

Simuka! Zimbabwe

Timbotaurawo VanaMai...
Mothers having our say.

SiMuka! Zimbabwe

*Timbotaurawo VanaMai...
Mothers having our say.*



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LOVE ZIMBABWE ENOUGH TO THINK AND ACT A BETTER FUTURE FOR US ALL.

**IDA ZIMBABWE UFUNGE NEKUITA ZVINOVAKA REMANGWANA RAKATINAKIRA
TESE.**

“Whatever things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:24

“All that we are is a result of what we have thought” Bhudda (563 BCE -483 BCE)



OUR DREAMS

It's not for lack of might, that I don't wanna fight...

Patience is wisdom, to forgive is freedom... So Why? (Woza Africa Compilation)

As people we are all born with the dignity that comes with being a human being. We all want to live full lives on earth, have a good life and do the things we want to do. Yet most of us are struggling to meet our basic needs on a daily basis in a country that is full of riches. Why is this so?

There are those among us that think that only they must have a good life. They are greedy and take everything for themselves while imposing their values on others. They are violent, irresponsible, grab and destroy what belongs to other people, and will not admit making mistakes. They do not know how to say sorry.

Every generation must reaffirm the values of love, peace, mutual respect, tolerance for differences and the right to pursue happiness by each individual. This must be in a manner that they define for themselves. Sometimes this affirmation must involve struggle. It is the one that has the vision that must pursue it. That means you. Yes, you the reader, and your friend, your sister, brother, your parents, your children, your neighbours and everybody who is alive today. What is your vision? What is your dream? Are you willing to stand up for it? If not you, then who?

We all want a country of peace, love and harmony. We want peaceful co-existence with each other. We may disagree on what should be done and how it should be done, but we want to use peaceful means to settle differences. Zimbabwe is a rich country. We are blessed. There is enough to go around for everybody if we manage it well. We can have leaders with integrity that answer to us on our collective heritage. It is possible.

We all have something to do with this task. We are all responsible for creating a brighter

future for our children. Don't leave it for someone to do something, for no one will do anything. We will continue to live in the darkness of fear and despair and hopelessness. Let us join hands to lift the dark clouds of fear, despair, greed and violence from our land.

**Let us join hands to paint a rainbow of love, hope, charity and faith.
Let us reach for the sky. Let us reach for the stars. Let us bring in the light.**

This is your call...Do not worry about what is wrong. Do not fear those that want to plunge our country into darkness. Stop whining about power, water, roads, high fees, food etc. If we think right and act right it will all get sorted out, for these are just minor details to our real problem.

Rather: Focus on that which you desire for this country. Think about the good that YOU can contribute to our country. Put all your energy into WHAT IS RIGHT for us. If each one of us focuses on doing right and knowing what we want we will succeed. Only you can create your life and your future.

Redemption Song: Bob Marley

Emancipate yourselves from mental Slavery
None but ourselves can free our minds

Have no fear for atomic energy (and all other weapons of war)
For none of them can stop the time

How long shall they kill our prophets
While we stand aside and look?

Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom
It's all I ever had
Redemption Song
The songs of Freedom

What will keep us in the bondage of darkness?

- Selfishness and lack of responsibility for our actions at a personal and community level
- Not admitting where we have made mistakes
- Lack of forgiveness and carrying grudges against each other
- Greed and mindless accumulation of wealth at the expense of others and our environment
- Fear of the unknown and intimidation by the known
- Silence and not speaking out in the face of wrong doing by those around us
- Colluding with corruption
- Lack of respect for the humanity of others
- Disrespect for the good laws that are in place to regulate our conduct towards each other
- Violence and killing each other like wild animals

- Abusing each other through assaults in our homes and on the streets
- Abusing our children and youth sexually, morally, economically and politically
- Not respecting women as mothers and grandmothers, so as to restore the balance between the male and the female in nature, which is much needed for any society to fully develop as the Creator intended
- Not caring for the disabled, the elderly, the destitute and other vulnerable people in society.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

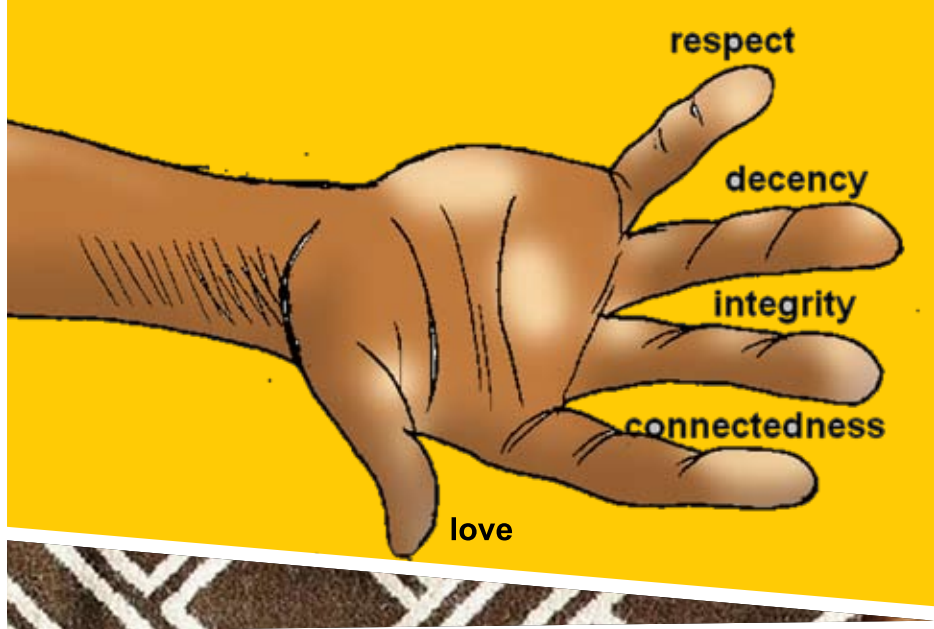
- Make a commitment today to be clear about what you want for your country's future and your personal future.
- **KNOW IN YOUR HEART** what is right and what is wrong.
- **COMMIT YOURSELF TO DO WHAT YOU KNOW IS RIGHT**, regardless of the circumstances and the pressures.

We must rebuild Zimbabwe. Each one of us has a role to play. Carry your one brick.

Visions do not always get support... In the book of Nehemiah in the Christian Bible, he set out to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and at first he was mocked by his enemies, and when they realised that he was serious they threatened his people with harm. When he continued they brought up charges of treason against him and plotted to kill him. However he persisted and when his work was complete his enemies had no choice but to recognise his power and that he had God on his side.

... Overcome your fear. It is a paralysing friend to the one that seeks to attain their dream. We were created to live a good happy life. Know that the Creator that created this universe intended it to be a happy place. Anyone that creates hate and violence is going against this master plan, and cannot succeed in the long term for the simple reason that the power that created this earth is far much greater than the few individuals that seek to create chaos for their benefit. Do you believe that there is power far greater than each one of us? If so, then have no fear. Be free to think for yourself. Ask questions. Dare others to speak out against bad things. Do what you know is right.





OUR VALUES

The collective root of our identity as Africans is Munhu/ Umuntu and our values are imbedded in the concept of Ubuntu/ Hunhu. Hunhu /Ubuntu is thinking and behaving like a human being, and this behaviour is supposed to be guided by values of respect, decency, integrity and connectedness to your social and physical environment. Those who do not have this are called 'Nhundiramutsime', those who urinate in the drinking water well. There is a lot of value in remembering this and asking ourselves...what defines us as Africans?

Where are our traditional leaders whose role it is to uphold our culture? Are they playing that role? What is the role of spiritual leaders in the church? Are we challenging them on greed and immorality? Where do the traditional Mhondoro and Masvikiro fit in? Are we challenging them to speak out against the use of bad practices by traditional healers? What do we have to say to the different leaders ? Can we say it? Are we saying it?

We know the concept of Ngozi is real. Killing and taking a life is a crime against other people and against God. That is why there has to be atonement and appeasement. Do we realise that as a nation we shall have to atone and appease God for all the blood that we are spilling? It is a universal law of cause and effect. Balance must always be restored at some point.

What is this abhorrent creature that we now call politically motivated violence? Is this a part of being African; to be beaten up and threatened with violence and assault and death if you vote as you wish? If so why are we surprised that we are losing our children to other countries who are now using our investment in our children to their benefit. Let us call crimes what they are...rape, serious assault and murder. Why do whole communities watch while the children of neighbours burn up homes in the village. In our tradition children are raised by the whole village. So the question is who is raising these elements whose only life lesson seems to be to kill and or maim whoever disagrees with them?

We must deal with this in the proper manner. Let us name and shame these people. Traditional leaders and church elders must exercise their moral authority and summon such people to come and explain to the community their actions and ask for forgiveness. Where necessary there must be compensation.

It is wrong to encourage bad behaviour. Say it now as you read this...please. "It is wrong to beat or kill another person just because they disagree with you." Practice saying it to yourself and one day you shall be able to say it to someone else and to larger groupings of people. That is all you need to do.

So you are afraid. It is ok to be afraid. But what are you going to do about the fear. What is it that you are afraid of? Is it part of being African to be so fearful to speak out against that which we know is wrong? Is it cultural to be such cowards in the face of intimidation and watch while the inheritance for our children and their children's children goes up in smoke because we are afraid to speak out? Respect is one thing. Fear is something else. Tell yourself that you shall not be afraid anymore. God said to Joshua 'Be strong and courageous', for the Divine cannot assist us when we are full of fear.

Is it part of our African culture that we condone and allow bad leadership in our communities and nation? What happened to the proverb 'Kutonga Madzoro?' What is the traditional practice of conferring Chieftainship? Is this still being followed? What have been the consequences of having this traditional office of authority in the community taken over and appointed by politicians? Others are now installing themselves as chiefs! Why do we allow leaders that we are not choosing of our own free will to be imposed on us? What is the worst thing that could happen if all of us just decided that enough is enough, and do as our conscience dictates. It is true that those that think they control us can threaten us, beat us or even kill some of us. But we should not accept it. We must overcome our fear and send out a clear message to say we will not accept it anymore.

Why do we now have such high crime levels? What has gone wrong? **Remember, Africans never had jails.** So how come now we just accept violence, theft, assaults, rape and all the other criminal acts and just treat them as normal. Some of us are now even condoning thievery as 'doing deals'.

Ubuntu/ Hunhu refers to a whole set of social behaviours, codes of conduct, things that we value, (of which the other person is the most important), respect for others, reverence to the Divine (as Africans we have always known and accepted that there is Mwari) and honouring Chisi, the day of rest, protection of our wild animals and natural environment (Mitupo and Sacred places), and a host of other guidelines for our physical, spiritual, emotional and financial well being that included physical cleanliness, regular prayer, public apologies and compensation for wrongs done (kuripa) and practices like Zunde RaMambo for food security for the destitute and in emergencies.

Who is accountable for all of this now?

SO THE CHALLENGE FALLS ON YOU:

What is it to be African in the modern day and age? What is of value in our culture and tradition that we have lost? What is it in our culture and tradition that is no longer good for us?

What is it about our African culture that we can salvage to save our Ubuntu/ Hunhu? For example, in the mornings do we have time for our children to greet us; "Mangwanani



Amai, Mangwanani Baba. Marara sei/ Livuke njani Mama, Livuke njani Baba?" And us asking the same of our children. If we lose such simple behaviours of etiquette and caring for each other's well being, how can we expect that person to go out in the world and behave like a civilised human being?

They will bump into you on the street and not even realise that they have behaved badly. Why are we allowing ourselves to be called Momz/Mathaz and Mudhara when we know we are Amai and Baba.

What can you do? Are there other people you can talk to so that we all start talking about this?

Does our vocabulary contain these few little words and phrases:

Excuse me. Please. May I? Thank You. I am sorry. I made a mistake.

Please forgive me.

When last did you use any one of these, or encouraged another person to use them?



ISLAMIC



JUDAIC



TRADITIONAL
NDORO



CHRISTIAN

OUR FAITH

Most of us believe in a creative force of life, and we call this force different things; God, Allah, Mwari, Musikavanhu, Jehovah, Unkulukulu, Somandla, The Life Source, The Universe, The Infinite, The Creator, to name a few. Even science has come to accept that the organising force in the universe is spirit, which is then called energy (can neither be created or destroyed, moves in and out of form, and has no beginning or ending).

One thing is common to all these faiths...that is they all preach the message of love and the need for human beings to be aware of and in contact with this force so that their actions can be guided by the highest and purest values of love towards one another. In science it is called living in harmony and balance with nature and all the eco- systems of existing matter. Why is it that now we use our different faiths to create hatred! We now kill and maim in the name of God!

The universal creative force binds us to a higher purpose by unifying us with each other so that we can all survive together.

It is ironic that we have used the teachings of love and tolerance to create hatred, division, violence and bring grief to each other.

Some of us have sought to have our country declared this faith or that faith, basing their argument on numbers as if prayer has now become religious politics.

Let us learn the virtue of living and letting others live as well. One can chose their faith or chose not to have one, but others must be allowed the same freedom of choice to choose their preferred manner of worship. The fact that someone is quiet does not mean that they necessarily agree with your religious practices. Let them be. We call those that are different from us names that are disparaging; VaPostori Sect (denying them spiritual legitimacy), MaJudha-Jews, and those that follow African Traditional Spirituality are said to do 'zvechibhoyi' in a derogatory way or said to be worshipping demons.

So let us end this intolerance in the name of religion and allow and respect people's choices without seeking to impose our spiritual values. Those that share ours will come to us. Too many labels create 'us' and 'them', the seedbed of hatred and intolerance. We are all One in Spirit. What matters is our conduct towards one another, which should reflect love, peace and harmony.

What is important at the end of the day is how we are transmitting the values of love to our children and to each other. Where is the love in how we relate as family, as communities, as organisations, as government, as schools, as health institutions, at public functions, on the street, in our administration of justice, in resolving differences? **Where is the love and goodness in how we are relating to one another as a nation???**

What if you were to meet God right here and now...and He/She asks you ...what is it that you want for your country so that I may grant it...? What would your answer be? Write down that answer for yourself and start challenging yourself to do something, anything, towards the realisation of that future. By that small action you will be contributing your energy to the Vision that YOU have defined. If it is something that contributes to a future of peace and joy and abundance for everybody it will have Divine support.

We have the power to create our future. Let us use it and use it well. Our destiny is ours to define. We just have to take the first step in faith and the Universe will open doors for us where we see only walls.



OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

To share often and much...to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded. (Ralph Waldo Emerson: 1803 - 1882)

The state of any country is indication of the state of its families. What we do in our families is what we do when we go out to the workplace and we will act the same even when we are running the country. Could it be that the violence and disregard for others that we now see in our public spaces is reflecting how we are running our families? You answer that.

A child or spouse will not do what they promised to do and we do not tell them that it is not right to make false promises. Then the next day that person is a leader, and we expect them to behave differently!

Violence is wrong!

The family is the place where we should feel safe and rest from the chaos in the world, but for most women and girl children it is a place of pain. It is at home where women are beaten and raped the most. Is it African to accept the disrespect for women that we see daily? We know that 'Amai havatukwe. Amai havarohwe' because it brings Ngozi, meaning the highest condemnation of the behaviour among people and among the ancestors and God. How can you claim that you love someone and then do things to them that cause them pain and make them cry? Discipline and culture can be respected without violence.

Our proverbs say Musha Mukadzi, Musha NdiMai (the home is the wife, the home is Mother). It is not right to disrespect women? It is not our culture to rape women and children? **The vernacular word for raping is the same for murdering (Ukubhinya/Kubhinya).** In our culture, a man found of guilty of wife beating is fined a goat that he pays to his wife to say sorry. Madzishe muripi?!



Social Principles

As parents we must teach our children and each other the value of hard work and just reward. Let us desist from stealing, cheating and corruption through shady deals, dishonest business and avoiding responsibility. Let us teach each other in our families and communities the following basics:

- That the future has to be planned for
- That one must get an education or a skill to earn a living
- That one must live within their means and not always to look to others for upkeep unless if they are a minor
- That wealth does not accumulate overnight
- That every action has results and consequences
- That we are all responsible for our choices, decisions and actions, no matter what the circumstances
- That we have a duty of care towards one another
- That we must respect each other, especially the elders for they do have more life experience and usually wisdom as well
- That when you have a job you expect to get a salary but you must also work to earn it
- Fists are not the intelligent person's way of settling a difference of opinion
- It takes strength and courage to admit a mistake
- It is good to ask for help and ideas from others when you are not sure about something.

It appears that these are some of the basics that are missing in a lot of our leaders in the different settings, be it politics, religion or the corporate world. They start from the family.

What are those things that bind us communities? What are those that divide us?

How can we focus on those things that unite us and use them to improve how our communities are organised? How best can we confront those things that divide us and reduce their negative impacts?

Ethnicity, language, political identity, social status and connections, access to resources, and religion are among some of those things that can either help us to build strong communities that work together, or cause untold misery and suffering as people use them as a reason for fighting.

When we fight over these, none of us develops. When we fight nobody makes it to our promised land of the good life that this country can offer us. We have to act now. We have to get organised now. Our families must be our support. Don't sacrifice your brother/sister to politics. Our communities must unite on common values and common goals that benefit and protect all. Ngatirongekeyi.

Talk to your children, your brothers and sisters and your parents about this.

Let us stop using community gatherings as spaces for terrorising others. They must be places for healthy debate and discussions on how best to improve and develop the community. Now even funerals are used for intimidating others. In our tradition we respect the dead.

What bothers you the most about what has gone wrong in your community? Who is responsible. If it is the government, then team up with others and approach your local office to discuss how this can be dealt with. If it does not involve the government, then team up with others and approach community leaders. Maybe all you need to do is come up with 3 values that shall be respected and adhered to in your community. Then put in place a system of getting those who break these values to explain themselves publicly.

OUR WEALTH AS A NATION

Zimbabwe is blessed. We have the perfect weather that is not too cold and not too hot. We have good rainfall. We have rich soils to grow our food. Our land has beautiful mountains and rivers. We have wildlife that in other countries people only see in books or in a zoo.

We have minerals that we can mine and use for our industries or trade with other nations for money or other things that we require. Most of us are strong healthy people that are not afraid of working to earn our daily bread. So why are we so poor? Why are we always complaining that we do not have enough money for our food, for rent, for clothes, to send the children to school, and all the things that we complain about? We took the land of our forefathers back and distributed it among ourselves. So how come some of us are getting fatter and fatter while others are getting thinner and thinner?



We have a lot of educated Zimbabweans that are capable working in government and managing our national resources. So why are we still so poor? What have we missed? Where have we gone wrong?

Whose responsibility is it to make sure our resources are properly managed? Are they doing their job? If not then what should be done about these people? This is our life that we are talking about. Do you feel that you as a citizen you are powerless to do anything about it? Why? Is there nothing else that you can do?

Our fear is real, and things have been done to us that justify our living in fear, **but for how long** shall we continue to watch your children suffer and our families living in misery just because we are too afraid to speak out? It is time we demanded that the riches of our country should be better managed in a transparent manner and benefit everyone. It is our duty to prepare for our future and that of our children. **What are you going to do**

about it?

Did you know that your Member of Parliament has a responsibility to tell you how the resources of the country have been used? You just have to ask them what is happening with our gold and diamonds and they should be able to answer you because these things are discussed in Parliament. They are you representative in that Parliament.

Believe that there is enough in this country for everybody. Believe you have the power to do something. Let us stop the greedy ones. Let us practice charity. Let us look after those among us who are destitute. We do not need a donor to do this. We can revamp the Zunde Ramambo and with healthy communication in our communities we can collectively supervise this to make sure it serves the community. We can do other things as well. Start a conversation with others and talk about what else we can do for ourselves and help each other.

Do our local business people give to the community simple things like writing books and pens? If there are 10 shops at your business centre and they each donate \$20 per year they can provide school uniforms for 20 destitute children. At the church you can have a collection of \$1 every month to help the children in your parish with pens. This should give you an idea of what is possible.

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What else can you do in the community/ club/ association/ church or any other social group that you belong to? Come up with something. Do it with integrity and accountability and be an example of what is possible. Write to us and share with others what you have done so that others get inspired by your actions.



OUR GOVERNANCE

Governance refers to the way in which a country, the government and the people are organised and conduct the affairs of the country. Before colonisation we had kings and queens and lesser chiefs of smaller tribes. These were hereditary, meaning that ruling followed a family line and a king basically ruled until they died or were removed by force through war. Now we have the electoral system that we inherited at independence and it is here to stay. We must understand how it works. Our leaders no longer inherit these positions. We now elect them into office through regular elections. We now choose who we think is the best person to represent us in Parliament which is where the government runs the country from.

The job of Parliament is to make laws, check how much money the government has made and supervise how it is used. They should make sure schools and hospitals are running properly, people have water and electricity and that roads are maintained. That money does not come from donors! It comes from government through the taxes that it collects. Members of Parliament must report to us what is happening in terms of government plans, what they have done to make sure our inputs have been included into those plans, and what the community can expect in terms of development with regards the things stated above.

The government is made up of ministries that must follow the policies and plans of whichever political party is in power. Government workers are there to serve the citizens and do not service a particular political party because they serve the entire country, regardless of who is in power at a particular time.

Political parties can change every 5 years but the staff in government will stay and do their work properly for each and every one of those different parties. Is this what we have here in Zimbabwe? **Can you discuss this topic without someone wanting to know why you are talking about it?**

Something has gone wrong. Some of our leaders think that once they attain a position

they must stay there forever even when they are not delivering and we no longer want them there. We are now forced to vote for them even when we do not want them and some of them threaten us and beat us up when we decide to vote for those we want. We have the right to choose whom we want. We must reclaim this right.

Forced governance is wrong. And we should not allow it. But most of us have been so intimidated that we are now afraid to even say this. Until when? And with what consequences for us and our children. What are we teaching the youth?

That if you want something you do not have to work for it. Just be prepared to beat up people and get what you want? Have you thought of the power that you as an individual have to put a stop to this? If you individually decide that enough is enough, and all of us who are right thinking and want to live a normal life decide to do what is right come next election, we will put an end to this governance by force. We are raising future generations of leaders who are basically brutal greedy thugs who will kill to get what they want, be it power, money or influence. One works for these things. They are earned through service, commitment, cooperation and hard work.

There is a place for traditional leadership, for we still need people to have oversight of our



community and traditional values and our way of life as Africans. They are responsible for the transmission of our identity through language, ritual, music and dance, ceremonies and the observance of traditional practices that are good for everyone and define who we are. The problem is that now it is not very clear who is doing what. We have not heard a single one of them come out and say that the destruction of forests is wrong for example, or that the burning of homes of opponents for politics is wrong. Let us remind our traditional leaders of their role so that they can take their rightful place next to the properly elected leaders and play their traditional role properly.

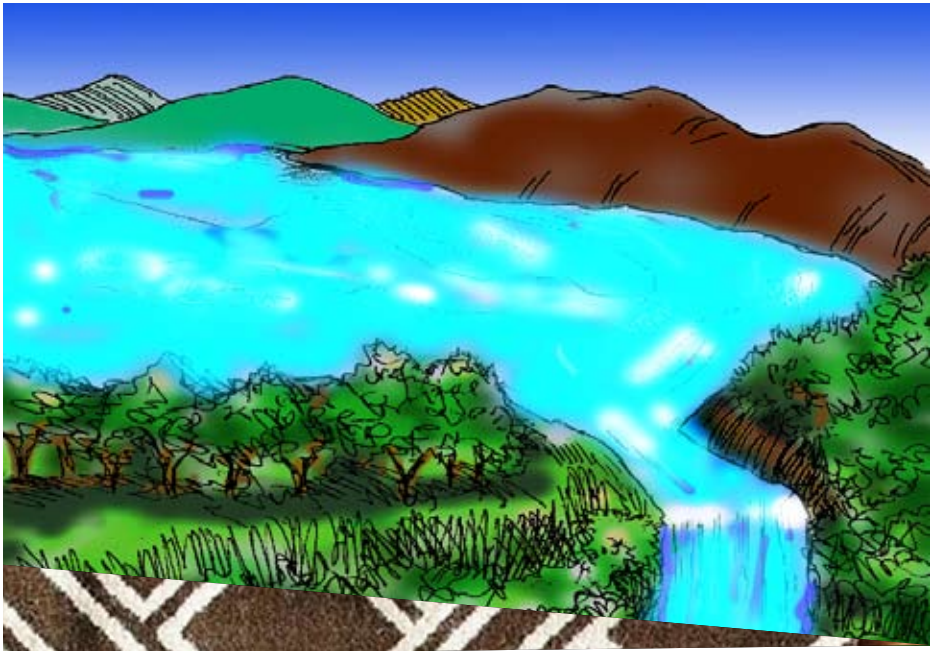
We want to respect our traditional leaders. But they must earn our respect as elders, not people that we fear on political grounds. Every community member must feel confident to say 'I am going to report to the Chief' when they are wronged by another. We have settled a lot of disputes locally through this method and grievances have been settled amicably, with compensation being paid for where necessary, for example where someone's goats eat the maize in a neighbour's field. Now someone will slaughter my

cattle in broad daylight and the chief is quiet. What has gone wrong? Naming wrongdoers in our community was one way of ensuring behaviour control. Now our children belong to political parties and not to us as communities. Do we no longer have voice on what happens in our communities?

It is now very difficult to talk about how our beautiful country is run. Most of us are too afraid. **The challenge now is to overcome that fear. Dare to bring up one of the issues discussed in this chapter and get people talking about it.** Even if it is for just a short time, at least you will be starting somewhere. Remember it is the fear that you need to overcome. If you cannot talk about it in public, try it in your home and among your friends. **Let us free ourselves. Let us free our minds.**

Your responsibility in all of this is to make sure you vote whenever an election comes around.

HAVE YOU CHECKED THE ROLL? HAVE YOU REGISTERED AS A VOTER? If not, please do so immediately!



OUR TREES, RIVERS AND FORESTS

Our forests and rivers are being destroyed. There is litter, weeds, and pollution in our rivers. Rivers and other water bodies are not for dumping waste. When we destroy our natural environment we destroy ourselves. Our rivers are choking with silt, grass, waste and hyacinth. We are just watching. What will happen next? Let us save our rivers.

Traditionally we used to wash our clothes (a few skins and cloth) in rivers using a bio-degradable weed (ruredzo). Now we use soap! It is different. Please let us educate each other. Let us wash our clothes **AT** the river but not **IN** the river.

We should not cultivate on river banks. It causes siltation. We should not build there also.

In the cities...especially Harare, we should leave wetland areas free of buildings so that underground water can come out properly to from the streams that become rivers and give us fresh water to drink. Let us ask the City Council why there are allowing buildings in these reserved areas. There was a reason why they were kept free of construction. Who is authorising these buildings that go against sound principles of urban planning? The water that we drink is treated and needs to be mixed with fresh water. Do you think we can never run out of drinking water? We can. Not all of us can afford to buy water to drink. Let us plan our future well.

We have the gift of beautiful forests, rivers, mountains, wildlife and weather. But we are destroying it every day that we are careless with this gift. Let us not let the love of quick money lead us to our ruin. We are not giving our earth enough time to recover and nourish us.

We are cutting down trees with no thought for tomorrow. Some of us start a fire to catch mice or a hare, and we burn down an entire forest. Is it worth it? It is disastrous for us to cut so many trees and not plant new ones. Indigenous trees take long to grow and must be preserved as much as possible. Burning forests destroys the moisture in the earth and the leaves and grass that keep this moisture. In the long run it will affect our rain patterns and we may end up with a desert in our country. It is that simple.

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Why are trees so valuable to us?

- They give us the very oxygen that we breath
- They preserve the moisture in the soil, keeping the land from becoming desert
- They help to maintain the seasons and to make the rain fall.
- They provide the things we need o build our homes
- They make our land beautiful.

Our traditional leaders used to have the responsibility of oversight on this. Can we remind them? Why are they remaining silent in the face of such massive devastation of our natural habitat? Who shall say 'enough' of this cutting and burning?

We are throwing litter everywhere. When you drive along our roads you see cans, bottles, paper and plastic thrown out of moving cars and buses. Who is going to sweep all this litter from the countryside?

It is so simple to keep a plastic bag to throw in your litter and then put it in a bin when you get to one. All that litter breeds germs that cause disease and encourage the breeding of mosquitoes and rats, and all these carry diseases. Our country earns money through things that include tourists, who come to admire the beauty of our country. From these tourists we get jobs. These jobs include hotel staff, drivers, sculptors, weavers, tour guides, construction, transport services and a lot of other jobs that are created by thriving tourism. It helps us to tell the world about who we are, our culture and our way of life. It helps us to get respected by other nations who visit and get to know us. If we allow the destruction that is taking place, what will we have left? Do we want our visitors to see us as a dirty people who live in filth? Do we want our children to grow up thinking that it is fine to walk in streets full of dirt and litter? That is what we are teaching them now through the way that we are living.

What Is Your Responsibility?

On this and everything else that we discuss in this booklet, commit to have just one thing that you feel strongly about and find others that do the same. Together let us get people

to keep our homes, living areas and environment clean. Find these people in your neighbourhood, in your church group, at the club, in your sport team, at your income generating project, your new resettlement, at sports games, at weddings, at traditional ceremonies, social gatherings and anywhere else that you talk to other people on a regular basis.

Let us talk about the following:

- Who are these people that have burned our beautiful country into a black and lifeless wasteland. Why are they doing it and why are they being allowed to continue?
- How can they be stopped? Who has got the power and authority to make it stop? What about us? What can we do and who can help us to tell them to stop? What penalties can be brought against such behaviour? What incentives can we use to encourage people to stop burning?
- Who is responsible for making sure that our communities are clean? Can we remind them of their job, and help them to do it by acting like the responsible clean Zimbabweans that we are.
- Who is teaching our children about being good citizens and not throwing litter everywhere (on the streets, dumping litter at street corners), throwing garbage out of Kombis and buses and cars? Can we talk to each other about this?
- Do food take away companies need to put the food in big bright boxes that will be thrown away in the next 10 minutes. Why do they not use paper that you can crumple and is easier to dispose of? It would make the food cheaper anyway. Ask them. We shall distribute copies of this booklet to them.

What can we do in our communities to clear our rivers? Can we not give the hyacinth to our livestock as feed? Let us get our weavers to use the reeds to make us nice sitting mats/ mhasa/ ica. If we buy from them we can challenge them to make us beautiful items that we can use in our homes like the sitting mats that also make lovely sunscreens, internal screening, shopping baskets, table place mats, vegetable bins, fruit plates, decorative pieces and a lot of other things. We already have people making beautiful lounge suits and other furniture with our natural materials that would otherwise cause a problem. Let us furnish our homes with this lovely furniture. These are affordable and durable. Let us build this into a vibrant local industry which in time can even have strong exports. If we support these artisans we encourage them to improve their products because they will be earning more money.

Let us put our heads together and generate ideas to save our rivers and our dams. We must stop looking to outsiders to come and give us money. Let us not sit and wait for a 'donor' to tell us what to do when we know what we should be doing. They are not going to be there forever. We must start thinking for ourselves and start somewhere, no matter how small.

So that's it. Let's get this country's heartbeat ticking, and its heart is you and me together.

As Mothers we thought it was time we had our say...

When you have finished reading this booklet, please pass it on to someone else to read too. Give it to your friends, your co-workers, your employees, your church colleagues, your drinking buddies, your children, parents, brothers and sisters...anybody! Just pass it onto someone, or better still, buy them their own copy!

MUCH LOVE AND LIGHT!

SiMuka Zimbabwe!

Nguva Yakwana.

Vana Mai Timbotaurawo...



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