



## **Introduction:**

**Harare, 08 March 2023-** Transparency International Zimbabwe (TI Z) joins the rest of the world in commemorating the International Women's Day (IWD) 2024 under the theme: **“Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress.”** The theme emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive society where women are valued, respected, and empowered to fully participate in all aspects of life. It also has a special significance to the discourses on the fight against corruption and building networks of integrity in Zimbabwe and beyond.

## **TI Z's Perspectives on Corruption and the 2024 IWD Commemoration**

***Corruption is both a cause and a consequence of discrimination against women,*** which is inimical to inclusion. Women often face barriers in accessing public services such as health, education, training, funding, and networks that are essential for active contribution to society. These barriers include, but are not limited to, theft or diversion of public resources by those in entrusted authority which are earmarked for women's economic empowerment and supporting the advancement of women and girls. Favouritism and/or nepotism equally prevents or limits women's recruitment to key positions, and opportunities to develop their talents. One barrier also involves their vulnerability to, and exposure to sextortion, which is the form of corruption where sex is used as a currency for paying a bribe.

***The effects and impact of corruption are felt disproportionately by women,*** as compared to their male counterparts. Previous research by TI Z including the 2014 Annual State of Corruption Report, the 2014 Youth and Corruption Baseline Study, the 2016 Women, Land and Corruption Study, the 2019 Gender and Corruption Study and the 2021 National Bribe Payers Index (NBPI) confirms the disproportionate impacts of corruption on women and young girls in Zimbabwe. These are mainly caused by women's gender roles in which they are statistically more inclined to interface with public service delivery institutions.

This year's commemoration provides an opportunity to highlight concerns about ***women's limited participation and engagement in anti-corruption initiatives.*** The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), various regional anticorruption protocols and the National Anti-corruption Strategy (NACS) promote citizen participation in anticorruption initiatives. However, fear of retribution is a significant factor in the low levels of public participation in the anti-corruption drive. To illustrate this point, the organisation has realised over the years that women are not forthcoming in terms of reporting some of the corruption cases because of fear, lack of information as well as cultural limitations. The challenge of fear is best understood in the context of the lack of robust whistle-blower and witness protection mechanisms in the country. We

therefore take this opportunity to **#InspireInclusion** by calling on the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament of Zimbabwe to pass these important pieces of legislation, which will build women's confidence to engage meaningfully in the fight against corruption.

Overall TI Z believes that mainstreaming gender in anti-corruption systems will have a positive impact towards accelerating gender equality. Gender and corruption policy frameworks that prioritise sextortion and other forms of gender-based manipulation is long overdue. The laws in Zimbabwe around corruption such as the Prevention of Corruption Act (Chapter 9:16) are silent on gender and do not specify gender-based forms of corrupt activities. Further, data on gender and corruption should be improved to allow for evidence-based responses to corruption. More so, improving women's participation in all economic spheres as a step to curb women's vulnerability to bribery and corruption is of paramount importance. Hence the need for concerted efforts by the government to ensure that women empowerment efforts are nationally prioritised.

Lastly, on this day, TI Z calls on people from all walks of life to **#PlayYourPart** by transforming social practices, families, communities, and institutions to address the root causes and underlying circumstances, systems and conditions that support violence and gender inequality, including corruption. Your collective efforts will inspire others to understand and embrace's women inclusion for an equitable and just world.

---

**Transparency International Zimbabwe (TI Z) is a non-profit, non-partisan, systems-oriented local chapter of the international movement against corruption. Its broad mandate is to fight corruption and related vices through networks of integrity. TI Z believes corruption can only be sufficiently tackled by all citizens including people at the grassroots level.**

#### Vision

*A Zimbabwean society free from all forms of corruption and practices.*

#### Mission

To combat corruption, hold power to account and promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in all sectors of society.

#### Contact Information:

For any questions please get in touch with us at [tiz@tizim.org](mailto:tiz@tizim.org)

Website [www.tzim.org](http://www.tzim.org).

X: TIZim\_info

Instagram [transparencyintzim](https://www.instagram.com/transparencyintzim)