



HerStory

our monthly newsletter

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Editor's note



Welcome to our September newsletter. We are excited to share with you our latest developments as we continue to envision a world where every young woman and woman's life is widened, expanded, enriched and has a right of way.

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our partners who have continued to support us. Your support has allowed us to keep our programs running smoothly and effectively.

Our commitment to promoting young women and women's rights and well-being remains steadfast. Join us as we reflect on our progress and look forward to the exciting developments ahead. This month's newsletter is packed with inspiring stories, updates on our projects, and valuable insights.

Accelerating Impact: Activity Blitz

We're excited to share our latest Activity Blitz, showcasing the progress and achievements of our initiatives. Dive into our updates and discover the impact we are making.

NB: All stories are based on real events and experiences, but names have been changed to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of our beneficiaries





HARNESSING YOUNG WOMEN AND WOMEN'S AGENCY AND LEADERSHIP THROUGH ECONOMIC JUSTICE

**Rethinking economic justice for women:
Women's spaces for business-skills
sharing, apprenticeships and support
give a boost to women's
entrepreneurship**

written by Sandra Zenda



The adage, poverty has a woman's face, has remained substantiated by continued trends of women being disproportionately affected by poverty as a result of systemic gender oppression and exploitation. For instance, compared to 368 million boys and men who live in poverty and live on less than US\$1.90 per day, globally, 383 million women are estimated to be living in poverty. It is thus not surprising that poverty remains one of the key factors hindering the attainment of gender equality as the economic exclusion of women has remained a lived reality. In Zimbabwe, despite a pro-gender equality Constitution of 2013 which provides for equal representation and participation of women in all spheres of life, the participation and representation of women in civil and political spaces continues to be hindered by economic exclusion.



READ MORE: STORY 1



MODEL GENDER EQUALITY BILL



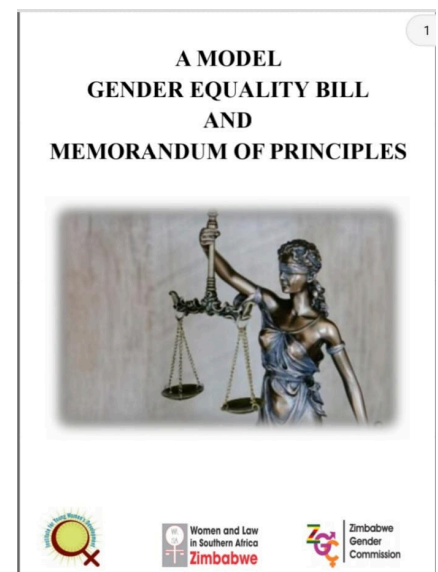
UNITY OF PURPOSE: INTERGENERATIONAL CONSENSUS ON A PARLIAMENTARY MOTION ON THE MODEL GENDER EQUALITY BILL (MGEB)

written by Clontilda James



Women across the political divide and generations, and civil society representatives posed for a photo after an MGEB policy reflection meeting.

The Institute for Young Women's Development (IYWD) has since 2020 been advocating for the adoption of the Model Gender Equality Bill (MGEB) to align constitutional gender equality provisions with national laws. Zimbabwe has made a lot of progress in putting in place laws to recognise women's rights. 2013 presents opportunities for the advancement of women's rights if sections 56 and 80 of the Bill of Rights are enacted into legislative acts. On 26 August, IYWD met with former and current women parliamentarians to reflect on the advocacy journey and map a way forward. The enthusiastic former and current women parliamentarians from across the political divide recommended that the model bill be tabled as a motion in parliament.



READ MORE:STORY 2

"The advantage of presenting the bill as a motion is that you can table the entire bill. The Minister responsible will then be expected to take the bill and present it in Parliament".

Margaret Dongo

Enhancing women's confidence to exercise their civic and political rights



The Power of Collective Action

written by Onai Nyahunzvi

A group of women came together to identify the most pressing issues affecting their community. After lively discussions and debates, women of the Rimuka suburb in Kadoma, Sanyati District unanimously agreed that the water crisis was the most critical problem hindering their daily lives and participation in decision-making processes and developmental meetings. Therefore, they decided to make access to water their primary focus for advocacy efforts.

"Water is life, access to water is a critical women's right," said Mercy Rukweza, a resident. "Water crisis is affecting women's participation in our community."

[Read more:Story 3](#)

Access to Water and Healthcare, creates time and opportunities for women to exercise their citizen participation rights

written by Clontilda James

Young women and women drawn from four wards in Zvimba district participated in a transformative leadership training program hosted by the Institute for Young Women's Development. The training equipped them with the skills and confidence to exercise their civil and political rights to take up leadership positions and influence decisions to drive positive transformation in their community

[Read more:Story 4](#)



Sexual and Reproductive health rights

Informing choices, saving lives through community-led safe abortion awareness and advocacy

Written by Clontilda James



Despite Zimbabwe's progressive constitution, which guarantees the right to health and reproductive autonomy, the reality on the ground tells a different story when it comes to access to safe abortion. Zimbabwe's abortion law, the Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1977 (TOPA), is stringent, permitting termination only in cases of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is at risk. Consequently, women are compelled to seek unsafe abortions, thereby putting their lives at risk.

[Read more: Story 5](#)

"I did not know that abortion was legal and that there is a law under which women can access safe and legal abortion in Zimbabwe, but my eyes have been opened I am now raising awareness to fellow women in my community

Henrietta Masamba

Read more: Story 6



Welcome

to our

Feminist Spotlight



Meet

CHIPO MSONZA

IYWD Member

Chipo Musonza, (in a polka dot pink top), is a member of the Institute for Young Women's Development. She is passionate about making sure that residents in her community have access to clean water and save women time queuing at local boreholes.

She and other women tirelessly reached out to their local municipality Bindura, to make sure homes had a consistent supply of clean water. She finally took it up to become a Councillor and represent her community's needs. In 2023, she was successfully elected as a councillor for her ward. She immediately took up the challenge to lead the council to address a water leak problem that had left the council closing the water supply for a long time.

Together with the Municipality's Engineer, Chipu led a "Save Water, Save Life" campaign. She educated residents about water conservation and encouraged plugging in leakages. Her efforts resulted in 300 households receiving new taps and easing the burden on women as water now flows regularly.

In her own words

Inspired to serve, the Former Mayor's continued Impact on her community

Sophia Gwasira's historic election as Mutare Council's Mayoress was cut short by the recalls instigated by the then Citizen Coalition For Change (CCC) interim secretary general Sengezo Tshabangu. Sophia Gwasira embraced the setback as an opportunity for growth and reflection. Despite the recall, drawing from the valuable lessons and skills she acquired through the TLT, she was not deterred from making a real difference in her community. Sophia, known for her compassionate leadership and practical approach, has always been attentive to the needs of the elderly and orphans in Dangamvura.

Written by Clontilda James



Sophia Gwasira

"As I hand out food hampers and share smiles with the elderly recipients and the orphans, I feel a deep sense of fulfilment and purpose, making a difference in the lives of those in need"

Read more: Story 7

Thank You

To our dedicated readers, contributors, and partners. Your support fuels our goal.

Contact Us:

☎ 263 772481273

✉ info@iywd.org

🌐 www.iywd.org

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RIGHT
OF WAY,
GIVE WAY**