:** Expanding social safety nets such as cash transfers and food-for-work programs, can help cushion vulnerable populations from the worst effects of hunger. These programs provide immediate relief while also enabling communities to build resilience to future shocks.
- **Debt Relief and Economic Reforms:** ZIMCODD continues to advocate for debt relief as a means of freeing up resources for food security initiatives. With Zimbabwe's standing at over US\$21 billion, the country is constrained in its ability to finance long-term solutions to hunger and poverty.
- **Strengthening Local Food Systems:** Building resilient local food systems is essential for achieving long-term food security. This includes promoting value addition in agriculture, improving access to markets for smallholder farmers and supporting community-based cooperatives. These measures would create jobs, increase household incomes and reduce poverty in rural areas.

Opportunities

- **Internship Program || Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe (TSCZ):** <https://vacancybox.co.zw/job/internship-program-traffic-safety-council-of-zimbabwe-tscz/>
- **Internal Control Assistant:** https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=sDQ_pZ2QfUac_GGXQMoHUUuLkJQtR9JjdmDECZJzXFUNjFNMEiMWjIMNUpCTjVEMEFEVVAwMjAzQi4u&route=shorturl
- **Head of Programs || Plan International:** <https://jobs.plan-international.org/job/Harare-Head-of-Programs/1132300001/>
- **Consultant to Develop the National Strategy for Women in Energy and Gender Equality:** https://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?cur_job_id=117433
- **WASH Specialist (Resilience) (NO3) Harare, Zimbabwe#68709, Fixed Term, (Open to Zimbabwe Nationals Only):** <https://www.unicef.org/careers/vacancies/template>



Are you passionate about Social & Economic Justice?
Do you believe in the movement for equality?

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Become a registered member of ZIMCODD today: <https://rb.gy/ewz45>

Join our Bulk SMS blast & Mailing List by sending us your email address & phone number to stay caught up on our activities, weekly & monthly reading resources on the Social & Economic justice movement.



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#Youth4Integrity pledge

Are you a member of the youth (18-35 years) with a passion for fighting social and economic injustice? Do you want to join the action for Integrity? Do You want to become an Integrity Icon? If your answer to any of these questions is yes, take the pledge today: <https://rb.gy/90gzgx>

Watch Episode 5 of our #Youth4Integrity Podcast: <https://youtu.be/rg3bOWjkySs>

Quote of the week: Jacques Diouf

"Hunger is not an issue of charity. It is an issue of justice!"



Picture of the week: Climate Activists hold a vigil while advocating for Climate Justice & acknowledging the immediate need for Debt Justice.