



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

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**ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE 2018 MICROFINANCE EXCELLENCE AND  
APPRECIATION AWARDS**

**14 DECEMBER 2018**

## SALUTATION

- Representatives from the **Ministry of Finance & Economic Development**;
- The Chair of Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institution, **Mrs. Virginia Sibanda**;
- The Chief Executive Officer of Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions, **Mr. Godfrey Chitambo**;
- **Distinguished Adjudicators** for the Microfinance Excellence and Appreciation Awards;
- The **Awards Winners** for whom we are gathered here today;
- **Chief Executive Officers** and Representatives of Microfinance Institutions here present;
- Distinguished Guests;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. Good evening to you all.
2. It is an honor and a privilege for me to welcome you all to the launch of the **inaugural national Microfinance Excellence and Appreciation Awards**.
3. Allow me to appreciate and thank the various stakeholders here present such as Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions (ZAMFI), and other development partners for all your concerted efforts in ensuring that the microfinance sector **contributes**

**meaningfully to the attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Zimbabwe's inclusive growth and development, as we work to achieve the national vision of becoming an upper-middle income country by 2030.**

4. I am informed that the Microfinance Awards is something that ZAMFI and other microfinance stakeholders have been **contemplating for a long time and this day is a dream come true**, and marks the beginning of a new era in the microfinance sector in Zimbabwe.
5. As you may be aware, Ladies and Gentlemen, the microfinance sector in Zimbabwe has travelled **a long and winding road since 2003**, and today's event is a major milestone in the development of microfinance in Zimbabwe.
6. This day represents an excellent opportunity to showcase the sterling work that the sector has been doing over the years, and to reward those institutions that have excelled in their efforts to **empower the low income and the marginalised through provision of access to finance**.
7. Let me start by **congratulating the winners for the hard work and determination** that has culminated into the awards that they are going to be conferred with tonight.
8. The awards that are being given today denote the commitment and the effort that has been invested by all microfinance stakeholders in

Zimbabwe to raise the microfinance flag high. The *poor can be served in innovative & excellent ways*.

9. I am informed that the awards being given tonight represent excellency in various aspects of microfinance including;

- a. Microfinance institution with the *most exceptional service* to the microfinance sector;
- b. The *most client-focused and socially responsible* microfinance institution;
- c. The *most women-friendly* microfinance institution;
- d. The *most youth-friendly* microfinance institution; and
- e. the *most innovative* and ICT user MFI, among others.

10. What is even **more exciting is to note that there is an award for the best journalist on microfinance**. The good works by microfinance institutions and the sector as a whole need to be broadcast to the world, that the world may appreciate the contribution of the Zimbabwean microfinance sector to the global agenda of achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

11. Let me assure you that the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe remains committed and will **continue to support microfinance sector in its quest for innovation, excellency, and growth to greater heights**.

12. **Ladies and Gentlemen, microfinance holds the key to the empowerment of our people**, the majority of whom are marginalised and living below the poverty datum line.
13. In this regard, in order to attain meaningful **empowerment**, and **asset accumulation** among the economically active poor, **we continue to urge the microfinance sector to focus on lending to the productive sector and facilitate exports and generation of foreign currency by the poor and marginalised.**
14. Further, we urge the sector to **adopt international best practice** in microfinance, including the **Social Performance Management framework** which seeks to, among other things, **build sustainable, socially responsible microfinance institutions.**
15. In this **digital age, Ladies and Gentlemen, adoption of innovative ICT- driven microfinance solutions will catapult the microfinance sector to the next level of the financial inclusion agenda.** In this regard, I would urge the sector to **prioritize robust ICT business solutions, going forward.**
16. **In conclusion**, allow me once again, to thank the organizers of this event, and hopefully, this is the beginning of more excellent developments in the microfinance sector.
17. **To the winners, congratulations.** Your accomplishments signal huge achievements for the Zimbabwe microfinance sector.

**TATENDA; SIYABONGA; THANK YOU!!!**