

Tuesday, 8  
March 2022

# International Women's Day

## Executive Director's Statement



International Women's Day (IWD) provides an opportunity to reinforce the fact that everyone has a role to play in forging a more gender-balanced world. Today we join the world in commemorating IWD2022.

Zimbabwe Health Interventions (ZHI) acknowledges that women have various roles to play in their lives. Today we recognize and celebrate women in every field who work hard every day to achieve personal and professional goals.

ZHI through its programs Re-ignite, Innovate, Sustain and Empower (RISE) and Accelerated and Comprehensive HIV Care for Epidemic Control in Zimbabwe (ACCE) aim to break the biases that prevent women from making free healthy choices.



Dr Taurayi Tafuma  
ZHI Executive Director

This year as we celebrate IWD, our focus is on raising awareness on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to encourage women who are HIV negative and at high risk of contracting HIV to take up the PrEP drugs as a preventive measure. PrEP empowers women to make choices and decisions to reduce their HIV risk where they are not able to negotiate for safer sex. Gender bias associated with PrEP is that women cannot make their own reproductive health choices. PrEP empowers women to be in control of their sexuality and manage their HIV acquisition risk. Gender bias encountered around PrEP include gender-based violence where a woman is discovered to be using PrEP for HIV prevention leading to discontinuation of PrEP

ZHI is ensuring access to PrEP through both the ACCE and RISE projects at healthcare facilities and in the community for adolescent girls and young women who are at a disproportionately higher risk of HIV compared to their male counterparts

As we strive towards equality, we urge all stakeholders to come together in support of the Government of Zimbabwe's drive to end HIV. Collectively everyone everywhere can make women's equality a reality through supporting access to health and empowerment!

I urge men to become allies of the movement to break the bias and to be advocates/ champions of change in accelerating women's equality.

ZHI commits to building a diverse and inclusive environment that challenges stereotypes and bias.

Happy IWD2022 to all our staff and stakeholders

