

THE ZIMBABWE OF TODAY

Zimbabweans are living in a state of fear and uncertainty. They suffer discrimination in all its forms and are unable to earn a living. Levels of poverty are high; unemployment is at 82% and inflation at four figures. Non-existent service delivery also makes life difficult. Access to education, housing and other basic needs is now only for the rich. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has created thousands of orphans and child-headed households, is a social catastrophe compounded by a failed healthcare system and little or no access to ARVs. Further loss of valuable human resources is happening due to people leaving the country in large numbers. People have been unsuccessful at holding their government accountable due to a raft of repressive laws and shrinking freedom of expression/media space. Corruption at all levels of government and the politicisation of all aspects of society has led to chaos and disorganization in every sector.

WHAT IS OUR MISSION

Women and men of WOZA will initiate a non-violent campaign. Our aim is to mobilise Zimbabweans to demand social justice from their leaders. The time has come to put the past behind us and start building a better tomorrow. We will hold existing leaders accountable and mobilise people to the movement to demand leaders who will deliver all aspects of social justice and a genuinely people-driven constitution.

WOZA CONSULTING ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Since January 2006, WOZA has carried out consultations on social justice across the country. In 284 meetings, almost 10,000 rural and urban people told us what they want in a new Zimbabwe. We wrote down what they said and the result is the People's Charter.

This is the Charter below. We want to know what you think about it. Please read it with your family, friends and community and let us know if you agree with what is written. If you do, please sign your support for the Charter and the possibilities it could bring.

**THIS CHARTER WAS WRITTEN BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE.
AND PEOPLE MUST DEMAND IT. UNITED WE CAN MAKE IT A REALITY.**

Let us know what you think about the Charter by writing to us at WOZA/MOZA, P.O. Box FM 701, Famona, Bulawayo or emailing us at wozazimbabwe@yahoo.com

DREAMING OF A NEW ZIMBABWE THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER

Zimbabweans, united and resolute, announce:

That after 26 years of independence, the freedoms and equal opportunities we were promised have not been fulfilled;

The dreams we had of a good life – of dignity, comfort and security - have become nightmares. Zimbabweans must dream once again and turn their dreams into a living reality.

We must keep in mind, however, that we deserve better and we must not be afraid to believe that we have the right to a brighter future and we have the right to contribute to building it.

And therefore, we, the people of Zimbabwe, women, men and children, of all races, tribes and religions, come together with respect for each other and as equals to adopt this Charter, knowing that united we can deliver its possibilities;

And we undertake to work together with strength, courage and hope, until all Zimbabweans can live in a genuinely democratic country in peace and with dignity.

We shall all be Free and Equal

All Zimbabweans shall be equal, regardless of gender, physical ability, colour, national origin or tribe. Women's and children's rights shall be promoted and protected;

We shall be educated about the rights and freedoms guaranteed to us by our Constitution and by international law, both regional and universal; and shall enjoy them freely;

We shall be free to meet, organise and speak our minds without fear or intimidation.

People Participating in Governance

People shall be informed of and encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of how the country is managed and run, fully exercising their rights as citizens;

Any person born in Zimbabwe shall be allowed to become a citizen of the country. Birth certificates, national identity documents and passports shall be easily available for all citizens;

People shall be free to choose the leaders they want, without fear and intimidation. Leaders at all levels shall be chosen through free and fair elections, without rigging;

Women must also be encouraged to take up leadership positions to ensure gender balance;

There shall be an independent electoral supervisory commission to oversee the conduct of elections and elections shall be monitored by neutral observers, both local and international;

People shall be free to belong to the political party of their choice and shall not be discriminated against because of the party they support;

All other arms of government, especially civil servants, police and army, shall be non-partisan and shall effectively serve the interests of the people.

The Leaders We Want

All leaders shall be responsible, care for the people they serve and take their issues and problems to heart, taking action to develop their communities;

Leaders at all levels shall respect all people equally, listen to their concerns, consult them when making decisions and feedback to them;

Leaders shall understand that they will be held accountable and accept that the people who elected them have the right to criticise policy;

Leaders at all levels shall publicly renounce corruption and nepotism;

Traditional leaders (chiefs and headmen) shall not be chosen by politicians but by traditional methods. They shall be non-partisan and stay in the communities they serve, rather than sit in Parliament.

Justice in the Law

There shall be a new constitution - written by the people of Zimbabwe for the people of Zimbabwe;

All unjust laws that deny basic freedoms shall be repealed;

There shall be rule of law and no single person will be above the law of the land and everyone shall have equal access to fair and just treatment under the legal system. Law breakers will be pursued, prosecuted and punished without regard to their political affiliation;

The judiciary shall be independent and non-partisan, committed to upholding the law and promoting a culture of justice;

Prisoners shall be treated with dignity, kept in humane conditions and given access to rehabilitation. Juveniles will not be treated as adults by the police, the courts or the prisons.

This Land is our Land

The Land Redistribution Programme needs to start again and land be distributed fairly to any Zimbabwean – of any colour or gender – who will use it properly for the benefit of the country;

There shall be respect for property rights;

Farmers shall be helped with loans and inputs, so that they can develop the land productively;

Farmers shall receive a fair price for their produce and shall be allowed to trade freely.

Wealth and Prosperity

Government shall make every effort to bring development, infrastructure and prosperity to all parts of the country, both rural and urban, equally;

Government shall encourage investment in commerce and industry that shall create employment and promote prosperity for all Zimbabweans;

Government shall make every effort to control inflation by promoting production;

Zimbabweans require a transparent and fair system of taxation with feedback on how their taxes have been spent;

Government shall genuinely act to stamp out corruption and not let it continue to destroy our economy;

Real currency shall return and our money shall have real value once again.

The Right to Earn a Living

All people shall have the right to earn a living so that they can be dignified and do not need to rely on handouts to survive;

There shall be enough employment, with decent working conditions and a liveable wage; equal pay for equal work.

There shall be access to resources to start self-help projects, especially for youth and widows;

People should also be allowed to trade; licenses and stands shall be fairly distributed.

Good Living

There will be enough food for everyone;

All basic commodities shall be available and affordable. If necessary, there shall be price controls to make sure that everyone has access to them;

Every person shall have access to decent, affordable housing. Rents shall be lowered and there shall be respect for property rights;

All areas, both urban and rural, shall have affordable access to the services necessary for safe, healthy living – clean water, proper sewerage and sanitation systems and refuse collection;

All areas, both urban and rural, shall have affordable, regular access to electricity;

There shall be a regular, affordable public transport system that provides adequate coverage of all areas of Zimbabwe. The elderly should be allowed free local travel;

The vulnerable in our society shall be protected; the elderly, widows, people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans and the disabled shall be properly cared for by the state;

All people shall have the right to rest, sports and recreation.

Educating the Nation

Every child shall have equal access to an education without any form of discrimination. Those who cannot afford it shall have access to financial assistance;

Primary education shall be free and secondary education affordable as we were promised in 1980; All students shall have a good quality education, taught in classrooms with enough resources – books, desks and equipment.

There shall be enough qualified teachers committed to educating the next generation. We must respect their contribution enough to give them a living wage.

We Want to be Healthy

There shall be adequate access to good healthcare, which shall be affordable for all Zimbabweans;

Hospitals and clinics shall have enough medicines and equipment;

Those living with HIV/AIDS shall have adequate access to Anti-Retroviral medication; those who cannot afford to pay shall be given the medicine and, if necessary, food aid for free;

The elderly shall not have to pay for medical treatment or medicines.

There shall be enough qualified medical staff committed to treating people with dignity and care. We must respect their contribution enough to give them a living wage.

People shall be allowed to die with dignity; burial charges must be affordable.

Access to Information

There shall be independent radio stations, newspapers and television stations that shall provide accurate, independent information; News reporting shall be balanced, unbiased and all political parties shall receive equal coverage.

Righting the Wrongs

There should be a meaningful apology made by those responsible for Gukurahundi and a truthful explanation of why it happened;

Survivors of Gukurahundi and family members of the 'disappeared' should receive compensation;

The pots taken from the Njelele shrine in Matobo, Matabeleland, must be returned and the desecration reversed with a full apology.

Those affected by Murambatsvina should receive the housing that they were promised; they should also receive compensation;

Leaders who have looted our wealth through corruption should be brought to justice.

Respect for Culture

All people shall have equal right to use their own language and to observe their own culture and customs.

Zimbabweans, especially the youth, should be taught their own and other traditions, so that there can be respect for all different cultures.

Peace and Friendship

Zimbabweans are by nature friendly people – we must once again extend a hand of friendship to our neighbours, regionally and internationally, so that they can help us rebuild our beloved Zimbabwe.

**LET ALL THOSE WHO LOVE ZIMBABWE JOIN HANDS TO TURN OUR DREAM
OF SOCIAL JUSTICE INTO A REALITY.**