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14 - 20 March 2025

Government Cracks Down on Illegal Vending

By Mercy Mungoriwo

Government has issued a stern directive to local authorities, mandating the immediate removal of vendors operating in unauthorized locations amid the growing menace of illegal vending across the nation's urban centers.

This announcement follows grave concerns about the health, safety, and security tied to the burgeoning underground marketplace, particularly the surge of night vendors.

"The proliferation of illegal vendors in our central business districts poses serious risks not only to public health, but also to the operations of legitimate businesses. These unregulated marketplaces lead to unfair competition, and the unsanitary conditions they create are a breeding ground for diseases such as typhoid, dysentery, and cholera," stated Local Government and Public Works Minister Daniel Garwe.

As illegal vendors continue to occupy valuable public spaces, serious concerns have arisen regarding the dangers they pose, including criminal activities like theft and drug dealing.

"The lack of regulation in these areas allows criminal elements to thrive. This not only destabilizes our communities, but also erodes public trust in law enforcement," he said.

During the briefing, Harare Mayor Councillor Jacob Mafume said the City Council is prepared to work towards restoring sanity in the capital.



"We are also committed as a council to the enforcement of by-laws. I stated earlier that there is no permission for night vending as the Minister said.

"Even during the daytime, there are laws that control vending. People are not supposed to operate anywhere and everywhere they see fit," he said.

Local authorities are now faced with the urgent task of enforcing this directive, ensuring that public spaces are restored to order, and protecting the rights of lawful traders and residents alike.

"Local authorities must enforce regulations requiring all informal traders to hold valid licenses and operate only in designated areas equipped with adequate sanitary facilities," said Minister Garwe. "Government remains committed to fostering a safe, clean, and orderly environment for all citizens."

US Government Cuts 83% of USAID Programs, Impacting Key Projects in Africa

By Senior Reporter

The United States government has dramatically scaled back its global aid efforts, cutting 83% of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) programs worldwide.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced recently that 5,200 projects had been discontinued following a six-week review of the agency's operations.

"After a six-week review, we are officially cancelling 83% of the programs at USAID,"

"The 5,200 contracts that are now cancelled spent tens of billions of dollars in ways that did not serve, and in some cases even harmed, the core national interests of the United States," Rubio said during a press briefing.

Rubio added that the remaining 18% of USAID programs—approximately 1,000 projects—would



Marcus Rubio, US

be administered more effectively under the direct oversight of the State Department.

The cuts have halted initiatives funded with a total budget of \$522 million, \$388 million of which was allocated to ongoing projects. These projects, ranging from health and education to disaster recovery, have now been terminated.

The decision, which coincides with the start of President Donald Trump's second term in office, has left many humanitarian needs unmet in Africa, including Zimbabwe, where USAID was a key

contributor to health and education sectors.

Zimbabwe has been among the hardest-hit countries, as USAID funded critical health programs and infrastructure in rural areas. These initiatives included payments to health workers, procurement of medical technology, and construction of clinics.

USAID's extensive support for HIV programs in Zimbabwe—worth over \$90 million—has been discontinued. Projects aimed at reducing new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women, valued at \$53.2 million, will also cease. Another \$30.1 million earmarked for orphans and vulnerable children in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces has been cut, as well as \$17.4 million for broader child welfare services.

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In commemoration of Women's Month, The Business Connect honors the strength and resilience of women, especially in Zimbabwe. Let's continue to empower women and girls, accelerate gender equality, and work towards a brighter, more inclusive future for all.



Women's Month Supplement

Adapting to Change: Unlocking Mental Well-Being in Zimbabwean Corporates

By Ntombizanele Margaret Mangumba

"Hem and Haw were content with their cheese, but what happened when it was moved?" This question, inspired by Spencer Johnson's iconic book "Who Moved My Cheese?" resonates deeply in today's fast-paced world. As Zimbabweans, we are no strangers to change, but how we respond to it can make all the difference in our mental health. The truth is, change can be daunting,

and our inability to adapt can have severe consequences on our mental well-being. When we resist change, we risk becoming stuck in a state of anxiety, fear and uncertainty. This can lead to decreased productivity, strained relationships and a weakened immune system.

We live in the fast ever changing corporate world, like a complex maze. Each of us is on a journey to find our own "cheese" – our passions, goals and sense of purpose. But, just like Hem and Haw,



Ntombie Mangumba

we may find that our cheese has been moved, and we must adapt to find it again.

As corporates, it's essential to recognise the importance of mental health and wellness in the workplace. By implementing Mental Health and Wellness Policies and Strategies, companies can:

1. Develop gender-sensitive policies: Recognise the unique challenges faced by women and men, and develop policies that address these needs.
2. Provide access to mental health resources: Partner with mental health professionals to provide counselling services, workshops and training programmes for employees.
3. Promote a supportive work environment: Encourage open conversations about mental health, reduce stigma and promote a culture of empathy and understanding.
4. Foster a culture of adaptability: Encourage employees to be flexible, resilient and open to change.

Organisations should generalise mental health and wellness policies, avoid mental health issues instead:

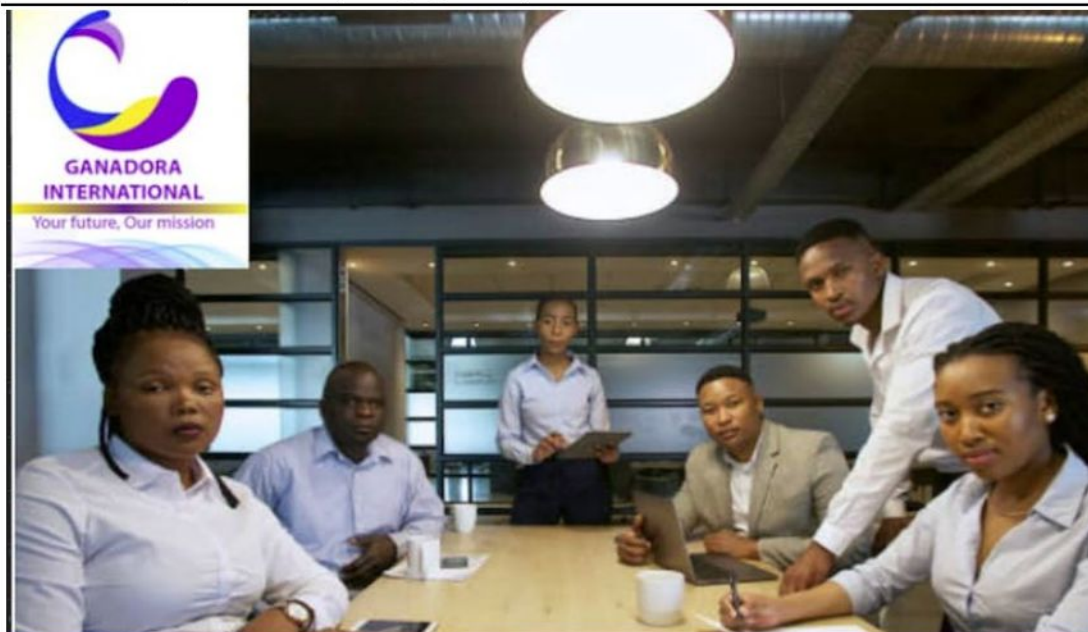
1. Conducting needs assessments: Understand the specific gender based and inclusive needs of employees.
2. Develop tailored policies: create policies that are inclusive and gender based.
3. Mental Health and Wellness Committees: Corporates need trained Mental Health and Wellness Committees.
4. Monitor and evaluate: Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their mental health and wellness policies.

Prioritising Mental Health and Wellness issues as corporates, employees and individuals is crucial in enhancing workplace productivity. By acknowledging and accepting change, we can begin to adapt and thrive. This might involve:

1. Practising self-awareness: Recognising our emotions and thoughts, and understanding how they impact our behaviour.
2. Embracing a growth mindset: Viewing challenges as opportunities for growth and learning.
3. Cultivating a support network: Surrounding ourselves with people who encourage and support us.

In conclusion, adapting to change is crucial for maintaining good mental health. By acknowledging the impermanence of things and embracing change, we can unlock a more resilient, adaptable and mentally healthy version of ourselves. Let us work together to create a Zimbabwe where corporates, individuals and employees mental health is prioritised, and adaptability is celebrated.

• Ntombizanele Margaret Mangumba is a Wellness Specialist at Ganadora International. For feedback you can send an email to info@ganadorainternational.com



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