



## ZIMBABWE CHAMBER OF INFORMAL ECONOMY ASSOCIATIONS

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### **Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA) Press Conference Statement on:**

**Theme:** ZCIEA RESPONSE TO INTER-MINISTERIAL BANNING OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES VENDORS DUE TO TYPHOID OUTBREAK

*(Ref: The Herald 5 January 2017- Inter-ministerial body on typhoid formed)*

**We** The Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA) are concerned by the outbreak of Typhoid in Harare, which could even spread to other corners of the country if not urgently addressed by the relevant authorities.

However it is a further concern that at such a juncture the inter-ministerial committee's first reaction identifies vendors as the chief source of the Typhoid outbreak whilst avoiding the real source of the mess who are the local authority and the ministry of local government, the oversight body for local authorities. For years the Harare City Council has neglected the dilapidated and dysfunctional water reticulation and delivery systems, leading to an 'accepted' trend of burst sewer pipes and now permanent tributaries of human waste in sewage water around Harare. This also true of other local authorities throughout major parts of the country. Those who live in glass houses should not walk around naked because glass is transparent and the inter- Ministerial committee is a glass house that the Ministries have built. We have pertinent questions to ask:

- 1) Why has the Ministry of Health Neglected to instruct or to direct the local authority to clean up the faecal mess flowing in the locations for a good number of years which in itself was a health time bomb. Where they waiting for Typhoid?
- 2) What measures if any did the Ministry of local Government take to ensure that local authorities improve water reticulation and delivery systems?
- 3) Why did the Ministry of Environment not take the local authority to task for neglecting waste collection and water delivery and processing?
- 4) As for Ministry of SMES what realistic and meaningful measures have they taken to protect the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable majority of informal economy workers in Zimbabwe?

In an art shell, all these Ministries Heads are blind to the poor service delivery and environmental protection which has led to the outbreak. All they see is vendors as corrosive elements to health and their elitist portrayal of life in Zimbabwe. We reiterate to say vendors and all informal economy workers are neither criminals nor a disease but are full Zimbabwean citizens making an honest living out of the jobless and decayed economic state of Zimbabwe.

Vendors in the streets whether legal or illegal as may be termed are trading fruits and vegetables As a service provision to the populace, 2. As a form of employment to survive and sustain their families, 3. As a last resort to survive in such a harsh and failed economy. Whilst typhoid outbreak can be spread by food, water and litter, there are many contributing factors to this.

Zimbabwe has become one of the dirtiest countries in the region due to poor service delivery by the local authorities. The council water has become undrinkable due to unmeasurable levels of contamination and little or doubtful purification by the responsible authorities. Sewage just flows all over in the locations and sometimes flows into burst water pipes. These sources of contribution to human endangerment are the chief catalysts to the outbreak of the diseases. Does this mean the fruits and vegies vendors trade is more contagious than the sewage waste that is flowing in almost every city in Zimbabwe???? Vendors are also Zimbabweans and have a right to decent life and work that is why they trade in the streets.

If Government creates and supports sustainable employment, then the streets will be free. Almost more than 2 million people are surviving on vending because of failed economic policies. Such are the issues to be addressed ahead of minors. Vendors can play their role to stop the spread of Typhoid but taking away their survival line is like dropping a bombshell in a stadium full of people. We urge the authorities to fully consider proper and realistic measures to curb such diseases and not punish vendors for everything. We cannot continue to allow destructive double standards by relevant ministries at the expense of the whole nation.

Where will Typhoid come from when vendors are trading in a clean country where garbage and bins are collected timely, where will typhoid come from where clean and pure water is running in the taps Bins are timely collected? Vending in the Streets is not a wish but an outcome of uncontrolled company closures as a result of bad economic policies, decisions and corruption by the government of the day. There-fore the government should stop victimizing the vendors and address issues realistically and holistically.

ZCIEA National President - Lorraine Sibanda

ZCIEA Secretary General – Wisborn Malaya

ZCIEA – 6 January 2017