



every **voice** counts!



**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

EVERY VOICE COUNTS RELEASES NEW MUSIC VIDEO FOR THE SINGLE “SPEAK OUT” AN ORIGINAL COLLABORATION BY CACTUS AGONY AND MY FATHERS HOUSE CHILDRENS CHOIR

***Zambians everywhere soon to be tapping their feet and singing along to the rhythm of a new hit track” the APRM cornerstone single “speak out”***

**Lusaka, 26<sup>th</sup> January** –The National Governing Council (NGC) of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in Zambia, with the *Every Voice Counts* campaign, announces the on-line video release of the campaign theme song ‘**Speak out**’ on the APRM –Every Voice Counts Website ([www.aprmzambia.org.zm](http://www.aprmzambia.org.zm)). The on line release will be followed by its television premiere on Born and Bred, ZNBC’s popular urban music show on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January, at 22:15hrs.

The single is already a familiar tune on many people’s lips as it is featured in the sound track of **My Country** a five part \TV series recently screened on ZNBC and MUVI TV.

The song was produced by Mr. Junior ‘Swat’ Munthali at Lusaka’s Kula music studios and is the dynamic interpretation by Cactus Agony and the Blessed Angel’s Choir from My Father’s House Orphanage in Kalingalinga.

For Esther Denisha, coordinator at the orphanage, the Every Voice Counts approach to work with the children’s choir struck an emotive chord:

*“My Fathers House Orphan Homes were a great part of this campaign..Orphans can also contribute to the development of Zambia because they play a big part in influencing policies that affect them. We were blessed to be part of this campaign ...”*

Cactus Agony is known as a socially conscience artist, often using his talent to promote development in the country. His previous works include songs promoting activism against gender violence,, so as he put it he “ jumped at” the chance to be part of the campaign.

*“I hope this song will inspire a lot of people and motivate them. If you are going to get people involved in development and recruit people it has to be catchy and in the right spirit. It just flowed. I think the **Speak Out** song has all this”*

*With lyrics such as “the development of the nation is not the job of government alone, it takes everyone’s participation” and an up tempo sing a long vibe, **Speak Out** is a rallying cry that hopes to inspire listeners across the country to become involved with the Aprm process.*

*The video features Cactus Agony, children from My Father’s House orphanage,, stars from the My Country series including Phakeni Makowane (aka Matongo and also of Club Risky Business fame) and a host of popular figures and celebrities: Brian Shakarongo, Tio, Ruff Kid, Smooth IK and CQ*

The video was created by acclaimed production company Media 365 and MT Productions whose video for JK’s song, “Soul Survivor” won the best R&B music video award at the 2010 Born & Bred Awards in December.

As part of the communication initiatives of the National Governing Council, *This campaign song* seeks to champion African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as a tool that impacts on our lives and how we can all make a difference. Through this song it is hoped that knowledge and awareness of the APRM will increase and that people will be inspired to take action in the most appropriate ways. The song's main message is that no matter who you are, you can make a difference.

*The video can be viewed on the APRM website, YouTube, and the Every Voice Counts page on Facebook.*

#### **Further information:**

#### **About the Every Voice Counts! Campaign**

Targeted at all Zambians from diverse ways of life, the Every Voice Counts! Campaign aims to raise awareness and increase participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process in Zambia. The campaign will address the four focus areas of the APRM, democracy and good political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and social-economic governance.

The campaign features the *My Country* drama series, a television commercial entitled "Imagine" featuring Zambian celebrities, Slap Dee, Cactus, Maiko Zulu, and Ruff Kid among others. The campaign also features a radio programme as well as a campaign website and Facebook page.

#### ***My Country* Synopsis**

*My Country* is about **Shabwa**, a journalist, who resigns from a successful career at a tabloid newspaper to pursue a greater calling to use his skill as a journalist to help change his community for the better. His mission is to establish an organization called Change Agents that will train members of various communities as Citizen Journalists and use their voices (through print, radio and television) to report on issues in the community and advocate for the powers that be to keep their promises and make development a reality. His ideals lead him to set up office in the heart of a Lusaka township, recruiting his out of work, aspiring filmmaker cousin **Emma** to aid him on his mission with the promise that it will fulfil their dreams. Through his odyssey he meets **Hillary**, an officer at the NGC who is eager and passionate about the APRM's possibility for change, **Chester**, a young senior manager at a private corporation involved to its neck in corporate malpractice, and **Ricky**, an ambitious final year secondary school student from a Lusaka township, who dreams of pulling his family out of financial strain.

Through the interweaving stories of the characters, issues related to good governance, economic management, corporate governance and social economic governance, are revealed, highlighting what the APRM is and why it is important for all Zambians to get involved.

#### **About The African Peer Review Mechanism**

The African Peer Review Mechanism is an important undertaking for Africa and its people. Its main purpose is to bring about positive change by encouraging the adoption of policies, standards and practices that will bring political stability, economic growth and sustainable development. The APRM encourages Africa and Africans, to adopt a culture of accountability and provides a means of addressing issues that can affect good governance such as corruption and misplaced priorities. The APRM is concerned with all areas of society and good governance, but in particular the following four areas:

- 1. Democracy and Good Political Governance*
- 2. Economic Governance & Management*
- 3. Corporate Governance*
- 4. Socio-economic Development*

Participation in the APRM is voluntary; a country must volunteer to be reviewed by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. In the APRM base documents this is termed 'Voluntary Accession'.

For the APRM to be effective, it requires the participation of all stakeholders in the country, including government, political parties, parliament, NGOs, private sector, academia, women's groups, trade unions and the community. This is because development of a country does not rest with the government alone; its citizens must actively participate to ensure the change they want to see. A key benefit of the APRM is that it allows participating countries to not only take account of their own policies and practices, and monitor progress towards improvements but also to learn from other African countries that have successfully implemented policies that have driven their growth.

The APRM enhances Africa's ownership of its own development agenda and process

### **About the National Governing Council**

The National Governing Council (NGC) is the primary unit for implementing the APRM at national level. The NGC works with all stakeholders and members of the public and private sector, having consultations and discussions. The NGC is representative and members are drawn from private sector, women groups, persons with disabilities, academic, religious and faith based organisations, political parties, rural populations, trade unions and government to ensure it is an all inclusive team.

### **About Media 365**

Media 365 is a fast-growing, dynamic media agency that focuses on strategy, marketing, communication and research services within the area of social change and development. Based in Lusaka, Zambia, the agency uses the guiding principles of social marketing to develop, implement and manage cause-related campaigns for local and international clients.

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