

YOUTHS FOR URBAN FUTURES

Hivos
people unlimited

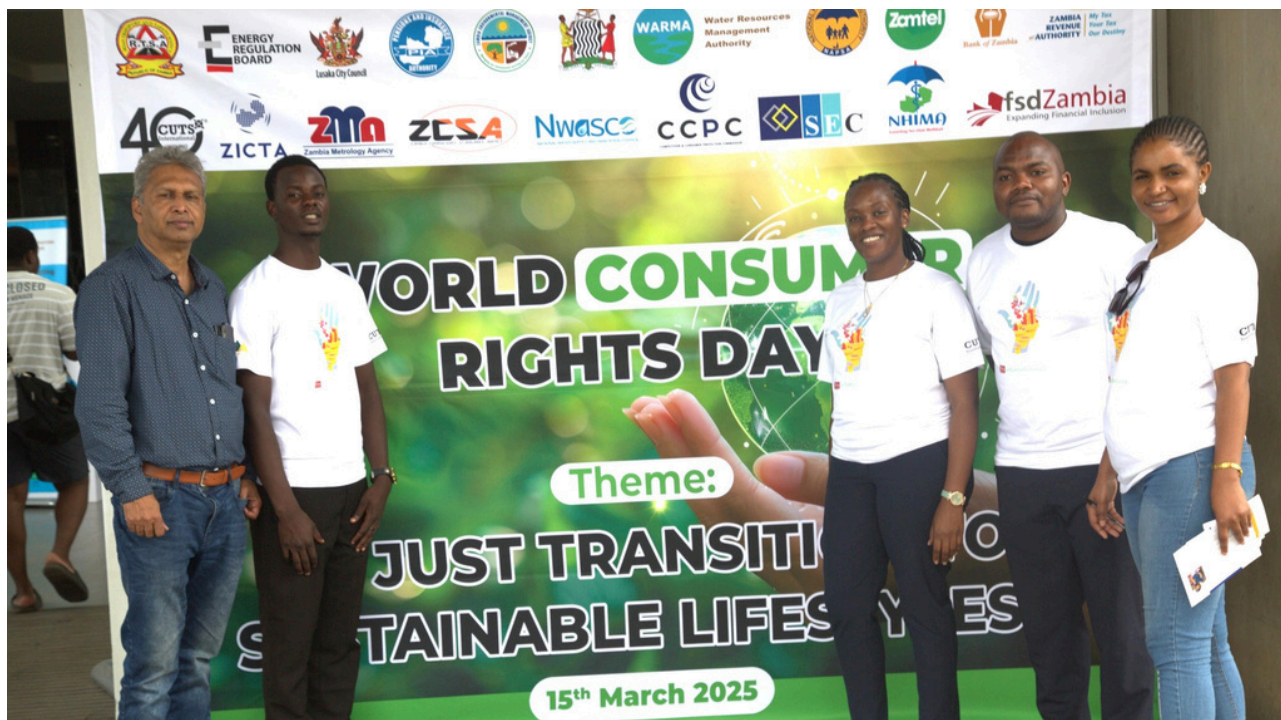
urban>>futures

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Compiled and designed by Nancy Mwape | Articles & Newsletter

YOUTHS DRIVING CHANGE FOR CONSUMER RIGHTS



Photos showing UF Chongwe team at the expo held in Lusaka levy mall.

By Chileleko Hamukale

World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD), observed on March 15, raises awareness about consumer protection. The 2025 WCRD expo held at Levy Mall, Lusaka, centered on the theme "A just transition for sustainable lifestyles," emphasizing youth involvement in sustainability, environmental protection, and social justice.

A key moment was the visit by Ministry of Trade, Mining, and Industry Permanent Secretary, Ms. Lillian Bwalya, to the Urban Futures stand. She urged young people to leverage creativity, activism, and institutions like the Zambia Metrology Agency to drive sustainable change, saying: "Your ideas will shape the future. Stay engaged, informed, and proactive in pushing for a just and sustainable transition."

In commemorating the WCRD that run for two weeks, young people actively participated through radio programs, exhibitions, and advocacy, highlighting the negative impacts of unsustainable consumption. The UF project has been equipping youths with skills, mentorship, and financial support to advance agribusiness and sustainable food production.

Youth have also been demanding for transparency, ethical business practices, and stronger consumer protection laws. They called out greenwashing and pushed for sustainable, affordable products while engaging with institutions like Competition and Consumer Protection Commission and Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority.



IMPACT STORY

BUPE WINS PRESIDENTIAL YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD



Bupe Phiri, an emerging entrepreneur and youth advocate from Chongwe, has been awarded the prestigious Presidential Award at the National Youth Indaba, securing K100,000 for his innovative agricultural app.

The app will provide small-scale farmers, women, and persons with disabilities access to essential farming resources, including weather updates, seed information, funding opportunities, and agro-news, enhancing productivity and sustainability.

The prestigious award under the Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Arts Entrepreneurship fair, took place on March 7 at Mulungushi Conference Centre in Lusaka. The award underscores the impact of youth-led business initiatives in driving sustainable food systems and green job creation, a core focus of the Urban Futures project.

Bupe's innovative business idea was pitched before a distinguished panel that included the Vice President who was represented by the Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises, the Minister of Youth, Sport and Arts, UNDP Resident Representative, and other senior officials.

Bupe joined the Urban Futures project in September 2024 and was on boarded under the Women's Entrepreneurship Access Centre (WEAC) and Urban Futures mentorship program, which focuses on innovative food systems in Chongwe.

Through this initiative, he gained mentorship, training, and pitching skills that helped him refine his business idea and confidently present to a wider audience.

Bupe believes this digital platform will enhance farm productivity, reduce food waste, promote digital literacy, and foster environmental conservation by minimizing resource wastage.

Bupe's success story reflects the broader mission of the Urban Futures project, which aims to strengthen youth-led businesses, create green jobs, and enhance food security in Zambia.

MALAIKA'S RADIO EXPERIENCE: A MOMENT TO REMEMBER

One bright afternoon, I was added to a WhatsApp group titled "World Consumer Rights Day." Ms. Chileleko Hamukali, the UF Project Manager, introduced us to an initiative by CUTS Lusaka and Hivos under the Urban Futures project, aimed at empowering youth and raising awareness about consumer rights.

A thrilling opportunity arose when Ms. Hamukali informed me that I would be speaking live on Millennium Radio, a private station. Excited yet nervous, and to prepare for the radio, a briefing session was arranged by CUTS for me and my colleague, Wiseman Daka.

When the big day finally arrived, I tag along a friend for moral support. At the Radio station, Ms. Hamukali and I were welcomed by the host, who outlined the program flow. Representatives from the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) and the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) joined us, adding depth to the discussion.

Once on air, the conversation was lively and engaging. I spoke with passion about consumer rights, and the host made the experience even more enjoyable. As my segment ended, I felt an overwhelming sense of pride, grateful for the encouragement from Ms. Hamukali and my family.

This experience ignited my passion for advocacy, and I look forward to more opportunities to use my voice for meaningful causes.



Malaika

URBAN FUTURES STUDIES YOUTH FOOD CONSUMPTION TRENDS



A study embarked on under the Urban Futures project has highlighted key challenges affecting youths in Chongwe, particularly in food consumption and economic stability.

The two-months research review that many young people depend on petty trade and informal activities, making them financially vulnerable.

On nutrition, the study found that many youths consume only two meals per day, with limited dietary diversity due to affordability issues. The high cost of animal protein remains a barrier to balanced diets, underscoring the need for affordable protein alternatives and improved access to nutritious food.

The study findings will be shared with different stakeholders to build a resilient food system that ensures affordable, nutritious meals for Chongwe's youth.

MAINZA'S JOURNEY IN TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEM



Left Mainza engaging with a stakeholder.

Below Mainza with his animals.

At 27, Mainza Malambo is leading a transformative journey in Chongwe's Ntandabale ward, using sustainable agriculture to uplift his community. As chairperson of UF youth, he is committed to engaging young people in farming as a pathway to food security and economic empowerment.

Mainza's farming journey began in 2019 when drought left many families struggling with food shortages. Determined to find a solution, he turned to goat farming, starting small but now managing over 100 goats.

"My goats represent hope and the potential for change," he said. To expand his business, he supplies fresh, locally-sourced goat meat to restaurants and lodges in Chongwe. His goal is to scale up to over 1,000 goats and supply major supermarkets like Shoprite and P'n Pay, as well as hotels seeking quality, locally-produced food.

He believes goat farming is an ideal entry point for youth in agriculture due to its low investment requirements and high profitability, particularly with the growing demand for goat meat in retail markets. Mainza's story highlights the potential of youth-led agribusiness to drive sustainable food systems and economic resilience in Zambia.



Mainza's goats



ALBERTINA’S JOURNEY: FROM PEASANT FARMER TO AGRIPRENEUR

Albertina Luyanga, a young farmer from Chongwe and an Urban Futures Champion, has transformed her passion for farming into a thriving business through the Urban Futures project.

Before joining the project, Albertina grew vegetables mainly for home consumption and shared surplus with neighbours. However, exposure to the project has helped her realise the potential of farming as a source of income. Through interactions with diverse participants from countries such as Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Colombia, Egypt, and Ecuador, she has gained insights into value addition and sustainable agribusiness.

One of the highlights of her journey under the UF project was the opportunity to attend the World Urban forum in Egypt, which broadened her perspective on agriculture. With newfound knowledge and entrepreneurial skills gained under the project, she has been able to generate income to support her family. The project has also inspired her to invest in her future, leading to acquiring five hectares of land in Rufunsa District, a significant milestone in her farming journey.

Albertina credits CUTS, GNS, and Hivos for their support through coaching, mentorship, and entrepreneurship training, which have reshaped her outlook on life and farming. She remains committed to producing healthy food and empowering young people to explore sustainable agriculture.



Abertina with Chongwe mayor on the right in Eqypt



Above Abertina showing off the peasant butter produced for sell.

On the left in the field planting maize and beans.



YOUTHS URGED TO EMBRACE CREATIVITY, INNOVATION

CUTS Country Director, Ms. Angela Mulenga, has urged youths in Chongwe to embrace creativity and innovation through the Urban Futures project, emphasizing the role of youth-led business enterprises in transforming local food systems and tackling climate change challenges.

Promoting green jobs and enterprises among Chongwe's youth is a key objective of the Urban Futures project, offering a promising pathway for job creation and sustainable economic development.

"These initiatives will not only create employment opportunities but also help transform local food systems into more sustainable models," Ms. Mulenga said.

To illustrate the power of innovation, Ms. Mulenga shared a story of David, a fictional young entrepreneur who serves as an inspiration for youths to explore creative solutions in agriculture.

In this scenario, David's journey begins by identifying market needs through research on farmers' challenges, such as inconsistent rainfall and inefficient water use. He attends workshops on modern irrigation techniques, receives mentorship from experienced agronomists, and secures funding through micro-loans for youth entrepreneurs to invest in essential tools and materials.

Ms. Mulenga explained that David represents the many young people who, with the right support, can establish successful businesses in agriculture and technology. His story highlights how a young entrepreneur could develop and install precision irrigation systems, improve income while enhancing agricultural productivity and food security in Chongwe town.

Precision irrigation systems use advanced agricultural technology to optimize water usage, deliver water directly to plant roots



Ms. Mulenga

through methods such as drip irrigation and automated sprinklers. This reduces water waste and enhances crop yields, making it particularly beneficial in areas like Chongwe, where agriculture is a primary source of livelihood she explained.

Ms. Mulenga added that by sharing David's story, CUTS aims to encourage Chongwe youth entrepreneurs to take similar steps, organise informational sessions, expand services, and incorporate modern technology to improve agriculture.

"The story of David serves as a model to inspire young people in Chongwe to explore agricultural innovations and entrepreneurship. Increased crop yields, youth employment, and sustainable farming practices are real possibilities when young people embrace innovation," Ms. Mulenga said.

She explained that while David is an imagined example, his story reflects what young innovators can achieve when they apply creativity and take advantage of available opportunities.

PLANNING UF ACTIVITIES FOR 2025



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