



THE WEEKEND READER

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

IMPACT STORY: #SIYA INTEGRITY ICONS DEMAND SERVICE DELIVERY

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt & Development (ZIMCODD) is engaged in a project titled Strengthening Institutions and Youth Agency in Zimbabwe's Accountability Narratives (#SIYA). This action strengthens the capacity of young people and sub-national level institutions to improve good governance and integrity. Instead of 'fighting corruption', let's cultivate a culture of integrity, honesty and hard work amongst our youth who become Integrity Icons. Below, we profile one of our Integrity icons.

My name is Comfort Chirombe and I am a young person passionate about development and adequate service delivery. I firmly believe in the values of integrity and have a strong appreciation for human rights. My journey toward advocacy began when I was introduced to the #SIYA project by the Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) in partnership with ZIMCODD. This initiative has significantly transformed my mindset regarding engagement and participation in national processes.



#Youth4Integrity

The Challenge

In our community, a troubling practice known as "gap filling" has emerged, where local authorities allocate stands in undesignated and hazardous areas. This practice poses risks to personal liberty and the rights of children, as it often leads to unsafe living conditions. For instance, in Ward 2 of the City of Mutare, a stand was allocated to a businessman who constructed a shop in a dangerous blind spot, jeopardizing the safe movement of residents and creating potential hazards that could result in serious accidents.

Advocacy in Action

During a feedback meeting, we, the Integrity Icons, engaged the ward councilor about the allocation of this problematic stand. We asked, "Who allocated a stand in such a dangerous spot?" The councilor responded that he would consult with the management of the local authority to provide answers. Inspired by the training we received through the #SIYA project, we pushed for a formal inquiry into the matter. Our engagement led to a meeting with the local authority's management, where we sought clarity on how the corner shop was established. This inquiry was fruitful, and it was acknowledged that investigations would be conducted to determine the circumstances surrounding the allocation of the stand and to identify those responsible.

The Broader Impact

The random allocation of stands in high-density suburbs has far-reaching consequences. It has resulted in the installation of stands in unsuitable locations such as wetlands and recreational areas. This situation breeds illegal settlements, fueled by frustration among residents who have paid for these services but find themselves displaced or at risk. A notable example is the illegal settlement known as "board slam," established in the flyover area of the National Railway of Zimbabwe. Shelter is a fundamental human right enshrined in our national laws. However, no right is absolute, and achieving national development requires a balance of integrity and professionalism in our city planning and governance. The ongoing challenges highlight the need for accountability and responsible decision-making in the allocation of resources.

Conclusion

Through #SIYA and our collective efforts as Integrity Icons, we are fostering a culture of accountability and advocating for the protection of human rights within our community. Our experiences underscore the importance of youth engagement in local governance and the necessity of maintaining integrity in our actions. As we continue to advocate for improved service delivery, we strive to ensure that the rights of all citizens are respected and that our community develops in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Together, we can build a future where every individual has access to safe and dignified living conditions!

#SIYA is made possible by the generous support of the American people through United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Zimbabwe. The contents are the responsibility of ZIMCODD and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Opportunities

- Grant Accountant <https://zimcodd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Vacancy-Alert-Grant-Accountant.pdf>
- Project Accountant: <https://zimcodd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Vacancy-Alert-Project-Accountant.pdf>
- MNCH Technical Officer: https://fhi.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/FHI_360_External_Career_Portal/job/MNCH-Technical-Officer_Requisition-2024201446-1
- Partnerships Resourcing Officer: <https://southernaficatrust.org/partnerships-resourcing-officer/>
- Finance & Admin Manager: <https://southernaficatrust.org/finance-and-admin-manager/>



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Do you believe in the movement for equality?

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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/9ogzgx>

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

Quote of the week: Nelson Mandela

“The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow!”



Picture of the week: Scenes from the ongoing ZIMCODD 3-day workshop on Public Finance Management (PFM), contracts and open governance data for Local Authorities.