



ARTUZ WEEKLY BULLETIN

Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe

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Editor's Note: Fight for the revival of the classroom

THE quality of an education system depends on the quality of its teachers.

But the quality of teachers cannot exceed the quality of the policies that shape their work environment in school and that guide their selection, recruitment and development.

While excellence, equity and inclusion are the effects of many causes, good teacher policies are the foundations on which successful school systems are built.

More specifically, teacher friendly policies are concerned with three intermediate goals: attracting talented men and women to teaching, and retaining them; developing effective teachers; and matching teachers with students in the most favourable way - given the ultimate goal of promoting excellent, equitable and inclusive learning.

The investment in teachers can have significant returns:- improving the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of schooling depends, in large measure, on ensuring that competent people want to work as teachers, that their working environment is conducive, and that they are paid what's worth.

The attractiveness of the teaching profession is related to teachers' salaries and to promote teaching as a career.

People are attracted to certain professions by some combination of the occupational status, work environment, sense of personal contribution and the financial rewards associated with the given profession.

It is for this reason that the 2022 motto is to "fight for the revival of the classroom," as Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) president Obert Masaraure said in his New Year's message.

The campaign began in earnest in Bulawayo on January 6, 2022 where teachers engaged local legislators on the need to save the education sector. MDC Alliance legislator Nicola Watson promised to take the matter to Parliament.

"The classroom is both the consumption and the production center for education, the Union will therefore take the struggle to the classroom with a clear campaign demanding inclusive revival of the classroom," Masaraure said.

"This struggle will be championed by both learners and teachers. The era of fake schools opening is over. It is either a school is effectively delivering inclusive education or we force it to close shop."

Regards

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Editorial

News

ARTUZ Unveils #SaveOurEducationZW Campaign

THE Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) will mobilise citizens under the banner #SaveOurEducationZW campaign to pile pressure on the government to meet teacher salary demands.

ARTUZ has announced that educators will not return to work when schools reopen for the first term until the government restores the pre-October 2018 United States dollar salaries.

“At the close of the year teachers were earning as little as ZWL \$18 000 at a time when the Poverty Datum Line was pegged at almost ZWL\$60 000.

“Only those with cold hearts would expect teachers to report for duty under these circumstances. Teachers are leaving the country and the profession in droves because of underpayment,” ARTUZ president Obert Masaraure said.

Government has postponed the reopening of schools for the rest of the classes by a further two weeks.

Schools were supposed to open on January 10. Government this week reinstated US\$75 COVID-19 risk allowances but ARTUZ and other teacher unions have dismissed the token payments as not enough,

insisting on pre-October 2018 US\$ salaries. Masaraure said it is for this reason that ARTUZ is mobilising citizens under the protest banner #SaveOurEducationZW in the push for improved working conditions.

“The second point of intervention is keeping decision makers on their toes. No duty bearer will be allowed to sleep peacefully until the education crisis is resolved!” Masaraure added.

“The third point of intervention will involve leveraging on the national consensus that education is a public good which should be accessed by all citizens. To that end citizens shall be mobilized under the #SaveOurEducationZw campaign to demand inclusive access to quality education.”

In his 2022 budget, Finance minister Mthuli ncube allocated 12percent of the budget to education way below the 20% in line with the Dakar Declaration.

Masaraure added: “Lastly the Union will take full advantage of the pending by elections and 2023 elections to mobilise citizens to vote for leaders who prioritise the education of our people. The #Eduvote campaign will be spread to all cities and villages.”

ARTUZ Scored Big In 2021

THE Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) scored big in 2021, registering growth while giving the government sleepless nights in various campaigns.

This is contained in ARTUZ’s summary of activities for 2021 under the unions’ membership servicing, capacity building, information and networking and lobbying and advocacy strategic pillars.

“The year 2021 saw Amalgamated Rural Teachers union of Zimbabwe, ARTUZ, budding to become a force that is now giving government sleepless nights,” the report reads in part.

“The Union is rapidly swelling its membership, building resilient networks, keeping the government on its toes through consistent advocacy and further developing its internal capacity to enhance efficiency.”

In September 2021, minister Paul Mavima accused foreign countries of funding ARTUZ to destabilise the Zanu PF government through recurrent salary strikes to incite civil unrest.

In 2022, the ARTUZ plans to build on the rapid growth of the organisation by among others strengthening communication with membership, enhancing social support and introducing income generating projects, strengthening legal, gender and social welfare offices and improving data capturing at SSB.

The unions also plans to:

- Strengthen the right to education campaign in light of 50% dropouts in 2021
- Unveil a rapid response fund and hold security training to respond to the escalation of victimization of teachers.
- Host labour forums for raising consciousness of the teachers on labour Justice issues.
- Hold training and advocacy on natural resources governance and illicit financial flows since salaries are directly linked to resources mobilized by the treasury.
- Regularly hold climate change awareness campaigns and education on mitigation strategies including campaigns to end child marriages and Sexual Reproductive Health Trainings.
- Defending the right to vote for teachers and monitoring the electoral cycle.
- And hold campaigns against repressive laws, constitutional awareness and constitutionalism among other activities.

Daily Updates

Bulawayo ARTUZ Teacher community engagement a declaration towards Education Rejuvenation

THE Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union (ARTUZ) has petitioned Parliament on the state of the education sector under the #SaveOurEducationZW campaign.

The petition was handed over to MDC Alliance Bulawayo Central legislator Nicola Watson on January 6 at Luveve suburb in the country's second city during the launch of the campaign.

The campaign was launched after a consultative meeting that brought teachers, parents, students, School Dropouts, MPs and other stakeholders from various backgrounds to give direction on reviving the education sector.

The mood and spirit in the meeting exhibited focus, direction and purpose of unity.

ARTUZ members in attendance lamented the treatment they were receiving from the government in terms of remuneration and their safety in schools especially with political interference by executive members of the ruling ZANU PF party.

But they resolved to remain steadfast in the face of adversity. Parents shed light of their struggles in paying tuition fees for their children.

ARTUZ president Obert Masaraure emphasized the importance of unity within the teaching profession to attain a collective consensus in addressing teacher welfare issues and other challenges in the education sector.

Watson expressed her deep desire to fight in the corner of the education sector.

#SaveOurEducationZw indabas towards the revival of the classroom.



Matabeleland North Chair person Sukoluhle Ndlovu handing over petition to Binga South MP, Hon Prince Sibanda Madubeko.



Bulawayo province Chairperson, Godknows handing over a petition to Bulawayo Central MP, Nicola Watson.

#SaveOurEducationZw indabas towards the revival of the classroom.



Matabeleland North #SaveOurEducationZw indaba in session.



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Bulawayo #SaveOurEducationZw indaba in session.



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