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ZIMBABWE ANNUAL REPORT 2023

ALZ’s impact on the governance and anti-corruption field in Zimbabwe in 2023 centered on building and sustaining the accountability field and an ecosystem for change. Its Integrity Icon campaign grew beyond health and education to include all government departments, except security services. The Campaign was piloted at a local level in Macheke in collaboration with the Youth Development and Aids Trust which hosted a community Integrity Awards ceremony.

The Lab’s creative Arts4Change initiatives generated more than 100,000 views stimulating public conversations about accountability, mental health and young people in Zimbabwe. Among these are A Few More Dollars by 2023 Film Fellowship alumna, Jabulani Mudzova, which won a National Arts and Merit Award for Outstanding Short Film Production.

CivActs continued to impact community-led problem-solving, leading to results on several issues including drug and substance abuse, service delivery and natural resource governance. All these expansions across program areas led to increased conversations, citizen engagement and policy action on governance and anti-corruption efforts in Zimbabwe.



Shifting norms to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies.



Influencing policies, processes and practices through growing coalitions and advocating for change.



Equipping reformers - inside and outside government - with the knowledge and tools to push for better governance.



The Lab engaged an estimated 500,000 citizens through its work, while it was able to influence policy action on drug and substance abuse and sponsored critical engagement about the Mutapa Investment Fund, Zimbabwe's sovereign wealth fund.

The Lab's work around Integrity Innovation Labs led to several corruption cases being reported. For instance the community of Entumbane reported a case of a corrupt local drug peddler to the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC). CivActs work regarding citizen concerns about land in Chitungwiza has synergies with ZACC's anti-corruption efforts leading to the development of a partnership with the national anti-corruption body, the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, to spread awareness and fight corruption on several issues.

Since ALZ's establishment in 2020, it's been a holistic learning journey with some of the initial investments, insights, and lessons learnt beginning to yield fruit. The following lessons are instructive and will be instrumental to the Lab's continued learning, growth, impact and success in 2024:

Adaptation is critical to effective governance accountability and accountability work:

Since its inception during the COVID-19 era, ALZ has learnt that adaptation and responding to emerging contextual issues is key to achieving results in governance and accountability work. The Lab's adaptation is evidenced by its response to the drug and substance abuse challenge which was not initially perceived as an accountability challenge. The CivActs model was instrumental to ALZ's efforts to surface community concerns regarding the government's failure to properly implement the National Drug Master Plan. Advocacy for the government to fulfill its commitments to address the challenge has included engagements with stakeholders particularly the Youth Caucus. These young first-time parliamentarians have proposed the Lab's recommendations for the government to allocate resources, and the need for a multisectoral response to the public health crisis. This illustrates our agility in responding to the concerns of citizens within a complex context. Other emerging accountability issues include administration of Zimbabwe's sovereign wealth fund, the Mutapa investment Fund.

Collaboration is the cornerstone of successful results:

ALZ collaborated with the Centre to Advance Conversations on Business and Human Rights among Telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe. The partnership resulted in the Lab engaging with telecommunications companies and subsequently conducting research to assess the state of compliance with human rights principles in telecommunication companies. The issues of business and human rights have not yet been well discussed in Zimbabwe but through collaborations, AL was able to tackle the issue and conversations are ongoing.

Strong partnerships between public institutions and civil society are crucial for successful governance and accountability:

ALZ also learnt that it is very important to engage with key and relevant public institutions to promote governance and accountability. Engagement with independent institutions such as ZACC, and government departments including the Ministry of Education, and Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals has resulted in AL initiatives, particularly Integrity Icon, gaining more public traction and support.



The Registrar General attended the 2023 Integrity Icon Summit and his office congratulated Icons who were nominated from his office.

Supporting positive deviants is crucial for promoting accountability in the public service:

ALZ has learnt that 'naming and faming' honest civil servants is a great way of promoting accountability in public institutions as the Integrity Icons are motivated to continue their efforts and inspire others to do work with integrity. Tariro Zitsenga is an example of an Icon who has done exceptionally well to use her nomination as an Icon to push for integrity in her work at Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals. Through her influence, Parirenyatwa has introduced an initiative called "Champions of Change" at the hospital. This initiative promotes quality patient care and services in the hospital. Tariro works together with the Hospital Public Relations Manager to spearhead the initiative.

Social impact takes time to manifest:

The Lab is only now beginning to see incremental gains for the communities it serves, four years into the project. This presents key lessons on how governance work requires patience and a strategic focus on longer-term impacts such as shifting norms, values, or policies, rather than short-term fixes.

Civil Society has a key translation role to play for the communities it serves:

Through its community-facing work, the Lab has not only managed to bring out accountability issues that plague communities but has also translated this community work into national advocacy campaigns regarding drug abuse and the sovereign wealth fund, building the accountability ecosystem to connect local and national actors. Translating the seemingly simple community challenges into policy issues is a crucial part of working towards longer-term impact.

AL ZIMBABWE BY THE NUMBERS

78

participants trained

7

twitter spaces hosted

13

films produced

2

policy notes written

22

learning and
thoughtpieces

11

songs produced and released



ACCOUNTABILITY INCUBATOR

The Accountability Incubator empowers young civil society leaders to build sustainable and effective tools for accountability, participation, and open government. It fosters a non-prescriptive and supportive environment where creative and enterprising individuals with innovative ideas can inspire accountability in their communities.

The 2023 Incubator recruitment focused on innovations around "Global Challenges, Local Solutions". It enrolled 11 accountpreneurs (five women and six men) from 93 applications. These accountpreneurs' initiatives experimented with solutions to pressing accountability and governance challenges across Zimbabwe, focusing on civic participation, climate justice, digital governance, and inclusion.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

93

applications
received

11

accountpreneurs
enrolled

7

training
workshops

1

graduation &
friendraiser

5,000

people reached through
media outreach



The training curriculum

- Civic Leadership, Engagement, and Accountability Re-Learning (CLEAR) Workshop - The workshop grounded the accountpreneurs in the principles of public accountability, advocacy, civic engagement, and servant leadership.
- Ideation and Design Bootcamp and Demo Day - The bootcamp taught participants how to use the principles of human-centered design to develop community projects that are relevant and impactful to communities. The demo day provided participants with a platform to pitch their ideas to experts and receive feedback.
- Pitching and Public Speaking Masterclasses - The two masterclasses helped accountpreneurs refine their ideas and pitches.
- Fundraising and Networking training - Introduced the participants to the fundraising cycles and the importance of building networks for fundraising.
- Media and Communications for Civic Leaders and Social Entrepreneurs - The workshop focused on building communication strategies, developing communications goals, identifying audiences, building key messages, and practical sessions on the use of digital communication tools.
- Exit class on Sustainable Civic Innovation - The Exit class empowered participants to harness innovation, collaboration, and community for sustainability and impact.

With support from the Accountability Lab, some of the 2023 accountpreneurs began to implement accountability projects in their communities while some past accountpreneurs grew significantly and established themselves as key accountability players in their communities.

Among the 2023 accountpreneurs, Chiedza Sasa is one of those who quickly converted her innovative idea into a practical project positively impacting her community. Chiedza Sasa piloted an initiative called "Council on Your Phone" to promote citizen participation and accountability in local government in Chitungwiza using technology. The Council on Your Phone initiative uses a Chatbot called ChitChat, which allows residents of Chitungwiza to make inquiries, report faults, and access information on council operations, such as full council minutes, directly through WhatsApp. ChitChat aims to bridge the gap between the Chitungwiza City Council and its residents, strengthening the social contract between them.

Another accountpreneur, Ruth Takapera started implementing her initiative IVA (IVA means "BE" in the local Shona language), which aims to empower women in Domboshawa, a peri-urban area 30 kilometers outside Harare. She undertook a series of training workshops on entrepreneurship and financial literacy with 15 women. In December 2023, she held a graduation ceremony for the women and gave them a peanut butter machine so that they could begin to practically use their acquired knowledge in the real world by selling peanut butter.

Our approaches to democracy, rights and governance work inspire me. It motivates me to innovate how we learn and adapt, using different methods of learning. Working with young people is quite satisfying. I enjoy seeing the impact of our programs on alumni as they work towards their own solutions to the challenges that they face.

- Alois Nyamazana



HIGHLIGHTS

2021 accountpreneur revolutionizes local government and citizen participation in Matobo

Descent Dube's initiative Matobo Youth Development Initiative (MYDI) has grown in leaps and bounds since he participated in the inaugural Accountability Incubator in Zimbabwe. MYDI is based in Matobo District, Matabeleland South, one of the poorest regions in Zimbabwe, and serves the Matobo community by involving young people in governance and development processes. It creates platforms for them to voice concerns and engage with local leaders and government officials. Some of MYDI's programs include training Information Champions in mobile reporting and fact-checking, empowering them to collect and document community stories about accountability challenges faced by residents.

MYDI also engages with community leaders in Matobo to address community challenges. Some of the issues they have tackled recently include drug and substance abuse affecting many young people in the country.

In 2023 MYDI achieved a major milestone when they secured 1.8 hectares from the Matobo Rural District Council (RDC) for building a Youth Incubation Center. The Center will serve as a hub for mobilizing young people to participate in governance and development processes. The MYDI, in partnership with the Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE), has also introduced recording and live streaming of RDC meetings, enhancing transparency and accountability.

One of MYDI's early successes is its involvement of young people in community development. The initiative organized a project involving youth and women to construct a local clinic, alleviating the community's challenges in accessing primary healthcare services at Malaba (Nyashongwe) in Matobo.





Changing the Narrative: The Food Justice Network's Fight for Climate Justice in Zimbabwe

Four Accountpreneurs; Roselily Ushewokunze (2022), Vimbai Nhengu (2022), Darlington Mafa (2021), and Caroline Mutimbanyoka (2021) convened the Food Justice Network in February 2023.

The Network was a finalist of the African Climate Innovation Challenge pitching a campaign to overhaul Zimbabwe's Seed Act, earning an opportunity to participate in a pitch competition on the sidelines of the inaugural Africa Climate Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September of the same year. While they did not win, the Network found the experience valuable and continues to advocate for amendments to the Seed Act.

The Food Justice Network supports farmers and subsistence farming communities by enabling their participation in advocacy for policies that enhance food sovereignty. They also advocate for equitable access to nutritious food and promote sustainable and just agricultural practices. Network Coordinator Ushewokunze and Darlington Mafa regularly publish thought pieces on climate change and green accountability in national publications. This advocacy work aims to shift narratives about climate change in the global south. The Network has also launched the "1000 Youth Voices for Seed Sovereignty" Campaign in collaboration with Basilizwi Trust. This initiative aims to motivate young people in Binga, Matabeleland North, to join the seed sovereignty movement.



Courtney Mukoyi Wins Wangari Maathai Impact Award

Courtney Mukoyi (2021) was honored with the Wangari Maathai Impact Award in Artificial Intelligence at the Deep Learning Indaba in Ghana for his VoteBot initiative. Mukoyi's project provides users with options to access a range of information, such as voter registration centers across the country, information about what the Constitution says about elections, and a link for prospective voters to view their registration status. Mukoyi's organization, Justice Code Foundation, deployed VoteBot in the run-up to the Zimbabwe 2023 elections to enhance the participation of young people in marginalized communities in electoral processes. Mobilization focused on young people in Harare, Bulawayo, Chitungwiza, and Matobo Rural District. The Maathai Impact Award encourages and recognizes work by African innovators that show the impactful application of machine learning and artificial intelligence.



INTEGRITY ICON

The Integrity Icon Campaign is the Lab’s citizen-driven campaign to honor honest civil servants who go above and beyond the call of duty to serve with integrity. Campaign nominations increased by 65% from those received in 2022. The number of government departments from which nominations were gathered also increased from two in 2022 to fifteen in 2023, while the number of districts where nominations came from increased from eight in 2022 to nineteen. The campaign created pathways for collaborations between the project and significant actors in the public sector, particularly the Apex Council, a body that represents all government workers, and the Zimbabwe Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions. Actors in the integrity value chain, particularly the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), continue supporting the Integrity Icon campaign processes.

CAMPAIGN BY NUMBERS

286

nominations

2,501

votes

10

community screenings

5

films

1,356,778

people reached through radio programs

The Integrity Icon campaign in 2023 achieved significant progress in promoting integrity and fostering conversations about good governance in Zimbabwe through its diverse media outreach, community engagement activities, and commitment to collaboration. This increased public awareness of the campaign and its issues of interest and sparked spirited conversations about integrity across various communities. Following the recognition of Tariro Zitsenga as an Integrity Icon, her home institution reignited its customer service champions initiative to promote integrity among staff members. Zitsenga is a nurse aide at Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals - Zimbabwe’s largest referral hospital.

Drawing from the Integrity Icon campaign, Youth Development in Action Trust (YODAT), a Macheke-based youth organization, established a hyperlocal version of the campaign celebrating 40 local heroes who served the community with integrity, including 10 civil servants.



During the year the campaign intensified partnerships with public sector institutions. Notably, the Lab was the only civil society organization participating in the Africa Public Service Day hosted by the government of Zimbabwe in Victoria Falls, in June 2023. Furthermore, the Lab signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) formalizing and strengthening the relationship between the two organizations in the fight for good governance. Now in its fourth iteration, the campaign has fostered a network of honest civil servants committed to upholding integrity across various government ministries and departments, including the ministries of health, education, public service labor and social welfare, and the immigration department.

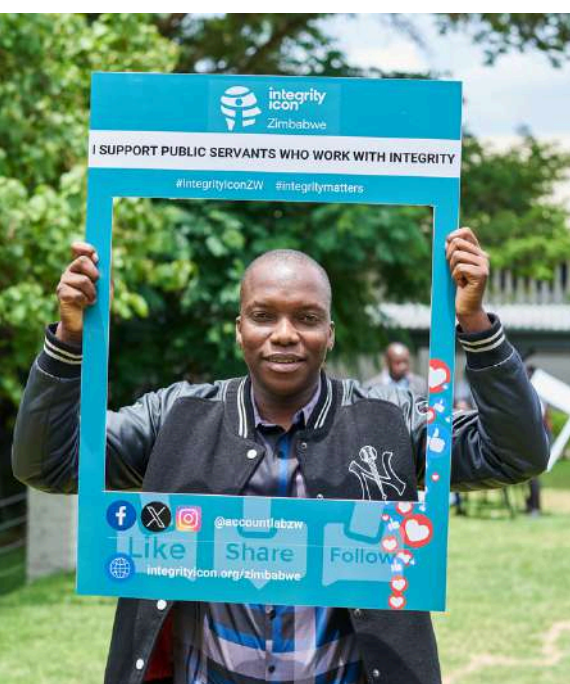
Fostering Dialogue Through Community Engagement

The campaign actively engaged with communities across Zimbabwe, hosting film screenings that reached 10 urban and rural communities including Chivhu, Matobo, Harare, and Bulawayo. 561 community members actively participated in the film screenings. Integrity Icon short documentary screenings fostered discussions on corruption, integrity, and government accountability. Notably, the screening in rural Chivhu garnered support from local leadership, including Chief Chivese and senior district officials. They emphasized the importance of upholding integrity as a driver of economic development. Similarly, screening for staff at Ingutsheni Central Hospital brought together 42 healthcare practitioners who recommitted themselves to upholding integrity within the healthcare system.

The campaign also staged Integrity Innovation Labs, where stakeholders including civil servants, Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), Community Frontline Associates (CFAs), and Accountpreneurs (Accountability Entrepreneurs) engaged in conversations to support the development of innovative solutions to pressing accountability challenges. Four Integrity Icons have led conversations on integrity as part of Integrity Innovation Labs, resulting in the development of a tech solution, fashioned to minimize land corruption in Chitungwiza.

Raising Awareness Through Media Outreach

The campaign leveraged media platforms to raise public awareness and promote debate. Radio programs promoting the campaign and highlighting the work of Integrity Icons through interviews and their stories were broadcast on national stations, including Radio Zimbabwe, Star FM, Sky Metro FM, and a Harare News Podcast. Cumulatively, radio programs reached an estimated 1,356,778 people. This media outreach received positive feedback on the ALZ Whatsapp line, with listeners reflecting on their experiences with public servants and submitting their nominations.



Building Partnerships for Collective Action

The Campaign fostered collaboration with stakeholders in the accountability ecosystem. ALZ was the only civil society organization invited to participate in the Africa Public Service Day hosted by the Zimbabwean government. The Lab signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), formalizing and strengthening the relationship between the two organizations in the fight for good governance. This collaborative spirit was further displayed by the high attendance of 190 people at the Integrity Icon Summit and Awards Ceremony, exceeding expectations and growing from the 129 who attended the ceremony in 2022. A live stream of the event achieved 1,193 views online. ZACC's support at this event underscores the project's success in building a collaborative ecosystem to promote integrity.

Tariro Zitsenga's Ripple Effect

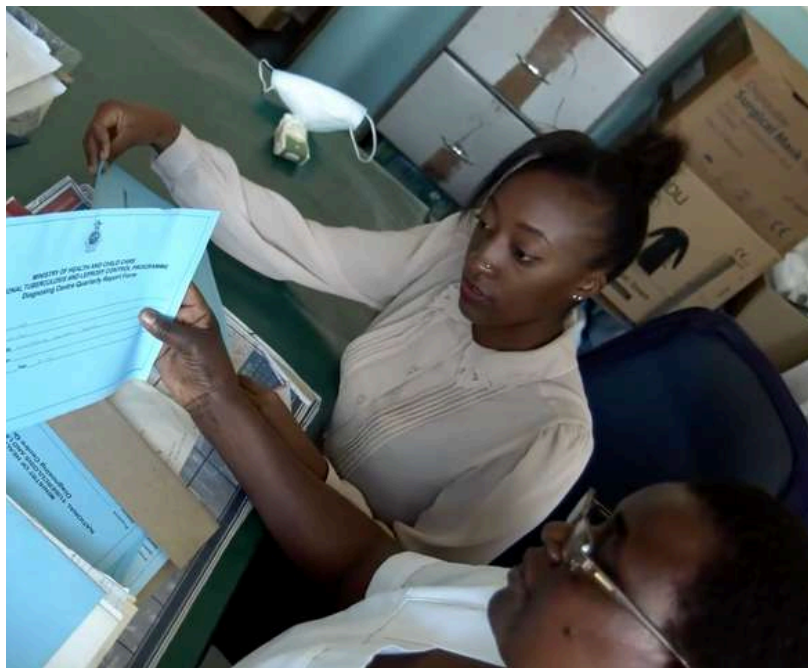
The Integrity Icon Campaign has had ripple effects and is sponsoring reform in government sectors. Tariro Zitsenga isn't an average nurse aide at Parirenyatwa Group Hospitals (PGH). In 2022, her dedication to serving patients with integrity, especially during the demanding COVID-19 period, earned her a prestigious nomination as an Integrity Icon. This recognition has had a profound impact, not just on Tariro but on the entire hospital and her community.

Being named an Integrity Icon was a turning point for Tariro. She felt a deep sense of pride. Knowing her impact on patients fuelled her passion to continue serving with integrity and commitment. The campaign's recognition of Tariro impressed PGH's CEO, Mr. Ernest Manyawo, who assigned the public relations manager to work with Tariro to promote integrity and a good work ethic throughout the hospital.

Inspired by the Integrity Icon campaign, Tariro and the PR manager spearheaded a "Champions of Change" initiative in early 2023. This program identifies volunteers dedicated to improving service delivery and replicating the core values of the Integrity Icon Campaign in the hospital. These "champions" work alongside Tariro, tackling issues like queue management and patient assistance, ultimately leading to a smoother and more efficient patient experience.

“When I was doing my community work on sexual reproductive health rights, a certain person approached me and offered to supply me with medical drugs for selling. I refused because I worked in a hospital. After all, there was a conflict of interest. I told the person that I am an Integrity Icon and that I do not engage in unethical behavior.”

– Tariro Zitsenga



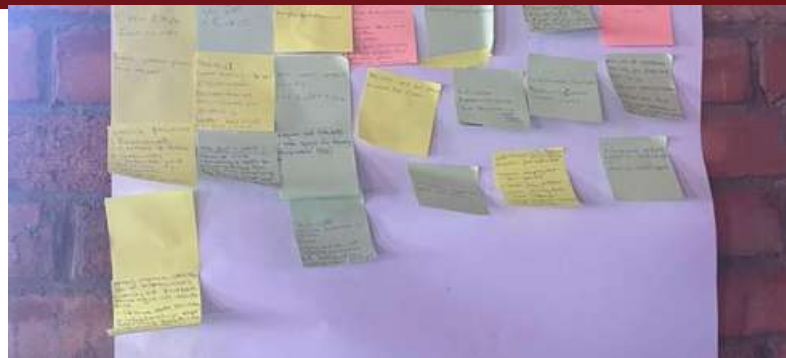
From Integrity to community champion

Anesu Chinguwa, a Health Promotion Officer at Ingutsheni Mental Hospital in Bulawayo, is a shining example of the campaign's power. Her nomination as an Integrity Icon in 2021 has propelled her career and significantly transformed her approach to serving the community. Anesu is now conscious of working with integrity and serving communities wholeheartedly. After being nominated, Anesu promoted accountability in her department. She has introduced a system for proper recording keeping of all the resources that are allocated to her department before taking them to communities, and regularly implements stock takes to ensure effective management of resources.

Anesu considers her nomination a pivotal moment that challenged her to reach even higher. It inspired her to deeply reflect on the meaning of integrity and how she could better integrate it into her work. Previously, Anesu had only focused on delivering excellent community service, but the campaign transformed her into a passionate advocate for integrity, inspiring those around her.

Inspired by her journey, Anesu's colleagues sought to understand the Integrity Icon Campaign and its application. Collaborating with the Lab, Anesu organized a screening of Icon short documentaries, which was followed by a discussion. This shift towards open dialogue about integrity paved the way for a more ethical and accountable work environment.

Anesu Chinguwa's journey exemplifies how one person's dedication can inspire positive change within themselves and their community.



CIVIC ACTION TEAMS

Civic Action Teams (CivActs) are an Accountability Lab citizen feedback, dialogue and community voice platform to ensure accountability in the development process. Using a six stage cycle (listening, collecting, interpreting, disseminating, and acting), the initiative facilitates community action around collective action problems and mends the social contract at a local level between residents and local authorities and other service providers. Since inception in 2020, ALZ in partnership with the Vendors Initiative for Social and Economic transformation (VISET), National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO), Amandla Centre of Zimbabwe and Zvigogodza Trust implemented 22 CivActs cycles. In 2023, these six-month cycles, led by 39 Community Frontline Associates (CFAs) mobilized community action around accountability and social service delivery improvements in Bulawayo, Goromonzi, Harare, and Chitungwiza. CFAs, who are local leaders who reside in these areas, facilitated residents engagements with duty-bearers and service providers using accurate information gathered through CivActs listening meetings and community surveys, and platforms like feedback meetings that are part of the CivActs model/cycle. In 2023, CivActs outreach reached at least 22,041 community members through community engagements, bulletins, surveys and radio shows, most of whom were women at 70% of audiences.

CIVACTS IN NUMBERS

1000

number of people reached by bulletins

22,041

people reached

74

community listening meetings

10

surveys

32

bulletins

29

radio shows

12,000

people reached by radio show

1350

people reached through surveys

CivActs have resulted in significant relief on social service delivery in the four areas it covers and greater accountability through regular engagements between local authorities, service providers, and communities on a range of issues that include energy provision, sewer and reticulation services, illicit land acquisition and unauthorized building on designated wetlands, drug and substance abuse, illicit lithium mining and informal markets rehabilitation. On top of these tangible results which speak to residents' bread and butter issues, CivActs have cultivated a culture of accountability and empowered communities to tackle local challenges through evidence-backed dialogue with duty bearers and service providers. This cultural element is critical to sustainability around the resolution of community level collective action problems, rebuilding the social contract and ensuring that residents/citizens know how to gather evidence to sustain and evidence their issues in engagements with policy makers. Below are some specific results from CivActs in 2023:

Rebuilding accountability chains by strengthening local engagement:

CivActs has helped to rebuild relationships and trust between duty-bearers and communities. This has resulted in improved accessibility to duty-bearers for the communities and improved responsiveness by duty-bearers to challenges. One CivActs location Mbare, which is perennially inundated by a multitude of challenges, including waste management, sewer and reticulation, and power cuts and faults, was able to rebuild accountability chains on the issues of energy provision. Mbare is Zimbabwe's oldest high-density/low income suburb. Mbare community engagements outlined challenges around energy provision caused by faulty cables, poor service from the national supply company Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC), and demands for bribes. Given the severity of the issue, and its constant recurrence on top of the list during CivActs surveys, CFA's supported by Amandla Centre of Zimbabwe and ALZ pursued the issue and initiated crucial dialogue between residents and ZETDC officials. This direct engagement, strengthened by evidence of the salience of the issue from surveys proved effective and led to the ZETDC replacing faulty cables, and significant improvements in power supply for Mbare residents. Furthermore, ZETDC officials agreed to strengthen their accountability to the community by joining a community WhatsApp group with residents and local council officials which serves as a platform for reporting faults, raising and addressing concerns, and alerting the service provider to instances of bribery, and other illicit activities related to electricity.

The Glenview community engaged the City of Harare Department of Works Manager and the Water Alliance Coordinator for the Glenview District Office on water challenges including access to water and violence at water points. This evidence-based approach shed light on the severity of the situation, particularly the violence perpetrated by the marshals themselves. The impact was immediate. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the Harare City Council swiftly addressed the issue by sending the borehole marshals for conflict resolution training. This action demonstrates CivActs' ability to hold service providers accountable and achieve tangible results for residents.



Local Policy influence

The CivActs initiative also played a key role in influencing a city council resolution to repair long-neglected sewer blockages in Mbare, Ward 11. Through community listening engagements and surveys, CFAs brought the residents' concerns to the attention of the ward councilor. The councilor conveyed these concerns in a council meeting which resulted in the adoption of the council resolution. The council subsequently procured new pipes and is scheduled to begin repairs, demonstrating the project's growing influence on local policy and service delivery.

The CivActs initiative in Chitungwiza focused on environmental concerns around corporations and individuals building on wetlands. Following community concerns on the issue, CivActs facilitated meetings between residents, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA), and the Municipality of Chitungwiza. The EMA committed to surveying the extent of construction on wetlands and halting any new projects that pose a threat to the environment. The Chitungwiza Municipality acknowledged the importance of environmental issues and agreed to consider them in the development of the City's masterplan.

CivActs also provided technical support to Chitungwiza residents who petitioned the Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Investment Promotion to allocate funds for the construction of the Muda Dam. Construction of the Dam was scheduled to start in 2029 but has been delayed by non availability of funds. The Dam is meant to serve as a water source for the growing Chitungwiza population which currently relies on the already burdened Harare water source. This advocacy aims to address the issue of water shortages identified during CivActs engagements and surveys in Chitungwiza.

CivActs have fostered local level accountability of duty bears and service providers and influenced policy changes by facilitating open communication and resident-led action. This has led to target communities being better empowered to demand and realize their rights, increase their social capital, and work towards a more sustainable future.

Highlights

- Banshee's song for Intetho, Defiance, won her a nomination for Best Female Hip Hop Artist in the 13th Edition of the Zimbabwe HipHop Awards. The song's lyrics discuss gender-based violence, and it was placed in the social impact category.
- Film fellows produced nine short films exploring accountability narratives through 4 broad themes; corruption and unemployment, women's rights, climate change, and mental health. The films were publicized through the Bokola Film Festival and community screenings sparking conversations among communities. Notably, A Few More Dollars produced by Jabulani Mudzova won the National Arts and Merit Award for Outstanding Short Film Production. The film depicts the daily struggles for a young man trying to stay afloat in the uncertain economic conditions in Zimbabwe.
- The School of Satire trained five young satirists on storytelling and satire techniques to address accountability issues. The program produced three satire videos on period poverty and environmental governance, reaching 11,472 views. Additionally, Arts4Change produced two rap reports, one summarizing the program's strategy and the other highlighting the challenges faced by female artists creating social justice music.



ARTS4CHANGE PROJECTS

The Arts4Change program, incorporating Voice2Rep and the Film Fellowship, is implemented in collaboration with Magamba Network. The program leverages creative approaches to spark dialogue on critical social issues in Zimbabwe. Activities include mentorship and training, network building, and advocacy. Participants learn how to use their music or films to influence thinking, behaviors and local policy in a way that elevates bottom-up approaches. Through these creative approaches the program empowers young artists to raise awareness, engage communities, and advocate for change.

The 2023 Arts4Change cohort comprised ten Voice2Rep Artists, nine film fellows, and five satirists. Voice2Rep Zimbabwe artists produced an album, Intetho/Hurukuro featuring eleven songs discussing accountability, gender-based violence, corruption and the mental health challenges young people face. The album was launched through a press conference and a two-day event at Let Them Village. The event featured artist performances, discussions, and the creation of a mural viewed by more than 5,000 people.





Testimonial: Ska Sebata

Glad to have joined Accountability Lab Zimbabwe last week as they had their first ever combined cohort induction which included the 2024 Film Fellowship, Voice2Represent and Accountability Incubator Fellows.

As an alumni of the Film Fellowship under the New Narratives for Accountability in Zimbabwe project, I had the honor of joining other alumni (Courteny Mukoyi, Princess Thandeka, Roselilly Ushewokunze, Nkosikhona Dibit) in a panel on best practice methods, learnings and teachings from our time as fellows as well as our journeys after the program. Best practice models serve as a roadmap for program growth because they leverage past successes and failures to inform future efforts.

For me the journey was about finding my voice, a voice that could advocate for social justice and human rights, and I have been doing just that. Since the Fellowship, I have been fortunate enough to work and interact with incredible organizations such as the Pan African Human Rights Defenders Network, Southern Human Rights Defenders Network and Internews. My film has taken me to platforms I never dreamed of and [has] been showcased globally including in India, the USA, New Zealand Greece, Nigeria, Zambia, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, Silicon Valley African Film Festival, Women Deliver Arts and Film Festival, Student World Impact Film Festival (SWIFF), Athens Digital Arts Festival, Africa International Human Rights Film Festival) to name a few. I have sat on panels which speak to accountability, good governance, human rights and gender equality. The film has been showcased for programs by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), under their Education Plus Initiative, and the African Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders for their Annual convention. Seeing the film resonate with audiences globally, sparking discussions and igniting change has been nothing short of amazing.

We often see people as they are, but the greatest gift is to see them as they might become. That's what the Accountability Lab Film Fellowship did for me. It nurtured my potential, sculpted my skills and empowered me to become the storyteller I was always meant to be. It is a testament to the transformative power of believing in someone's potential, and I am forever grateful for the chance to grow, to learn, and to make a difference.

Originally posted on [LinkedIn](#)



Empowering Artists and Filmmakers to Champion Accountability

Through its unique two-pronged approach, Arts4Change empowers both musicians and filmmakers to champion conversations about accountability in their communities.

Unearthing Voices for Representation

The program's "Voice2Rep" music initiative shines a spotlight on undiscovered music artists who advocate for greater representation and participation in social and political processes. [Marvellous Tshuma \(Marve T\)](#), a Voice2Rep artist, exemplifies this mission. Leveraging the skills and recognition she gained through Arts4Change, Marve T works with [The Noble Hands Trust](#) and Albinism Konnect. These projects promote the inclusion of ethnic minorities and people with albinism in governance and social programs. Marve T further utilizes her music to raise resources, funds and awareness for these crucial initiatives.

Another Voice2Rep success story is Comfort Ndlovu, the 2022 Voice2Rep Zimbabwe Winner, who produced [Qiniso for Vakuru](#). Ndlovu represents Matabeleland's long tradition of imbube music and Ndebele culture. The video for Qiniso (The Truth) was published in 2023, [triggering conversations](#) about [national healing](#). Comfort wrote the song hoping to encourage healing and reconciliation among young people by facing the truth of the past. The song's empowering lyrics and moving melody call for unity and understanding. The music and video reflect on the Gukurahundi massacres from 1983 to 1987, in which government forces killed about 20,000 people in ethnic Ndebele areas. Since then, the government has done little to acknowledge the scale and scope of the violence. The traumatic memories of this history continue to be a blight on the Zimbabwean psyche and contribute to the continued alienation of young people from the region. "I was trying to give people hope that we may have our differences, but we are people of the same great nation." says Comfort of the song.

Chitungwiza Youth Find Voice and Solutions Through Film Screenings

The Accountability Film Fellowship hosts the annual Bokola Film Festival showcasing the fellows' capstone film projects to diverse audiences across the country. The Fellowship organized a screening event in Chitungwiza, sparking important conversations among young people about the challenges they face.

The screening showcased nine films under themes including corruption, women's issues, climate change, and mental health. They resonated deeply with the audience, particularly A Few More Dollars by Jabulani Mudzova, Life In Rehab by Rungamai Tavirai, and Bleeding Heart by Easy Sibanda. These films depict the daily struggles of Chitungwiza youth, fostering a sense of shared experience.

A Few More Dollars sparked a conversation about unemployment and financial struggles. The audience connected this theme to the issue of corruption, highlighting the prevalence of bribery and requests for sexual favors in exchange for job opportunities. This dialogue exposed a lack of awareness among youth regarding their employment rights, a crucial takeaway for the project organizers.

Bleeding Heart and Breaking the Stigma prompted a powerful discussion about sexual assault, domestic violence, and access to healthcare for women living with albinism. The conversation revealed a disheartening reality – a lack of support from police and a culture of silence surrounding sexual assault and domestic violence. Further, a lack of awareness regarding the challenges faced by people living with albinism underscored the need for greater inclusion within the community.

Rains and Cattle Farming in Matopo brought to light indigenous farming methods for dealing with climate change, while Life in Rehab addressed the growing issue of mental health among youth. The dialogue exposed a critical need for more accessible mental health services and support institutions within Chitungwiza.

These discussions revealed a critical gap in the awareness of rights and access to support services. The Fellowship, through this event, gained valuable insights into the challenges faced by Chitungwiza youth. This knowledge empowers them to tailor future programming and advocacy efforts to bridge these gaps and empower young people to hold their local government accountable. The event also fostered a sense of community and solidarity among the youth, providing a platform for them to share their experiences and collectively seek solutions to the issues that impact their lives.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

19

artists trained

11

songs produced

79,191

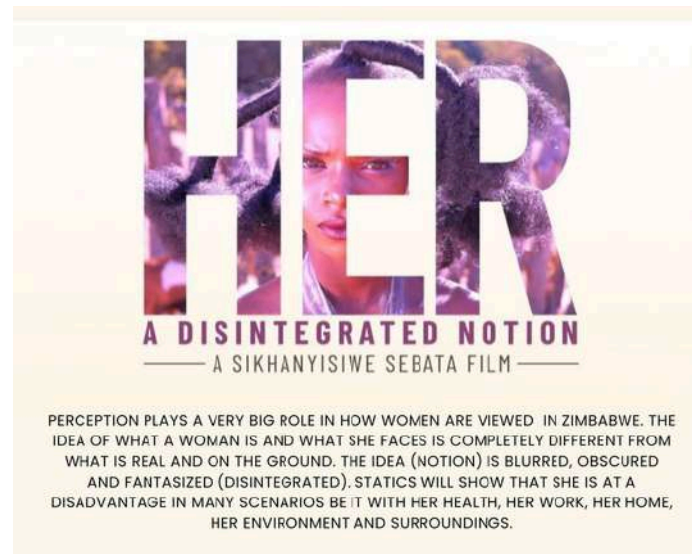
streams

13

films produced

13,305

views



Equipping Visionaries to Tell Powerful Stories

Arts4Change isn't limited to music. The program's "Accountability Film Fellowship" equips aspiring filmmakers with the skills and knowledge to tackle social issues through visual storytelling. Graduates like [Ska Sebata](#) are making a significant impact. Using the expertise gained through the Fellowship, Sebata produced [HER - A Disintegrated Notion](#), a short film that focuses on women's inclusion and gender equality. The film has sparked conversations about these issues in Africa and beyond, on international platforms like the Zimbabwe International Film Festival and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's "Africa Celebrates" event. [Mary Mundeya](#) is another testament to the program's impact. The film Mary produced during the Fellowship not only secured her a spot at the prestigious International Anti-Corruption Conference in Washington D.C., making her the first Zimbabwean journalist to attend, but it also led to her collaboration with the Women's Economic Justice Project. Another film, [A Woman's Burden](#), produced in collaboration with CivActs highlights the challenges faced by young women in Zimbabwe's informal sector, and continues to raise awareness and inspire action.

Arts4Change is a beacon of hope, empowering a new generation of artists and filmmakers who are wielding their creativity to demand accountability and ignite positive change. By nurturing talented musicians and filmmakers who advocate for representation, participation, and social justice, Arts4Change is paving the way for a more inclusive and equitable future.

Additional Programming Highlights

Operations Research

ALZ is implementing two research projects as part of its learning component. The research projects entail analyses on the political settlement in the city of Harare, and evaluating community values in 12 communities.

African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC)

ALZ is part of a consortium undertaking research on the City of Harare under the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC). The ACRC is a major six year investment (2020-2026) by FCDO to fund new, operationally-relevant research to address intractable development challenges in African cities. The Lab leads the Political Settlements Analysis components of the research in Zimbabwe and its role is to:

- Establish the role of Zimbabwe's national political settlement and the city of Harare's power balance in shaping urban development challenges in Harare from 2013 to 2021.
- Show how communities of interest and practice, and national political settlements bear down on the city as a subnational entity with its own balance of power and how this is informed by and informs the national level political settlement.
- Map Zimbabwe's national political settlement and its interrelationship with the city of Harare's power balance.
- Investigate the links between the political settlement, city-level power balance and four city domains (Structural transformation, Land and connectivity, neighborhood and district economic development, and informal settlements), and
- Apply the ACRC political economy diagnostic tool to specific priority complex problems that are identified during research.

The Lab undertook rigorous political settlements analysis to provide new insights on the interaction between the national and subnational governments (City of Harare) in influencing development outcomes. The research has enabled conversations on development outcomes on the city to be nuanced, more productive and has contributed to the decision to advance Zimbabwe to the next stage of project implementation focusing on neighborhood, district and economic development.

Appreciating its expertise on political settlements analysis, the consortium has requested the Lab to integrate it into two research domains, Informal Settlements and Neighbourhood, District, and Economic Development in Harare. The research being undertaken under the project is envisaged to lead to evidence-based policy and practice, catalyzing new efforts to address a wide range of complex, longstanding, and frequently interrelated problems which require multi-sectoral politically savvy solutions.

The Lab is thus part of a diverse international partnership whose complementary skills explore how positive transformation can lead to pro-poor growth, improved well being, and inclusive development. At an operational level, the Political Settlements analyses, have positioned the institution as a leading thought leader on political settlements in Zimbabwe. On an operational level, ALZ can develop context-specific interventions and research products that have attracted both national and global audiences. The application of PS analyses during the 2023 elections, for instance, saw ALZ providing the leading commentary on electoral accountability in Zimbabwe.

ALZ continues to play an advisory role in the consortium in shaping the second phase of the project which entails the implementation of a pilot project. Its political analyses inform the conceptualization of ACRC's interventions in Zimbabwe. At the commencement of the pilot project, ALZ will undertake localized research to unpack political dynamics at the Glenview Mall (furniture manufacturing and marketplace).

Evaluating Community Values in Southern Africa Project

Using experimental field research conducted in post-conflict communities in Zimbabwe with randomized and controlled (RCT) community-level interventions across 12 target communities, ALZ has provided groundbreaking evidence that shows a reduction in social trust and cohesion in the aftermath of the disputed August 2023 elections. Through the project, the Lab has been able to unpack deeply embedded social problems in the 12 communities. The Lab's research also produced results with the same rigor as other reputable think tanks such as Afrobarometer placing a reputational record on the Lab's operations research.

By facilitating the development of community values statements, using randomized invitations for participants the Lab brought together participants most of whom had never attended a community meeting to envision peaceful societies and took steps towards achieving social trust and cohesion. The Lab partners with Washington State University to implement the Evaluating Community Values in Southern Africa project. The project seeks to answer the primary question of whether community-based interventions can build social trust and community cohesion while reducing perceived and actual threats and violence. Interventions focus on cultivating cooperation toward outcomes that will benefit the community at large. The research feeds into the Lab's CivActs work through continuous learning in communities and ensuring that the Lab tailors its community interventions. The research is ongoing and the Lab will continue to report on the changes.

ALZ trained 40 enumerators and deployed 30 to collect survey data in 12 communities between May and September 2023.

3100 cumulative responses were collected during the first and second surveys in the following areas: Mbare, Nkulumane, Goromonzi, Gwanda, Cowdray Park, Chitungwiza, Tshabalala, Mabvuku, Epworth, Entumbane, Glenview and Pumula.

Regional Work

ALZ's work has not only informed processes at the local level, but the work of reimagining accountability narratives in Zimbabwe has reverberated across different fora and diverse audiences. Chief among these is the convening of the pre-summit for Democracy for CSOs and other stakeholders in the space.

Advocacy and Policy

The year brought significant questions about the future of democratic governance and the space for citizen participation in national processes. The 2023 General Election was scheduled for August, amid controversy about the delayed announcement of election dates, a poorly executed delimitation exercise, and numerous infarctions on human rights and civic space. In this milieu, ALZ undertook several initiatives in the period preceding, during, and after the August 2023 elections to enhance accountability within the electoral process.

Election Accountability Framework

Before the August 2023 elections, ALZ developed an Election Accountability Framework. This framework, introduced through a workshop for implementing partners of the New Narratives for Accountability in Zimbabwe project in May 2023, inculcated a deep understanding of elections in Africa, and the Zimbabwean electoral cycle, providing comprehensive guidance on monitoring electoral processes and demanding accountability from relevant institutions. The framework outlined key phases of the electoral cycle, legal provisions, and the roles of various actors in ensuring electoral integrity.

Observation and Opinion Papers

Using the Election Accountability Framework, ALZ deployed an in-situ election observation team to key battleground constituencies during the August 2023 elections. This team monitored the electoral process through an accountability lens, identifying both procedural adherence and potential irregularities. Additionally, ALZ produced opinion papers addressing various aspects of the electoral process including competitiveness, legislative issues, and the credibility of the elections.

Opinion pieces included:

- [How competitive is the 2023 Zimbabwe Election, and where?](#)
- [General Notice 635: Was there smoke without a fire?](#)
- [Supporting Zimbabwe to get free and fair elections is not an event but a process": The Role of the EU Election Observation Mission](#)
- [Zimbabwe election 'not credible': Voters 'disenfranchised' as ZANU-PF extends 4-decade grip on power](#)
- [Battleground constituencies in Zimbabwe's 2023 elections](#)

Election Accountability Grants

ALZ provided sub-grants to organizations including WeLead Trust, Ekhaya Vote Consortium, the Vendors Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation (VISET), and the Zimbabwe National Editors Forum (ZINEF).

This was to increase awareness and participation in electoral processes. Sub-grant activities mobilized 403 citizens to register as voters, reached 127 people through training workshops and press clubs, and reached 74,405 people online.

- Youth Voter Bus Campaign: WeLead Trust organized a campaign targeting youth voter mobilization, utilizing platforms such as X-space discussions and grassroots initiatives like Rank2Rank campaigns targeting young people at bus terminuses. These efforts significantly engaged young people, both online and offline fostering discussions on electoral participation. The campaign achieved a reach of 64,208 online, and more than 4,500 people through campaign materials and face-to-face interactions.
- Voter Mobilization in Bulawayo and Matobo: Ekhaya Vote Consortium conducted voter mobilization exercises and awareness campaigns in Bulawayo and Matobo, resulting in increased voter registrations and heightened awareness of electoral processes. The project recruited 22 volunteers who mobilized almost 403 people.
- Press Clubs and Elections Discussion Forums: ZINEF organized press clubs and discussion forums to engage journalists and journalism students on monitoring election promises and addressing voter apathy. These forums emphasized the role of the media in promoting accountability and citizen participation.
- Socio-Economic Rights Teach-ins: VISET conducted capacity-building sessions for informal sector workers, focusing on constitutional rights and mechanisms for demanding accountability from government institutions.

ALZSpaces on Elections and Public Accountability

ALZ hosted X-spaces, called ALZSpaces, conversations exploring accountability issues related to the general election. These five spaces facilitated public advocacy and lively discussions surrounding election accountability on critical themes such as representation, participation, and the electoral environment. ALZSpaces aimed to promote public awareness and discourse, reinvigorating the public sphere. ALZSpaces attracted 11.8k listeners.

Case Study: Accountability Lab's Advocacy for Drug Policy Reform in Zimbabwe

Addressing community concerns often requires more than local solutions; sometimes national policy change is needed to address local challenges. This recognition prompted the Lab to elevate certain issues from the grassroots to the national level, advocating for policy reforms.

One such issue is drug abuse, which has been escalating in communities, and is often referenced across CivActs' diverse communities. For example, one CivActs Survey of Chitungwiza residents found that more than 90% of respondents consistently described the prevalence of drug and substance abuse among young people as high. Residents reported crystal meth (49%) as the most used drug, reflecting a nationwide trend.

In collaboration with the Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust and the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network (ZCLDN), Accountability Lab facilitated a pivotal Policy Dialogue Meeting on June 26, 2023. This event, coincided with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, convening key stakeholders including members of parliament and civil society organizations. The dialogue emphasized the urgent need for coordinated action to address the drug scourge. Notably, Fiona Adolo, a representative of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Zimbabwe whose speech addressed the impact of drugs on young people, and Honorable Daniel Molokele the Acting Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Care, and Member of Parliament for Hwange Central Constituency who spoke about the need for multisectoral collaboration, and deepening advocacy for tangible policy change.

Following further engagement, Accountability Lab established a CSOs Working Group on Drug Abuse, comprising eight organizations committed to holding authorities accountable for the implementation of the National Drug Master Plan. Organizations included Anti-drug Abuse Forum Zimbabwe, Amandla Centre of Zimbabwe, Zvigogodza Trust, Abangane Trust, Youth Invest, WELEAD, Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust. and Vendors Initiative for Socio-economic Transformation. This collaborative effort identified policy gaps, advocating for comprehensive strategies to combat drug abuse.

Following the 2023 General Election, Accountability Lab's engagements extended to young parliamentarians, recognizing their role in policy formulation and building on previous engagements related to the issue. This dialogue facilitated discussion of Accountability Lab's policy note disseminating comprehensive research and policy recommendations informed by CivActs' data and the Working Groups recommendations. The dialogue was successful in educating young parliamentarians about the issue, with immediate results realized through parliamentarians debating the drug crisis in parliament and referencing ALZ data and recommendations. Debate in parliament has included ALZ recommendations for the construction of Vocational Training Centers and self-help centers; allocation of a specific coordinated national budget; awareness raising initiatives on drugs and substance abuse; construction of rehabilitation centers; and, strengthening law enforcement agencies to respond to drug peddling.

The policy recommendations put forth by Accountability Lab emphasize the imperative of reviewing existing legislation to adapt to evolving drug value chains and advocating for human-centered approaches prioritizing public health and accountability.

The Lab's advocacy efforts have also engaged and involved the Parliament of Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour And Social Welfare, Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Ministry of Home Affairs. These stakeholders have provided invaluable input in unpacking global and local initiatives to curb drug use among the youth.

Offline engagements were supported through digital and traditional media including two drug policy notes, several blogs and opinion pieces as well as multimedia content raising awareness and educating audiences and promoting citizen advocacy. The Lab employed various platforms to raise awareness about advocacy on drug and substance abuse including several radio engagements and multimedia content shared on social media. Social media content raised debate among audiences with some reporting challenges in their own communities: *Īyi nyaya iyi yema drugs tisangonanga government kuvanhu vekumusoro. Why tisingazvidzidzise kudzivirira zvokuvadza toga tisu hurumende yacho. Arikutengeswa vanhu vachitoziva paarikubva voti government ipi imi ndimi government yacho.* - This drug and substance abuse issue isn't just for senior government officials. There is a problem with local level enforcement. Communities need to learn how to prevent this crisis and take responsibility. We know where drugs are being sold." Facebook comment
Digital content related to drug and substance abuse has achieved a reach of 29,588, over 7,650 views.

The Lab's advocacy on drug policy reform is ongoing.

STAFF CORNER

Samuel Takawira was voted ALZ's staff member of the year 2023. Takawira is the project officer of the Integrity Icon campaign in Zimbabwe. He has steered the campaign, intentionally fostering relationships with key accountability actors including the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, and nurtured Zimbabwe's growing community of Integrity Icons. His efforts have increased the reach of the Campaign into communities through hyperlocal events, influencing integrity and accountability at the grassroots. Samuel, is a valued team member who inspires his colleagues with energy and enthusiasm. Takawira describes the achievement as honorable and he appreciates being recognized by the organization's leadership and his colleagues.

"Being recognized as a staff member of the year is an outstanding achievement for me and a testament to the work we are collectively doing at ALZ. It is not a solo effort, but it is being surrounded by people who want you to excel."

Bathabile Dlamini #teamlab's Media and Communications Officer in Zimbabwe. Armed with a journalism degree and soon-to-be Masters in Strategic Communication, Bathabile is a powerhouse in storytelling and multimedia content creation. She's not only a celebrated actress and filmmaker, with National Arts Merit Awards for her performances but also a skilled content creator for humanitarian organizations, producing impactful documentaries and podcasts.

Passionate about gender equality, Bathabile advocates against gender-based violence through workshops and documentaries. With her dedication and creativity, she's driving positive change in Zimbabwe's media landscape, using her platform to amplify voices and initiate vital conversations on social issues.

Beloved Chiweshe brings a wealth of experience and passion to his role as Programs and Campaigns Manager/Deputy Chief of Party at ALZ. With over fifteen years in democracy, governance, and human rights, Beloved has managed portfolios at the Embassy of Switzerland and PACT, driving impactful campaigns like the Ballot Revolution and FEYA FEYA-Free and Fair Elections. His leadership extends globally, having interned in Amsterdam and Brussels, where he founded the Association of Zimbabweans in the Netherlands. Beloved holds degrees from Africa University and Utrecht University, alongside certificates in monitoring, evaluation, and public relations. As a former student leader and recipient of Libertas and Chevening Scholarships, Beloved's commitment to democracy and human rights shines through, making him a valuable asset to #teamlab and the fight for accountability and good governance in southern Africa.

BUDGET

4

grants

US\$2,268,690.91

total budget for 2023

17

staff members

595,509

total reach
25 509 offline
570,000 online