



Zimbabwe and Zambia co-hosted the 20th Session of the UN World Tourism General Assembly from 24-29 August 2013 in Victoria Falls. (Photo: Shaun Metcalfe)

The feature story in this seventh issue of the UN in Zimbabwe Newsletter highlights the just ended UN World Tourism General Assembly with focus on promoting tourism for sustainable development. The newsletter also covers efforts on food and nutrition security as well as Millennium Development Goals progress in Zimbabwe. The remaining articles highlight issues related to health, youth employment, rural development, gender, and migration.

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UNWTO: Promoting Tourism for Sustainable Development

The 20th UNWTO General Assembly held from 24-29 August 2013 in the towns of Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe) and Livingstone (Zambia) showed the increasing impact of tourism as a tool for development.

The General Assembly saw the highest participation in its history, with over 120 delegations from UNWTO Members States, more than 40 tourism ministers, for a total of 700 delegates and around 200 media representatives.

Tourism has become a central sector, particularly in Africa,

where it accounts for an increasing number of jobs, community development projects, as well as investment and export earnings. International tourist arrivals in Africa grew from 15 million in 1990 to 52 million in 2012, while exports from international tourism reached USD 34 billion in 2012, up from USD 6 billion in 1990.

Tourism in Zimbabwe saw arrivals of 1.8 million in 2012 and the sector generating USD 750 million. As such, tourism has become one of the key economic drivers in Zimbabwe, contributing about 10%

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of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector is expected to contribute 15% to GDP, generating over 1 billion in foreign currency receipts, and over 10% of total employment by 2015.

Noting the positive trend, the Minister of Tourism, Honourable Walter Mzembe said, "In Zimbabwe, tourism, next to mining, agriculture and infrastructure, is a fourth pillar of our economy to generate wealth and increase access to employment, stimulate rural transformation, and usher livelihood opportunities to ordinary households, thus a sustainable tool for poverty alleviation."



The 20th session of UNWTO General Assembly in session, Victoria Falls.

“Tourism in Zimbabwe contributes about 10% of GDP & is expected to increase to 15% by 2015”

In support of on-going national efforts, the United Nations in Zimbabwe is supporting the first National Tourism Policy. The policy aims to ensure competitiveness of the tourism sector in the regional and global context as well as to foster domestic tourism. Similarly, the United Nations in Zimbabwe, as a prelude to the UNWTO General

Assembly, facilitated a conference from 21-22 August in Victoria Falls on how to enhance Zimbabwe’s travel and tourism competitiveness to make the country a destination of choice. During the conference, participants agreed that to enhance tourism competitiveness in Zimbabwe, visa facilitation, flight connectivity, and infrastructure development required serious investment.

Addressing delegates, the UNWTO Secretary General, Mr. Taleb Rifai underscored the event as “A timely opportunity for all of us to continue

along an encouraging path to drive tourism towards its fullest potential in fostering sustainable economic growth, jobs and development, and what better backdrop to do so than here in Africa, a region where we believe tourism can be a true force for good.”

On the side of the conference, a UN supported Zimbabwe Investment Handbook was launched. While handing over 1000 copies of the handbook to the Ministry of Tourism; Dr. Desire Sibanda, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion said, “With this handbook, the Government of Zimbabwe will continue its efforts on international investment promotion tours and conferences to showcase Zimbabwe as a viable investment and tourism destination”.



UN in Zimbabwe information stand provided information to over 200 people daily for six days on the works of the UN and the MDGs in Zimbabwe during the UNWTO General Assembly in Victoria Falls.

“UN supports the first national tourism policy”

UN Supports Government to Formulate Food and Nutrition Security Policy

With the support of the United Nations, the Government of Zimbabwe launched its first national Food and Nutrition Security Policy on 16 May 2013 in Harare. The policy is aimed at addressing the perennial food shortages that lead to food insecurity and malnutrition in resource scarce and drought prone areas of the country.

Launching the Policy, His Excellency President Robert Mugabe said, "In Zimbabwe, the nutrition situation is of concern to the Government as one out of every three children is chronically malnourished. 25% of all deaths of children under the age of five are attributed to nutritional deficiencies, and 47% of women are anaemic".

The President highlighted the need to address the food insecurity and malnutrition in the country: "The Government will continue to take measures that empower farmers, especially small-holder farmers and women so that they access cheap finance, knowledge on climate and the environment, smart farming systems, infrastructure and farm machinery."

“ 25% of all deaths of children under 5 are attributed to malnutrition ”

The policy marks a significant step by the Government of Zimbabwe in addressing food and nutrition insecurity and in promoting economic development. It was developed through multi-agency consultations, from community to technical and policy-making level, as mandated by Cabinet.

In a message of support from the United Nations Country Team, UNICEF



Farming community preparing their farm lands.

Representative, Dr. Gianfranco Rotigliano noted, "Today, we are here to bear testimony to all the hard work that has been put into formulating this Policy...and it is our sincere hope that this launch marks the beginning of a concerted effort to address food and nutrition challenges in Zimbabwe in a robust, coordinated, and multi-sectoral manner."

The Food and Nutrition Security Policy provides a framework for a cohesive multi-sectoral action programme with a shared vision and strategy for improved food and nutrition security. It also seeks to promote adequate food and nutrition security for all, particularly amongst the poor whose lives are most vulnerable to the dangers and deprivations caused by hunger and malnutrition.

In her remarks, Vice-President Joyce Mujuru, who is also the Chairperson of the National Task Force for Food and Nutrition Security, expressed the Government's commitment to, "The implementation of sustainable programmes to address the food and nutrition security situation of the country".

Messages of support to the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy were also given by the Ministry of

Agriculture and Mechanization, Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, the private sector, and academia.

“ 77,800 vulnerable farming households assisted with subsidized agricultural input vouchers ”

In 2012, to enhance food security of poor households, the United Nations provided support to 77,800 farming households with subsidized agricultural input vouchers. In addition, the United Nations supported 1.4 million food insecure people in 38 rural districts with food assistance under the seasonal targeted food assistance programme.

Improved food security and nutrition contributes to sustainable and equitable growth, which in turn leads to poverty reduction, decreases maternal and child death, and enhances gender equality. Investing in nutrition, therefore, is central to achieving the MDGs and other development objectives.

Addressing Food Waste by Reducing Food Print in Zimbabwe

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), globally every year, 1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted in the food production and consumption systems. At the same time, 1 in every 7 people in the world go to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die every day from hunger.

“Food waste accounts 70% of Harare’s 150,000 tonnes of annual domestic waste”

According to a report on community based solid waste management in Zimbabwe, prepared by the Institute of Environmental Studies (University of Zimbabwe) in April 2013, in Harare alone 150 000 tonnes of domestic waste is generated annually with food and garden waste accounting for 71%. This is against the backdrop that 2.2 million people are food insecure in the country (2013 ZIMVAC).

To raise public awareness on the issue of food waste, the UN in Zimbabwe commemorated the World Environment Day on 5 June 2013 in Harare with a call to act on food waste across all levels of production and consumption. The event took place under the theme “Think. Eat. Save. Reduce your Food Print”.

At the occasion, UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Alain Noudehou called for a change in behaviour in the way individuals relate to food: “Simple steps such as smart shopping, understanding expiration dates and requesting for only the portion that you are able to consume at restaurants could go a long way in



Community-Based Organizations exhibiting on best practices in waste management, organic farming and traditional foods at the grounds of the UN offices in Arundel Office Park.

minimizing your food print”.

The UN Resident Coordinator noted that at least a third of everything we grow on this planet is lost between the field and the consumer. “It is an ethical, economic and environmental issue given the enormous waste of energy, water, fertilisers and other inputs as a result of food that is produced but never eaten.”

In his message for the day, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: “By reducing food waste, we can save money and resources, minimize environmental impacts and most importantly, move towards a world where everyone has enough to eat.”

Nearly 40 institutions and groups including representatives of Government, UN, private sector,

academic and non-governmental organisations took part in the commemoration.

At the event the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources Management, Mr. Francis Nhema, advised participants to use responsibly, utilities that have an impact on energy and the environment: “It is indeed sad to note that while a lot of people in Zimbabwe do not have adequate food, the bulk of waste on our dumpsites is organic and our economy cannot afford to continue with this wastage”.

“Reducing food waste: a step forward to ensuring everyone has enough to eat”

Zimbabwe Presents Latest MDG Progress Report



Zimbabwe on track to achieve Universal Primary Education – MDG 2 and presented accelerated action plan on the same to build on the momentum.

The 2012 Zimbabwe MDG Progress Report was presented in Harare on 29 May 2013 in the presence of 250 representatives from Government, UN, donors, Civil Society Organizations, academia and the media.

The Report, presented by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Dr. Desire Sibanda, assesses poverty reduction, economic growth, productive employment, the participation of women in decision-making, maternal and child health, HIV and AIDS, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships.

“Zimbabwe makes strides in universal primary education, gender parity in schools & fighting HIV”

The report shows that the country has made positive gains on universal primary education, achieving gender equality in schools, and in fighting HIV & AIDS. Some of the MDG challenges that the country faces are in MDG1: Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger, and MDG5 on Improving Maternal Mortality. Currently, the maternal mortality rate at 960 per 100,000 live births, approximately doubles that of the Sub-Saharan average.

Noting that 40% of maternal deaths are not caused by medical issues but are related to behavioural issues and social status, the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Alain Noudehou said, “It is unacceptable for our sisters, daughters and mothers to die while giving life”.

In his keynote address, Deputy Chief Secretary in the Office of the President and Cabinet, Dr Ray Ndhlukula said that Government

remained committed to achieving the set MDG targets.

The report also reflects on the Post-2015 development agenda, by noting that the new approach will seek to include critical problems that affect all communities, such as the plight of the poor, political, social and economic stability, inequality, as well as peace and security.

“Government & UN committed to accelerating maternal health and education MDG targets”

Referring to Post-2015 development agenda, the UN Resident Coordinator noted: “For the UN, the overall objective is to help Member States arrive at a unified set of concise, clear and measurable development goals that keep poverty reduction at the core and, at the same time, recognize and address broader and ambitious sustainable development challenges.”

Production of the 2012 MDG Progress Report was made possible through a consultative process involving Government, the United Nations, international development agencies, private sector, academia and research institutions, as well as civil society organizations.

During the event, the Accelerated Action Plan for MDG 2 (Achieving Universal Primary Education) was also presented. The Plan, supported by the United Nations (UNDP, UNESCO, & UNICEF), aims to close the gap of 1 in 5 children who do not complete primary school, thereby achieve 100% completion rates by 2015.

Working with Young People to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy

Marking the World Population Day on 11 July 2013, the United Nations and the National Aids Council supported the Young People's Network on Sexual and Reproductive Health, HIV & AIDS to strengthen young people's advocacy efforts to ensure that meaningful action is taken towards preventing teenage pregnancies.

1 in 4 girls aged between 15 and 19 years have already begun child bearing in Zimbabwe. In addition, 92% of all sexually active girls within the same age group are in a form of union or marriage (Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2010/11).

“Youth advocacy efforts strengthened to prevent teenage pregnancy”

“For many girls, pregnancy and marriage have nothing to do with informed choice, it is often a case of human rights violation, inadequate education, or sexual coercion,” said Ms. Tamisayi Chinhengo, UNFPA Programme Specialist, during a discussion forum held during the World Population Day.

The United Nations (UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and UNESCO) is working together with the Government of Zimbabwe to ensure the realization of young people's sexual and reproductive health rights. The UN support includes promoting young people's participation and leadership on issues to do with health rights, promoting life-skills, sexuality education, provision of youth-friendly sexual and reproductive services, and the empowerment of young women.

The lack of information and education on their sexuality and limited access to sexual and reproductive health



Members of the Young People's Network launched social media campaign to raise awareness and promote action to prevent teenage pregnancy.

services were ranked as key causes of teenage pregnancies in Zimbabwe.

“I am always imagining what my life would be like if I had met someone before I was pregnant who taught me to be assertive, discussed about relationships with me, the disadvantages of engaging in sex when so young, maybe I would not be in this situation. These things should be included in our education curriculum,” said Tinotenda, one of the participating teenage mothers at the forum.

The Zimbabwe Child President urged parents, the Government and young people to take action to reduce teenage pregnancies: “Parents and schools should impart information about sexual and reproductive health rights and the Government should make sure that the right policies and programmes addressing these issues are implemented”.

“This discussion is leading to the development of a ‘Call to Action’,

which we are going to take to policy and decision makers from both the public and private sectors to ensure that action is taken,” said Yemurai Nyoni the Young People's Network National Facilitator. The Young People's Network has launched a social media campaign entitled, ‘Life Choices’ aimed at raising awareness and promoting action to prevent teenage pregnancies.

“Working together to ensure sexual & reproductive health rights of the youth”

The Young People's Network, supported by the United Nations and the National AIDS Council is one forum promoting young people's meaningful participation and leadership in reproductive health and HIV prevention.

Improving Access to HIV Therapy Through Effective Partnerships



Access to free voluntary testing and counseling as well as to HIV treatment services have increased.

Zimbabwe has made enormous progress in combating the HIV pandemic through effective partnerships between Government, the United Nations and other development partners.

Despite the reduction in the prevalence of HIV in Zimbabwe, it still remains among the most affected countries in the world. Approximately 14.3% of the country's estimated 12.9 million population are living with HIV. Nearly 1,300 lives are lost weekly from HIV-related illnesses according to statistics from the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare.

“Anti-retroviral treatment services expanded to 94% of health facilities, with 70% coverage”

Like many single mothers who have been stigmatized after testing HIV positive, Abigail Mateke (*not her real name*) has faced difficulties and challenges. She has lived much of her life on the margins of society. Abigail is

a subsistence farmer in Buhera, a dry district 170 kms south east of Harare. She lives with her elderly parents and her three-year old daughter, Nyasha, who is HIV-negative. To supplement her farming, Abigail works as a casual labourer in her neighbours' fields but her income is still paltry. She could not afford to access anti-retroviral treatment or counselling.

However, her life changed drastically when one day a knock arrived on her door. On the other side was an outreach worker advising her to seek free treatment. She now receives free anti-retroviral treatment and counselling on her condition at a nearby village clinic.

To date, the partnership between the Government, the United Nations and other development partners has seen high quality free testing, counselling and treatment rolled out across the country, enabling over 600,000 people living with HIV to be put on ART.

Initially, factors such as the cost and poor distribution of drugs made it difficult for many people living with HIV to access quality treatment.

“Prevention of mother to child transmission coverage services increased from 56% to 87%”

The strong collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, United Nations (UNDP, WFP & UNICEF), NatPharm and other development partners has played a central role in making quality treatment more widely available to the people in need. Together, they have ensured the timely delivery of essential drugs and ARV to ensure the right treatment is provided at the right time to those in need like Abigail.

“The fight against HIV goes beyond pharmaceutical considerations and the medical ward,” says WFP Representative and Country Director, Mr. Sory Ouane. “It’s a multi-faceted and complex issue which calls for multi-dimensional solutions and equally important is the provision of logistical expertise with procurement, handling, storage and distribution of the medicines.”

Promoting Youth Employment and Rural Development

The United Nations, led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), facilitated a stakeholders' mission from 5-6 June 2013 in Mutare that enabled them to witness the launch of employment creation projects and the handover of equipment and toolkits for youth skills development.

The handover included five sector specific common facility training centres valued at over USD 150,000 established in all provinces.

The centres are managed by the Ministry of Youth Development, Empowerment and Indigenization, and Small and Medium Enterprise associations, to facilitate technological transfer to local youth establishments. In addition, the United Nations provided support worth over USD 115,000 to enhance programme monitoring at district level and the capacity of a group of youth involved in hand craft with 300 new toolkits.

“Joint skills programmes enhance youth access to decent employment opportunities”

At the handover event, ILO Director, Mr. Tabi Adobo said, “The overall



Out of school youth gaining hands-on skills through on-the-job practical training.

objective of the skills programmes aims to strengthen skills development systems that improve employability, promote access to employment opportunities, and increase incomes for inclusive and sustainable growth”. The Programme, which runs until 2014, is a five-year initiative funded by the Government of Denmark at a total cost of USD 6.8 million.

The programme has been scaled up in 39 districts of the country, delivering support to youths through two main methodologies, enhancing value chain development and employability.

The first methodology is training of rural economic empowerment with focus on agriculture and rural development - primarily based on value chain development, and skills upgrading for “out-of-school” youth. The second methodology is focussed on upgrading and delivery training through quality improvements in

informal apprenticeship, whereby out-of-school youth attach themselves to skilled master craft in order to learn a trade via “on-the-job” practical training.

“Youth employment and rural development programmes scaled-up to 39 districts”

The handover ceremony was attended by over 600 people, including the Minister for Youth Development, Empowerment and Indigenisation, the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Services, and members of the Economic, Employment and Poverty Thematic Group of the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

Model UN Promotes Youth Engagement on Global Issues

With ‘water is life’ as its key message, the 2013 Zimbabwe Model UN simulation held on 4 July 2013 at the Parliament buildings in Harare, served as a forum providing students with a deeper understanding of how the UN General Assembly operates.

The event, facilitated by the UN in Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe United Nations Association, provided an opportunity for hundreds of students and participants drawn from all parts of the country to deliberate on the

global water crisis, demonstrating a sharp understanding of UN General Assembly debating procedures.

In a message read on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, by the director of multilateral affairs, the foreign minister explained, “At the International level, water has provided reasons for cooperation rather than war,” citing the example of the Indus Basin Treaty between India and Pakistan that has remained

in force even during the armed conflict between the two countries.

Echoing the same theme, the clerk of the national Parliament, Mr. A. Zvoma expressed the view that water management requires effective cooperation at the local and international levels. “Building a village water pump in the recesses of Mashayamombe village in Mhondoro requires local actors to cooperate. Bringing water from a river to irrigated farmland requires

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Engaging Local Artists to end Violence against Women

Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive human rights abuses that inhibit the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women.

According to official statistics, 1 in every 4 women has experienced violence between the ages of 15 and 49, and there have been 824 cases reported in Harare alone on rape only in the first half of 2013.

“150 artists mobilised to raise public awareness on ending violence against women & girls”

In addition to the consequences of violence against women such as violating the basic human rights of the victims, injuries, unintended pregnancies and HIV/AIDS, gender based violence also negatively impacts on the socio-economic development of the country. The direct and indirect economic costs of violence against women and girls are enormous, in terms of lost working time, lost earnings, and medical expenditure.

The UN in Zimbabwe has embarked on an advocacy campaign using creative arts to raise public awareness to counter violence against women. The creative arts have the power to transcend racial, linguistic, age and gender divides.

In line with the UN Secretary General's initiated campaign, UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls, the United Nations, in partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, brought together over 150 artists from Harare and Bulawayo



Prominent Zimbabwean artist, commonly known as Sniper, performing during an advocacy campaign to end violence against women and girls in Harare.

for a consultative workshop from 1-3 July 2013.

The workshop's objective was to sensitise both female and male artists on their role in ending violence against women and girls in Zimbabwe. The workshop also provided a platform to share UNiTE Campaign messages on the urgency for concrete action to prevent and end violence against women and girls in the country and particularly in the entertainment industry.

The UN highlighted to artists the three main Africa UNiTE Campaign pillars: (i) Prevent violence against women and girls; (ii) Promote justice and end impunity, and (iii) Provide services to survivors of violence.

In his welcome remarks, Mr Nicholas Moyo, the Deputy Director for National Arts Council said, "Arts are used to speak to everyday lives of ordinary citizens and therefore I encourage all artists to use their arts to speak to the society, as art is a mirror and reflection of who we are."

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and

Community Development, Dr Sylvia Utete-Masango, noted that her Ministry has launched a zero tolerance to domestic violence strategy. "The Ministry recognises that artists are an important stakeholder in the implementation of this strategy and in raising awareness around the Domestic Violence Act. Artists should take this task seriously because domestic violence remains a serious challenge in Zimbabwe".

“Preventing violence against women by promoting justice and providing services to survivors”

In October 2012, the UN appointed 14 artists from 14 countries in the Southern Africa region as creative champions to propel the message of the UNiTE Campaign to the public forum through the use of various artistic means of expression.

Providing Assistance to Stranded Migrants



Migrants returned from Botswana receive safe migration information at the Plumtree reception and support center.

The United Nations continues to collaborate with the Government of Zimbabwe to provide humanitarian

and protection assistance to diverse vulnerable groups.

Some 50,000 forcibly returned migrants from neighbouring countries were assisted between January 2012 and June 2013. Since 2006, over 600,000 returned migrants have benefited from the assistance offered at the Beitbridge and Plumtree reception and support centers.

The United Nations has so far provided support to 10 000 asylum seekers coming to Zimbabwe in mixed migration flows, mainly from Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Services rendered at the reception centres for both returned and asylum seekers range from temporary shelter, protection assistance, and emergency medical attention. In addition, support has been provided in addressing violation of migrants' rights, interim care for children on the move, and access to basic amenities.

“50,000 forcibly returned migrants and 10,000 asylum seekers receive assistance”

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regional cooperation,” he said.

In this regard, the United Nations supported programmes in 2012 assisted 310 vulnerable communities and 13,000 additional school children to access safe water through 98 new and 212 rehabilitated boreholes.

Describing the Model UN as an interactive learning experience that has benefited teachers and students for over 50 years, Mr. Paul Farran, Head of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Zimbabwe

encouraged the students to use the skills they gain from this exercise to develop innovative, pragmatic, and pertinent solutions, leading to agreement on resolutions which are to the benefit of all.

In December 2010, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2013 as the United Nations International Year of Water Cooperation to raise awareness, both on the potential for increased cooperation, and on the challenges of water management.



High school students participating at the 2013 edition of the Model UN debate in the Parliament House.



Office of the UN Resident Coordinator
Block 10, Arundel Office Park, Norfolk Road, Mount Pleasant
PO Box 4775, Harare - Zimbabwe
www.zw.one.un.org



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