

ImbaTamba! Art Exhibition

Using art
to Amplify
Women's
Voices



ImbaTamba Art Exhibition

IMBA!TAMBA

This festival is about integrating all forms of art, poetry, song, dance and photography to elevate or amplify women's voices in Zimbabwe in regard to their bodies. It reinforces the strong need for women to take charge of their bodily autonomy and helps enhance their body politics.

Background

In 2017, Katswe Sistahood, with support from Amplify Change set out create awareness on Abortion and Post abortion Care in Zimbabwe, within communities, and among Policy makers.

The project aims to reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions among young women. The project seeks to remove legal and procedural barriers to contraception access, abortion services and post abortion care for young women. The project is piloting the provision of SRH services particularly post abortion through partnership with Population Services Zimbabwe. It is leading advocacy activities for the review the Termination of Pregnancy Act to guarantee safe abortion services.

The goal of the project is to demystify abortion, challenge stereotypes and the dominant discourse around abortion that is dominated by religious and cultural fundamentalisms who equate abortion to murder, and an escape from punishment for unsanctioned sexual acts.

Objectives

1. To build consensus on the review of the Zimbabwe Termination of Pregnancy Act on how it can be reviewed
2. To come up with recommendations to legislators on the Termination of Pregnancy legislation in Zimbabwe that is realigned to the Constitution
3. To change the perspective on abortion by raising more awareness about it as a health issue
4. To share women's stories on abortion
5. To document efforts being made around the review of Abortion laws

I got pregnant when I was very young, and my uncle took me in. When I went for my baby's 6 months review, I was told I was pregnant. I could not keep this pregnancy. The man who got me pregnant, was a man from my neighborhood. He told me he could not support me let alone the pregnancy. I was scared and felt hopeless. I had no choice but to let go. I have a background in traditional healing, so I made my own mixture and terminated the pregnancy. I could not add another burden to my family.



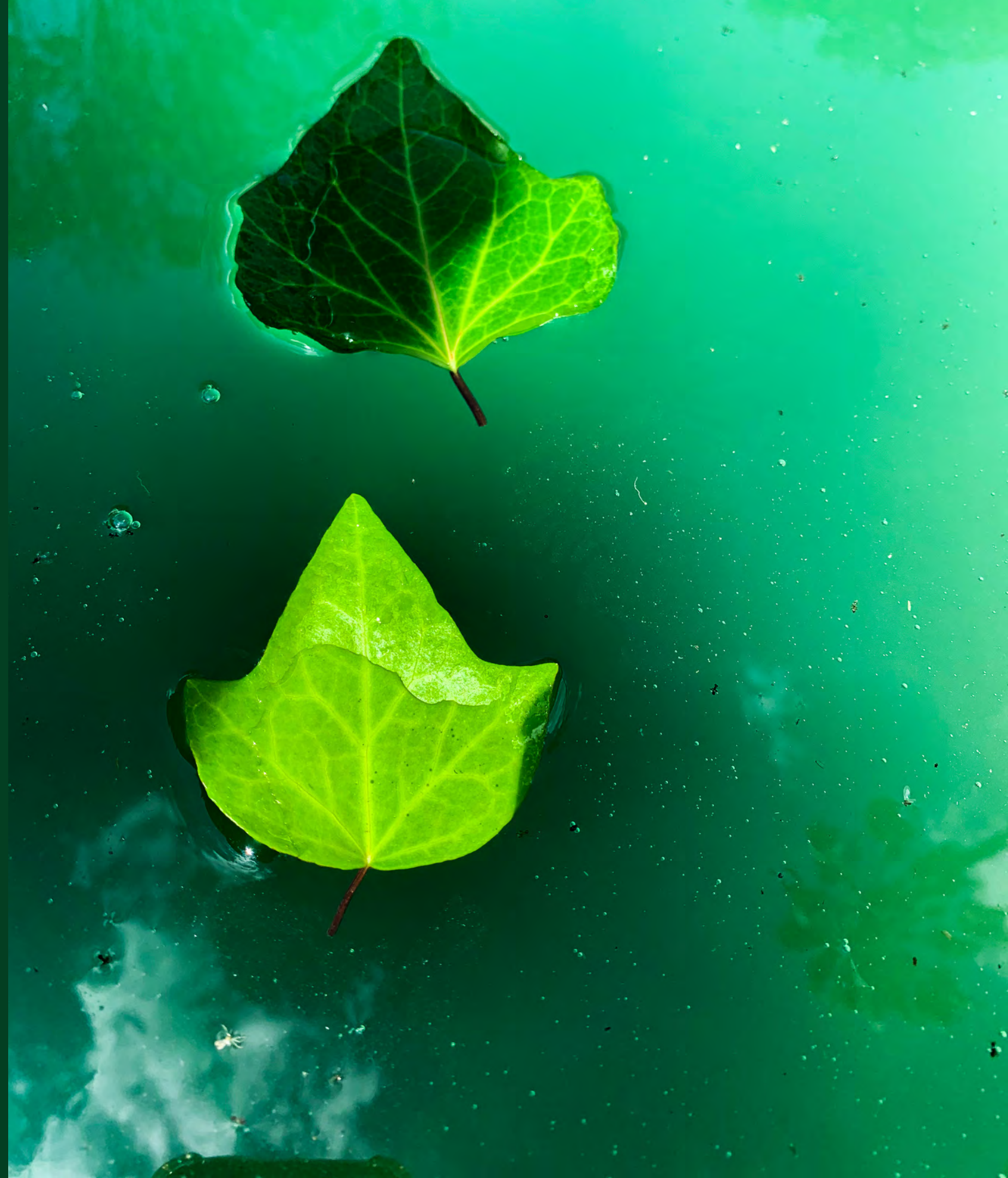
My parents passed on when I was born. I have never seen them. I got into a relationship with this guy who used to give me transport to go to school. He always wanted sex, but I denied him. One day when I was coming back from school, he took the longer route. He said he had a headache and needed water. We got out of the car and went to a nearby river. As I was walking in front of him he pinned me and raped me. I could not do anything. He was my boyfriend. I realized I was pregnant. I did not go on my period for 2 months. I told him and he refused to take responsibility. I told my aunt who helped me abort. She sent me to an old woman. Before I went there she made me drink a half cup of washing powder and salt. Nothing happened, I just got ill. I went to the old woman and she gave me seeds in a cloth which I inserted in my vagina. She also gave me something called "*muremberembe*" and aloe vera which I was supposed to drink in a cup and drop on my stomach and make it fall on the ground. I bled. My pregnancy was gone but this made me wish my parents were still alive. Maybe then I would not have gotten into this situation.



My husband and I found out we were pregnant. I had another child. We could not accommodate another one. I had to terminate this pregnancy. My husband and I reached out to his aunt. We got help from a man who sells pills in our neighborhood. He gave me a white pill and told me to insert it in my vagina. Nothing happened. He gave another pill. I had to do it all over again. During the night I bled terribly. I felt a sharp pain in my womb. It felt as something wanted to escape but could not. I called the man. Luckily he responded. He made me bite a cooking stick (mugoti) and sit on a bucket. A huge lump of blood and flesh came out. I felt relieved. After some weeks of bleeding. I did not have enough milk to feed my baby. It felt as if my breast had dried up and my milk was clogged. I was very sick for a long time. The man gave me brown pills. He said they would help.....



I got pregnant when I was 18. I told the boy who had gotten me pregnant and he promised he would marry me. After a few weeks, he started acting differently. I had to do something to terminate the pregnancy. It was clear he was not going to support me. He said I was the one with the pregnancy and should do what I could with it. I was still in school and I wanted to continue. I went to a local woman who helped me abort. I did not want to bear a child who would eventually turn into a street kid. The woman used "mupfuta" She inserted her hand and pricked me till I started bleeding. It was painful. I bought pain killers for the pain, I got terribly sick for weeks and lost weight. I bled so badly. I was scared. I am still scared because maybe she pricked in the wrong place. The boy blocked me. I do not know where he is. He ran away. I was hurt. I am still hurt but I am relieved.



I am pregnant. He does not love me, this guy. Yesterday I went to his house because he knows I am pregnant. He made me sleep outside. He later opened at 12 midnight and he forced me again to have sex with him. He made sleep on the corner in his house. In the morning, when he woke up he chased me out and locked his door. I am scared. My mother is in South Africa. I am the one taking care of my siblings. I think it is better if I abort.



As soon as I finished form 4, I started dating a guy. He insisted we have sex. I loved him. Also with peer pressure, I agreed. After the sex, he would give me the morning after pill. At that point, I did not know what the pills really did. I continued taking them but they made me sick. After some time I started having cravings. My boyfriend could see the changes on my body. I did not notice when my period did not come. I was young and did not know better. We went to town and got a pregnancy test. We went to his house. I did not know how to use it. He told me to pee in a container. I found out I was pregnant. I was scared. At first, he convinced me it was okay, and he would take care of me and marry me. I thought he was rich.....My tummy grew bigger. I was sick for a while and I told my mom I had ulcers. No one from my family suspected anything. One morning I woke up to see that he had blocked me. He moved away. He was nowhere to be found. After weeks he called me. He told me he was not ready to be a father. He said we had to terminate the pregnancy. At first, he talked about a doctor, but that changed. He told me he had no money, and he took me to a local woman. He is the one who talked to her. I had no part in the conversation. She took me to her house and made me lie of on her bed. As soon I as I did, she inserted her hand in my vagina. I fainted. From then on I have no idea what really took place. I woke up feeling all sorts of pain. The guy took me home. He never unblocked me. He continued visiting my house and would pick me up to go to the woman. This happened for almost a week. My pregnancy was successfully terminated. I bled for a whole month. After my period I started getting a thick discharge. I got sick. I lost a lot of weight. My family still thought they were just ulcers. After some months, I ran into this guy. He did not say anything to me. He just walked past me, and I did the same. I cried....





When I was 17 I was dating this guy. He slept with me and we did not use any protection. An older girl noticed I was pregnant. I told the guy. He told me he had a wife and could not take care of me. He told me his wife was violent and was going to beat me up. I saw the wife and got scared. I was scared she was going to kill me. She was also pregnant. The guy blocked me. I told my aunt who convinced me to go to his workplace. He told me to do what I could. He told me to abort. A woman in my community gave me chilly roots. I drank it and started feeling dizzy. I do not know how many months it was. I was at home staying with my mother so I could not stay there. I went to my mother's sister's place. I bled. No one knows about this and should ever know. The guy who got me pregnant went to South Africa.....

After finishing high school, I started going for a mechanical engineering diploma. I was far away from my parents and vowed to not disappoint them. However, I fell for a guy who was in the military. We slept together occasionally. He is the one who told me I was pregnant when he started noticing changes in my body. I went home for a semester break and found out I was pregnant. When I told him, he started acting differently. I had no choice. I had to continue my studies. I looked for a local woman who helped me. After I had terminated the pregnancy I went back to school. The guy started threatening me. He wanted to know where my pregnancy went. I reported him to school authorities who warned him against harassment.



My boyfriend got me pregnant. I decided to tell his family. They told me their son was young and had no business taking of me and my child. They also could not accept me because I am a sex worker. When I was 2 months pregnant I took the brown pills contraception pills and aloe vera but I remained pregnant. I then told my friend who helped me to abort. She understood because I had no one. She told me she knew an old man who could help me,

but he needed money. \$5.

He told me to never tell anyone about this. He made me a lot of herbs which made me bleed. My boyfriend's family took him away. To this day I am still scared that I will not be able to bear a child. I am also scared that my friend will tell people about what I did



I got pregnant and eloped with my boyfriend. He had no parents, so we decided to stay together. At first, it was not bad. Until he stopped coming home. I had my baby, but I had to scrape for food. When he came back he would force me to sleep with him. I got pregnant again. I fell into depression. I was now thinking of killing myself and the baby. This time around I made a decision to keep the one child I had and abort the pregnancy. I could not cater for myself, let alone two children. I went to a traditional healer who made medicine for me. When I took the medicine I got terribly sick. I could not go to the clinic because I was scared that the nurses would have me arrested. I could not go back to my mother. She did not want anything to do with me. People helped me, giving me more

herbs

to become strong. I lost weight but I am happy I made the decision

