

**For Immediate Release**

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**ActionAid Zimbabwe launches Social Justice Manifesto as nation goes to the polls**

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We would like to begin by applauding Zimbabweans for the relative peace that has characterized our society in the run-up to this crucial election. Peace and co-existence are key ingredients in building a just and democratic society. The Social Justice Manifesto we are launching today is a product of ActionAid Zimbabwe's two (2) decades of work with people living in poverty and exclusion, those at the receiving end of inequalities, and social injustices based on race, gender, sex religion, class, and age, among others. The Social Justice Manifesto, is our statement to political players and the government that will emerge out of this election, articulating an agenda for social justice, based on a vision for a just society which puts those living in poverty and suffering inequalities and injustices at the centre of policies and development. The Social Justice Manifesto represents living aspirations, beyond the election itself, and will thus inform our continued engagement with the key issues set out in this manifesto, post the election.

**Our Manifesto has 5 key pillars, as briefly set out below:**

**On Government and Public Institutions:**

We call upon the all leaders to uphold the national constitution and promote the rule of law. Social Justice will be achieved through servant leadership, governing through separation of the different arms of the State – Executive, Judiciary, Legislature and the media. There must be social protection to people living in poverty or excluded populations (people with disabilities, the elderly, orphans, sexual minorities and other excluded ethnic groups). Social Justice will thrive in an environment where there are independent and democratic public institutions that are transparent, accountable, corruption free and non-partisan provision of goods and services. There must be practices and principles of participation and inclusivity of its citizens in public policy and legislative formulation. For social justice to be embedded on all spheres of life. There should be devolution of Power for decentralization of goods and services.

**On Women's Rights and Inequality**

Women want accessible, affordable, available, adaptable and safe health services. The demands are: women's empowerment and transformation in their lives through their participation in decision making, access to, control over, ownership, utilization and fair distribution of resources. The women whose side we are, are calling for safe public spaces to facilitate meaningful participation in the national development agenda. They are seeking respect for women's sexual autonomy and bodily integrity as well as safe, reliable and accessible safe public services which include public transport, lighting and referral services for sexual and reproductive health to allow them to go through a violence free life.

## **Public Services**

Zimbabweans want to see domestic resources mobilised through progressive taxation to fund public services that are free and non-privatised services particularly in the health and education sector. Here is a call for gender responsive, non-discriminatory and sexism free public institutions. The Social Justice Manifesto is also pushing for gender responsive budgets that adhere to international.

## **Land, Food Security, Building Community Resilience**

The citizenry is calling on the incoming government to ensure women have enhanced access, control and ownership over productive land and other natural resources for sustainable development. Financing and extension support for agriculture to also prioritize women small holder farmers, while also guaranteeing social safety nets for households living in poverty deemed unable to meet the basic minimum food and nutrition standards. In the face of natural hazards and shocks, the citizens are calling for strengthening early warning systems, while promoting women-led community-based humanitarian response mechanisms. Communities hosting natural resources to benefit from those natural resources.

## **On Youths**

Among the many challenges facing our youths, the young people of our country are demanding that the new government must guarantee youth employment opportunities, and affordable, accessible, available, adaptable and safe education for all.

### ***For more information, please contact:***

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The logo for ActionAid, featuring the word "actionaid" in a bold, red, lowercase sans-serif font. The exclamation point in "actionaid" is replaced by a vertical bar.

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