1st May, 2023

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**LABOUR DAY: JOBS FOR THE MARGINALISED CITIZENS**

AS we commemorate the **2023 Labour Day**, we urge the Zambian government to create sustainable jobs for citizens with disabilities and other marginalized groups such as youths and women. Most marginalized groups in Zambia today remain unemployed despite their ability to sell their labour and earn an income for their personal and family livelihood.

The theme for this year’s Labour Day “**Accelerating Job Creation for Economic Growth**” provides an opportunity to remind government to prioritise the scaling up of its effort in ending poverty and promote equality among Zambians.

ActionAid Zambia is of the opinion that poverty among the people, including those employed is on the rise because of the government’s failure to strictly enforce labour regulations through its inspectorate department to compel employers to abide and respect workers’ rights.

Complaints of low salaries, delayed or non-payment of salaries and wages, denial to affiliate to trade unions, rejection from employment due to disabilities and many more are still rampant in Zambia and as such many labour complaints have remained unresolved or ignored by authorities.

It is the duty of the government through the department of labour to protect workers and secure their rights to ensure that they remain motivated and productive, because we believe that a motivated workforce is more productive and supportive to the overall economic growth of the country.

Therefore, ActionAid urges government to urgently capacitate the inspectorate unit of the Ministry of Labour and Social security to curb the apparent violations of workers’ rights. This will ensure that the minimum wage approved by the government should equally be enforced across the country, as such these labour violations should not continue unabated. To this end, the need to accelerate job creation is urgent and government should act now.

Furthermore, government should focus on key economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and mining to create the much-needed jobs and increase national productivity.

“*ActionAid Zambia works with marginalized women, young people and children in communities and supports government initiatives meant to improve their social being and assist them drift from the poverty circles,”*

Happy Labour Day

**SIGNED**

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Andrew Itai Chikowore (PhD)

**Interim COUNTRY DIRECTOR-ACTIONAID ZAMBIA**