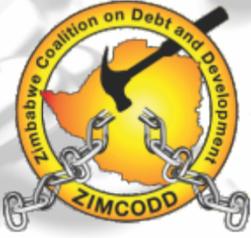


# BREAKFREE



The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development Newsletter

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2015 2nd edition

Investing in people for social and economic justice in Zimbabwe



Ill-defined legislation to reap off the poor. Page 2



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## Informal sector petitions Harare City Council to stop evictions

Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) in collaboration with the Southern Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) convened an Informal Sector Dialogue meeting on 8 of July 2015 to create platforms of engagement between vendor organisations, government, city council officials and the general populace. The meeting aimed to enhance understanding of the dynamics and complexities in the informal sector and also create dialogue on stakeholder responsibilities in addressing challenges in the sector.

At least 22 vendor affiliate organisations that participated in the dialogue meeting raised their concerns regarding the on-going relocation of vendors describing the process as retrogressive to their only source of livelihood for most Zimbabweans. The vendors

highlighted that the proposed designated places lacked suitable amenities and infrastructure to facilitate viable operation.

The meeting resolved to petition the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and Local Housing, Saviour Kasukuwere, Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Sithembiso Nyoni, Harare Municipality and the Office of the President and Cabinet to urgently convene dialogue and consultations with the informal sector especially on vendors' evictions among other issues. The petition pointed out that the evictions and harassment targeting vendors contravene Sections 64 and 68 of the country's Constitution that gives everyone the Freedom of Profession, Trade or Occupation.

Part of the petition reads: "Evictions are being carried out without progressive consultations



Participants at the informal sector dialogue meeting

with representatives of the more than 5, 2 million people who are in the now dominant informal sector and other key stakeholders.

"The designated areas for trading are currently not enough and have no market value and no supporting infrastructure such as toilets and clean potable water," goes the petition.

The vendors associations urged Government to halt the forced evictions and challenged local authorities to

develop appropriate infrastructure in the form of toilets, running water and waste bins at designated trading spaces. They also highlighted the need for the formulation of an all stakeholders negotiating forum, which will encompass local authorities, vendors, traders, civil society and the business community to map the way forward for a positive and developmental lasting solution to the crisis.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- According to the World Bank's website (<http://www.worldbank.org/>), World Bank Group (WBG) assistance to Zimbabwe totalled \$1.6 billion between 1980 and 2000. Since 2000, direct lending was suspended on account of need for payment of arrears.
- According Zimbabwe Equity Strategy 2015 published by IH Securities, The retail sector (inclusive of food, clothing and lifestyle) was hardest hit with our retail index returning - 43% in 2014 compared to 48% in 2013.
- According to the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and IH estimates Cotton production in 2014 remained depressed at 140k tonnes, 2.1% below output levels achieved in 2013. In a bid to relieve the industry and aid value creation, Government has pledged \$9.5mn towards inputs for 300k cotton farmers for the 2014/15 growing season.
- According to the Zimbabwe Economic Society, Zimbabwe's external debt has continued to outgrow exports as shown by the external debt to export ratio which increased from 168% in 2000 to 380% in 2009 declining to 225% in 2013 and 200% by 2014. The high external debt to export ratio is of great concern because of its negative effects on investment and savings.
- A 2013 Finscope survey indicate that 2, 8 million micro small and medium business, 85% of which are unregistered have created 5, 7 million informal jobs and the trend is increasing.
- According to the Retrenchment Board, 3 881 workers lost their jobs in 2014 with the last quarter recording 1038 cuts ,2 367 workers were retrenched in 2013. A total of 13 647 were retrenched between 2011 and September 2014 (Fingaz, April 2015)

## A natural resource forum formed in Gwanda

Gwanda Small Scale Miners (SSMs) have called on the government to adhere to the economic blueprint, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social and Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) that seek to provide funds and strengthen SSMs and cooperatives and make them viable tools for poverty eradication.

Residents attending a meeting organised by ZIMCODD on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May expressed these

sentiments. The meeting sought to raise awareness on the social and economic rights and opportunities for the SSMs as noted in the economic blueprint, ZIMASSET.

The failure by the government to provide loans and deliver on its promises saw the SSMs finally taking it upon themselves to form a natural resource committee whose role hinges on providing a voice to the artisanal miners and forging a way forward to

improve livelihoods of the community.

"Associations in Gwanda have been there for a while now but there has been little or no progress in addressing the challenges being faced by the artisanal miners. Building up one committee comprising different associations will enable us to work collectively in demanding transparency and accountability in natural resource governance. With

one voice we can engage stakeholders and dialogue with the relevant government departments," said one of the committee members.

In its quest to raise awareness on social and economic justice, ZIMCODD roped in the Gwanda community in August 2014 and the engagement with the artisanal miners has been a continuous process.

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# Ill-defined legislation to reap off the poor



Participants during the Public Hearing on the Public Debt Management Bill



ZIMCODD SEJA, Masimba Manyanya expressing his sentiments over the debt assumption bill during the debt assumption bill public hearing.

public debt and debts and obligations whose payment or repayment is guaranteed by the State. In that regard the passage of the RBZ Bill without proper governing mechanisms around state borrowing is like putting the cart in front of the horse. Currently, there is no guarantee that a repeat of the RBZ unlimited borrowing and expenditure is somewhat prevented. Therefore, it is critical in the spirit of accountability and transparency for Parliament to fulfil constitutional requirements and set the bedrock for sound public financial management for the benefit of all Zimbabweans.

disregard voices of the same people who elected them into Parliament to represent and protect their interests.

Despite the Bill having been passed, ZIMCODD resonates with what the people of Zimbabwe said during the consultative meetings and recommends that the Government institutes an all-inclusive and independent public debt audit (instead of validation and reconciliation mentioned in the RBZ Bill). The audit should bring to the surface how each debt was accrued and used, the exact amounts owed and the impact of the debt assumption on the social and economic development of Zimbabwe.

The passivity of some members of Parliament as exhibited by the lack of open and democratic discussions around the RBZ Debt Assumption Bill is of major concern. The debate witnessed in Parliament since the 13th of June 2014 when Government gazetted the Bill hinged more on political patronage than economic objectivity. It is worrisome that Members of Parliament

Individuals and institutions who privately benefitted from the RBZ's quasi fiscal activities should be made public and pay their debts. There is also need for a sustainable and holistic approach to domestic and external debt management in Zimbabwe, the RBZ debt must not be treated in isolation from national public and publicly guaranteed debt.

ZIMCODD observes with regret the passage in the House of Assembly of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Debt Assumption Bill on the 12th of May 2015. The RBZ Debt Assumption Bill sailed through despite the public of Zimbabwe raising objections against it during the public consultations conducted by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Finance and Economic Development between the 15th and 18th of September 2014.

The Government gazetted the Bill on the 13th of June 2014 whose purpose is to transfer the RBZ's US\$1.3 billion debt to the Government. The debt was incurred by the RBZ in the period ending 31 December, 2011. Since the Bill was gazetted in 2014, ZIMCODD has been actively involved, voicing its objection to the proposed takeover, raising public awareness and participation through various avenues such as press releases, position statements, public meetings, radio programmes, petition to parliament and constant updates. Throughout the year ZIMCODD affirmed

its position and campaigned against the Bill especially in its current form.

It is disheartening to note that the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Debt Assumption Bill has heaped the debt burden on ordinary Zimbabweans who are already heavily saddled with a huge domestic and external debt which currently stands at about US \$10 billion. In as much as domestic debt can be beneficial as argued by proponents of the RBZ Bill, enormous domestic debt may have negative effect on financial stability. Comparative studies by the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) on Domestic Debt Management in Senegal revealed that domestic debt crowds out private investments, affects the level of interest rates as they make borrowing expensive.

Interestingly even before the RBZ Bill had been gazetted into law, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development through the RBZ had already started

issuing treasury bonds worth US \$103 million to pay off some of the RBZ Debts. ZIMCODD reiterates that servicing of these debts absorbs a significant amount of government resources, which could be used for social services delivery. For example from the US\$1, 3 billion RBZ Debt, every Zimbabwean will shoulder an average of \$104 yet current budget expenditure on health equates to an average of \$23 per individual annually.

Other concerns also include the need to practice the principles of public financial management in terms of the provisions of Section 298(1)(f) of the 2013 Zimbabwean Constitution, which states that; "public borrowing and all transactions involving the national debt must be carried out transparently and in the best interests of Zimbabwe." These concerns have not been fully addressed before the RBZ Debt Assumption Bill was passed, for example information around how the debt was accrued and how the money was expended was not

adequately availed to the Public. The debt schedule published by the Ministry of Finance only showed how much the RBZ owes and no information was availed as to who and how much is owed to the RBZ. Furthermore, current information availed just present the RBZ as a debt ridden institution while there is complete silence and secrecy on its Assets.

Section 300 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe requires Parliament to enact a law that sets limits on borrowings by the State, the



Participants follow proceedings during the ZIMCODD Debt Assumption Bill Public Hearing

## ZIMCODD High Schools Debates initiative credited

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) has been credited for its High Schools Debate and Public Speaking initiative. Addressing an audience comprising students, teachers, ZIMCODD members and staff in Harare who gathered for the Regional High Schools Debates held at Queen Elizabeth High School on Saturday the 4th of July, Sharon Ndlovu a Queen Elizabeth High School student who has participated in the debates since 2011 said the platform has moulded her to critically evaluate issues of social and economic justice. "I started participating in ZIMCODD's organized debates in 2011. Before the organisation initiated these debates I was debating trivial issues like if having a cat is better than having a dog, but now I have an enhanced introspection, developed a



Sharon Ndlovu giving a presentation during the High schools debates

ruthless surge to critically evaluate issues I have never evaluated before. I now know that debate is more than proving yourself right over the next person. Debate is about knowing the pros and cons of issues that affect our everyday lives", added Sharon.

The 2015 edition of the debates saw nine schools that include Cranborne Boys

High School, Queen Elizabeth, Hatfield Girls High, Allan Wilson School, Churchil Boys High, Kambuzuma High 1, Dzivarasekwa High 2, Herentals College and Mbare High School participating. The debate session was opened by the junior debaters drawn from Queen Elizabeth

*Continued on Page 3*

## The failed bid to take over Maleme Shalom farm

By Portia Ndlovu

A bid by an official in the President's office to take over Maleme Shalom Farm in Matabeleland South hit a snag after the villagers wholly rejected the move. In February this year a district official from the President's Office, is said to have been allocated Maleme Farm where he allegedly chased away villagers who resided there.

According to information gathered he wanted to modify the buildings into a private lodge but unfortunately his actions met stiff resistance from the Matobo community, which could not allow the farm take over, as it is benefitting at least 800 families. Chiefs Nyangazonke, Masuku and Mathema and some headmen lobbied against the farm's occupation.

Vice-President Ambassador Phelekezela Mphoko's ordering of the CIO agent to vacate the farm was met with



Vice President Ambassador Phelekezela Mphoko

great joy by villagers most of whom run projects and have houses at the Shalom Campsite and Ebenezer Agricultural Training Centre that also provides agricultural lessons for young orphans.

The Maleme issue had raised widespread community action across Matabeleland South with activists saying the state was deliberately allocating pieces of land without consulting them.

Maleme Shalom Farm is located in Matabeleland South Province in the Matobo district. Ebenezer College is a training institute for orphans and less privileged children from various orphanages, mainly in Ethandweni and Sikhethimpilo, which provides training and employment for more than 60 people and 80 chicken farmers who are working with farmers in poultry out grower schemes who are given portions of land where they can also grow crops.

# Matobo, most significant story of change

ZIMCODD work in Matobo began in November 2013 and an assembly was officially formed in June 2014. The assembly represents Small-scale Crop and Vegetable farmers in the District who also are members of ZIMCODD. In these past two years, ZIMCODD has managed to provide training on thematic areas covering development effectiveness, tax justice, trade and rural livelihoods, social and economic rights and social movement building among others. Small Scale Crop and Vegetable farmers in Matobo district have benefited vastly from the training and they have managed to use the information, which they have acquired to challenge unjust practices that infringe on their social and economic rights. A lot of developments have taken place in the district leaving the community empowered and fully aware of their rights. Prior to the program, Small-scale Crop and Vegetable farmers were marginalised and did not have adequate information on how to address issues concerning their communities. Farmers were facing challenges in acquiring seeds and fertilizers, as they were distributed along partisan lines and when it came to acquiring loans, they did not have adequate information on what was exactly needed and could not challenge unfair practices owing to limited knowledge and skills on how to approach the relevant stakeholders. Farmers have been receiving training on ZIMASSET and its provisions on Small-scale Farming, Social and Economic



First crop of SEJAs trained in Matobo

Rights, constitutional and legal provisions and the impact of public economic policies on their livelihoods. From the training, farmers got empowered and can now approach stakeholders demanding accountability. The training has enabled farmers to stand boldly and demand transparency when it comes to allocation of resources. ZIMCODD Social and Economic Justice Ambassadors [SEJAs] were proudly part of the Matobo residents who were able to stop the occupation of the Maleme Shalom Farm in February. It cannot go unnoticed that farmers have benefited vastly from the training and now fully aware

of the available resources provided by the government for small-scale farmers. They have gained knowledge on what is needed and what is expected of them on issues regarding the law. Farmers in Matobo are now fully empowered and are taking a step in the right direction as they engage policy makers and are also able to pool resources to improve their livelihoods. These are some of the challenges that have been addressed: In previous meetings, farmers from Antelope Irrigation had raised concern over issues of cattle from ARDA straying into their farms. The farmers were able to call for a meeting with ARDA officials and the issue was resolved with ARDA

finding alternative grazing land for their cattle. This shows progress on the part of the farmers in terms of empowerment because they took the initiative to go and have a dialogue with the relevant authorities. With the above information, one can gladly say ZIMCODD programmes in Matobo have brought about a significant change in the lives of small-scale farmers. Farmers in Matobo are now fully empowered not only on social and economic rights but also on how to make the best out of the resources they have. Members are now able to teach other farmers from the community on issues of social and economic rights.

## OPEN LETTER TO AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTILATERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SOVEREIGN DEBT RESTRUCTURING PROCESSES

Honourable Ministers

(Governments of Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe)

In the last 30 years, many Sub Saharan African countries were forced to accept severe economic and social consequences as a result of protracted sovereign debt crises, due to the unfair and inefficient creditor-dominated regimes. Sovereign debt crises are an inherent element of the modern global economy. Thus, no debt crisis will ever be the last one in history and we are not immune. In Sub Sahara Africa, we observe that external debt stocks are rising. In some countries, debt indicators have already reached critical levels again. In case of new debt crises, there is still no mechanism that can deal with a crisis in a fair, fast and efficient manner. This gaping hole in the international financial architecture comes at the cost of our children's prospects.

We, the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) welcome that your government voted in favour of the resolution "Towards the Establishment of a Multilateral Legal Framework for Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes" in the United Nations General Assembly (A/68/L.57/Rev.2). We therefore highly appreciate that you support this process for reform just as you voted on the 9th of September 2014. The global economy urgently needs a framework to overcome such crises whenever and wherever they arise.

We want to encourage you to constructively engage in the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations on establishing the multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes during the sixty-ninth session of the UN General Assembly. The details of the modalities have been made concrete already in the resolution on the modalities of the process (A/C.2/69/L.4/Rev.1). We are convinced that the UN General Assembly process to create a multilateral legal framework is a historic chance for developing countries to change "the rules of the game".

The modalities explicitly provide that civil society shall be consulted as well in the process. We therefore kindly ask that on behalf of your country, you actively contribute to the intergovernmental negotiations with own proposals after consultation with civil society, so that our catastrophic debt history will never be repeated. We stand ready for dialogue and support you in your efforts as much as we can.

The development of a framework is a matter of justice and it must not be delayed any further.

For further information contact



AFRICAN FORUM AND NETWORK ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT

Securing Sustainable Solutions to the African Debt and Development Crises

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## ZIMCODD High Schools Debates initiative credited

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and Westridge School debating on the topic: This house believes that the country has enough resources for national development, Westridge School debate team expressed the issue that the country is endowed with vast mineral deposits that if properly explored and the generated revenue properly managed, national development can be achieved. "The revenues from these resources should form the basis of state funding for social and economic needs. Zimbabwe is failing to benefit from the natural resources it possesses as a result of policy inconsistencies, limited technology and corruption", said Nadia Mutisi who grabbed the medal for being the best speaker in the team. The students added that there is need for value addition and beneficiation so that the mining industry can create jobs for the indigenous people with the country earning more

from the sale of precious stones. The issue of prepaid water meters which the Harare City Council has proposed to install was not spared. Debating on the topic, "This house believes that the Harare City Council should not enforce pre-paid water meters as this is a potential violation of the constitutional right to water". Hatfield Girls High team stated that water is a constitutional right whose privatisation would widen inequality between the rich and the poor. They also called on the Harare City Council to repair burst water pipes and ensure that residents have access to water before they embark on installing pre-paid water meters. Churchill Boys High team which was in the non-affirmative side said the residents must ensure that they use water responsibly and proposed that water meters were a noble idea, a point which was vehemently denied by those in the



Hatfield Girls High School team walked away with the first prize trophy

affirmative side. Hatfield Girls High School team was the overall winner of the debates followed by Kambuzuma High with Allan Wilson occupying the third position. The winners walked away with trophies and medals. ZIMCODD Students' Debate and Public Speaking Gala was initiated in 2010 and focuses on pertinent issues of local, national and regional importance and encourages

students in high school and tertiary institutions to research and articulate issues on public policy, social and economic justice, tax and trade justice as well as sustainable development and livelihoods in the wider society. The event has since been developed to a national gala which continues to incorporate more schools from Matabeleland South, Bulawayo, Manicaland and Harare.

# Backyard rabbit farming



The rabbit-raising business is adaptable in any location. Many owners use sheds, backyards, and old barns as sites for rabbit warrens.

Breed	Size	Use	Mature Weight (kg)
Angora	Medium	wool; meat	4 - 5.5
American Chinchilla	medium	fur	4 - 5.5
Californian	medium	meat	3.6 - 5
Champagne d'Argent	medium	meat	4 - 5.5
Checkered Giants	large	fur	5+
Dutch	small	lab	1.4 - 2.7
English Spot	medium	meat; lab	4 - 6
Flemish Giants	large	meat	6+
Himalayan	small	lab	1 - 2.7
New Zealand	medium	meat	4 - 5.5
Polish	small	lab	1.4 - 1.8
Rex	medium	fur	3.6 - 5
Silver Martens	medium	fur	2.7 - 4.5

Table 1: Common rabbit breeds produce in Zimbabwe

With the worsening economic situation in Zimbabwe, some people have resorted to backyard rabbit farming, which is considered the cheapest way of earning huge profits.

There is no commercial or large-scale production of rabbits in Zimbabwe, as the activity is mostly done on a small-scale at household level. Rabbits can be raised for their meat, wool, fur and even for laboratory experiments.

Raising rabbits for meat presents many advantages through the relatively low overlay costs and the animals' high reproduction rates. Unlike many other types of farming, rabbit production does not require vast tracts of land. The meat is tasty, good in quality and similar to chicken meat. The quantity of meat from a single rabbit is enough for a small party or a family dish compared to the size of a chicken.

Starting a rabbit farm takes careful planning. The rabbit 'business' one does not need a large initial investment. A few does (females) with a ram or buck (male) are enough for a start and once the kindling begins, the herd rapidly increases in size (if done well) and in no time, one can slaughter young males. Because the does produce offspring regularly they form a regular source of income instead of a large amount at once.

Many breeds of rabbits are produced communally in this country. Some of the most popular breeds are listed in table 1.

Rabbits are classified according to their weight or hair. The weight categories are small (1.4 to 1.8 kilogrammes), medium (4 to 5.5 kilogrammes), and large (6.4 to 7.3 kilogrammes). For meat production, medium-weight New Zealand Whites are best, followed by Californians. Angora rabbits are the only breed used for wool production. They produce 20.3 to 25.4 centimetres, or 0.35 to 0.45 kilogrammes, of wool per year. The most important factors for maintaining a healthy rabbit herd are cleanliness, good ventilation, close observation, and protection from sun and rain.

Rabbits require little quantities of water and minimum feeding, as they can eat a variety of foods. They are monogastric (single stomach), herbivorous (eat plant material) animals. Proper feeding will influence the rabbit's growth, fertility and health. Some foodstuffs contain a lot of protein (especially fresh greens), some are sources of energy (like ricebran, tubers and so forth). Both protein and energy, as well as minerals are important.

Rabbits also feed on forage such as roadside grass, kitchen offal, leftover food, garden leaves and many others, thus their feeds can be prepared from many readily available ingredients. Supplementation with concentrate or grain is sometimes necessary and will definitely increase growth rates. Forage should be kept off the cage floor by tying it together in bunches and hanging it from the ceiling or wall of the cage. This prevents the food from contamination by urine and droppings. Wet forage could lead to diarrhoea and even death. If forage is wet when harvested, it should be allowed to dry for a few hours first before it is fed to the rabbits. Watch out for possible poisoning, for instance, from cassava leaves or other plants.

Rabbits also enjoy receiving small amounts of greens as a treat and need clean water at least twice a day. A doe and her litter need about 3.8 litres of water a day in warm weather. Containers for water and food should be clean. One needs to make sure the rabbits are well protected from natural enemies like cats, dogs, large birds, snakes and humans- and with all this in place, you are good to go.

## Simukai Rural Residents Trust (Goromonzi, Zimbabwe) - OBITUARY



**John Kotwane MUKWESHA,**  
1945-2015

John Kotwane Mukwasha, first Chairman of Simukai Rural Residents Trust, passed away in a Harare hospital on 13th February 2015. With his passing away, Goromonzi, and certainly the nation at large, was robbed of an activist par-excellence.

Mukwasha, stood head and shoulders above all when he addressed the ZIMCODD's Zimbabwe Social Forum in 2013, where he called for social and economic justice at the 2014 SADC People's Summit in Bulawayo. He spoke on the evils of displacement of poor rural people through irresponsible Government policies, and particularly when he tackled the Goromonzi Rural District Council on issues of uncertainties surrounding rural residents in Chinyika communal lands, in the wake of the District Council's controversial 7 kilometre urbanization plan.

Mukwasha insisted Simukai would never be a political organization, as it remained focused on policies. He argued that violence was an enemy of development, just as Simukai's priorities focus on dialogue and people participation ('nothing for us without us'). Those who knew him well will surely miss his quiet smile and gentle demeanor. A loving family man, in his life John Mukwasha worked in different capacities as a teacher, a radio announcer, and in the District Administrator's office in Goromonzi. In his own words, politics must never be an opportunity to instill fear in the lives of other people, or an excuse to create enemies. Instead, it should be an opportunity to create hope in the lives of others, particularly the poor. John is also missed by fellow worshippers at the United Methodist Church, members of Simukai Rural Residents Trust, and the Goromonzi community at large.