



Transforming Youth. Transforming Zimbabwe.

National Youth Movement Building Outreach

Provincial Youth Conversation Report



22 November to 11 October 2019

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Overview of the Action

The National Association of Youth Organizations (NAYO) in partnership with Action Aid Zimbabwe (AAZ) partnered to strengthen the coordination of youth sector organizations and contribute towards youth movement building in Zimbabwe through a National Outreach dubbed the 'Big Youth Conversation'. The partnership came at the backdrop of previous partnerships advancing AAZ's strategic focus on Participatory Democracy through for instance the National Training for Youth on the African Charter on Democracy and Governance (ACDEG) and strengthening of the Activista Movement by organizing its inaugural meeting. The Big Youth Conversation covered all the 10 provinces of Zimbabwe with the respective provinces hosting the meetings with the exception of Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland East which were hosted in the combined meeting held within the Harare Metropolitan Province.

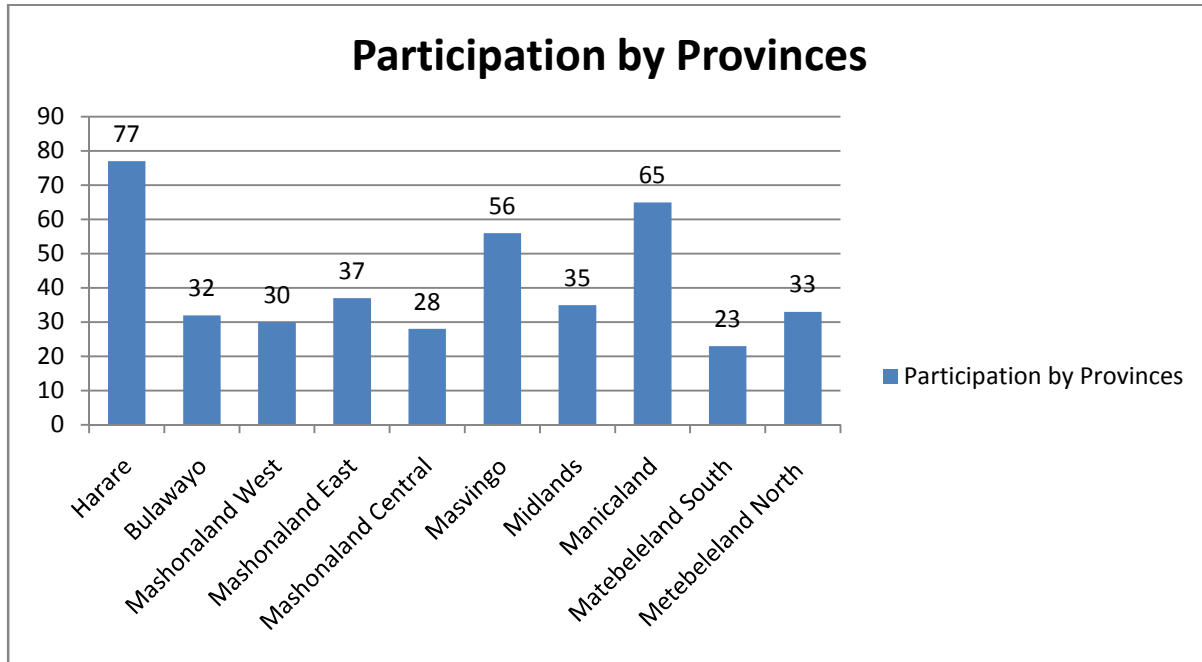
The National Outreach on Youth Movement Building was structured in the form of a formal conversation among youth actors which allowed for youth including those with salient voices to contribute to the conversation. The conversation was structured on five (5) different levels which included:

- Mere conversation – Youth conversing on matters of interest - this aided setting the tone for the different levels of the conversation and unpacking context specific issues
- What does the Big Picture look like for the envisioned Zimbabwe by Youth? – allowed for youth to co-create a share vision of Zimbabwe. It allowed youth to connect themselves and their struggles to the nation's posterity generating interest among youth actors to be critical of processes unfolding around them;
- What are the things that matter the most to us as Youth? – allowed for Youth to define a social contract between them and the state regards non-negotiable issues that are of critical importance to the emancipation and empowerment of youth;
- The things that we see going wrong around us – allowed for Youth to reflect on their communities and country with the view of organizing around challenges which are being experienced within the country.
- How do we build solidarity? – allowed for youth to reflect on the process of the conversation and share ideas to strengthen youth cohesion, collaboration and solidarity in pursuing shared interests.

The Big Youth Conversation created a platform across the provinces for youth to contribute towards youth agenda setting; explored the various ways in which youth are engaged at the provincial level and galvanized youth on emerging issues. The conversation contributed directly to the on-going National Youth Policy review process by the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation and is building the agency of youth at the local level.

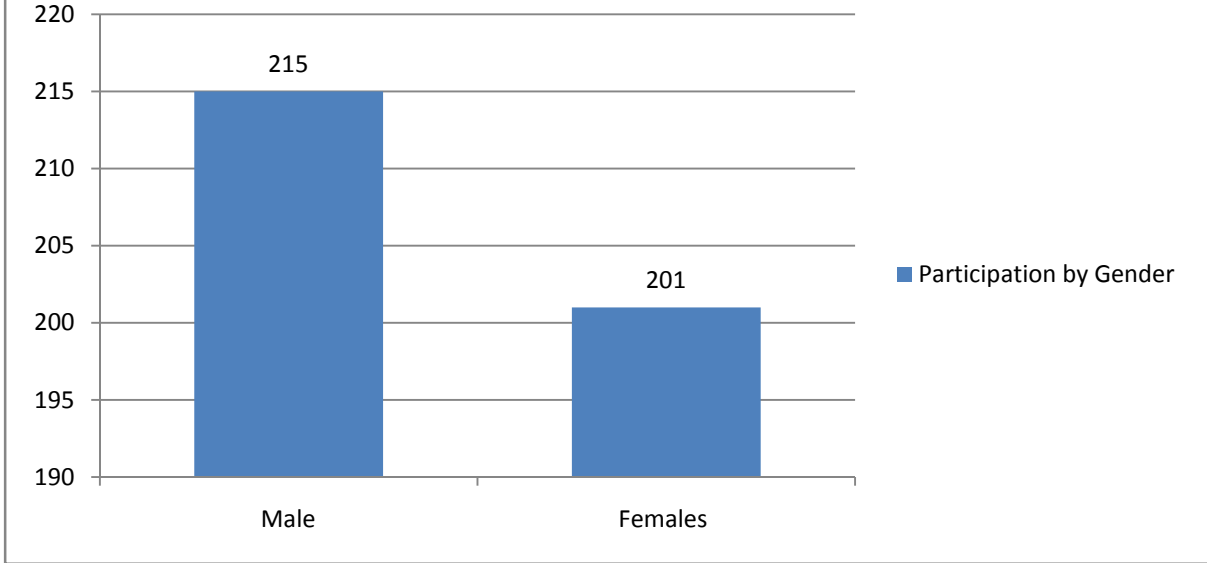
Demographics of the National Outreach

The Provincial Youth Conversations were held in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe and had a cumulative reach of 416 youth. Below is a table illustrating the participation of youth at the provincial level:



Harare province had the highest number of youth participating in the conversation which is attributed to the 'Youth Village' venue which was used at the NGO Expo – as such there was a high level of traffic within the Youth Village hosting the Conversation. Other provinces with high levels of participation were Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces. Matebeleland South and Mashonaland Central recorded the least levels of participation as depicted by the above table.

Participation by Gender



Provincial Profiles

The Provincial Youth Conversations were held utilizing open space facilitation methodology ensured the active participation of youth in the meetings. Whilst the conversation had a structure in the form of guiding questions, it is important to note that the Conversation took different forms allowing it to explore issues pertinent to youth within the context in which it was being held.

Combined Provincial Meeting: Harare, Mashonaland Central and East

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- A better Zimbabwe, where young people are not afraid to speak out their issues because of fear of being victimized and tortured.
- Provision of free health care, where all citizens receive health care at no cost or at a very minimal cost and provision of good quality education
- A future Zimbabwe, where young people create and shape their own destinies and not to allow the older generation to determine their future.
- Challenging the notion that “*we are the leaders of tomorrow*” , young people are leaders of today and tomorrow and they need to be untied and fight for their own space
- Free education, the government should provide free sanitary products to schools across the country and persons with disability should have equal rights and greater opportunities than the others.
- A Zimbabwe with solution-oriented youths to political, social and economic issues
- Inclusive youth participation, youth with access to decision making bodies, who stand as leaders and impact the development processes as they are the critical agents of change
- A Zimbabwe, where policies are development oriented, where freedom is everyone’s right and not living in fear of being misquoted.
- Where there is full youth participation, youth working in solidarity with no room for selfish agendas, where “togetherness is the youth agenda”.
- A Zimbabwe, where young people refuse to celebrate mediocrity from the leadership, youths who takes their lives seriously and when leaders gave fake promises, they rise to demand accountability and ask critical questions on things that matter as opposed to joking over the same
- Where youths have access, control and ownership of means of production
- Youth with access to social, economic and political rights
- A country where young people are not used to window dress occasions, a tokenistic approach where young people are a mere mirror of representation e.g. junior councillors, rather young people should break the vicious cycle of political apathy by increasing their political representation occupying seats within local authorities, parliament and the Senate.

- Where young peoples' votes are heard and they also participates in elections as candidates because as it stands young people are not participating in elections because they feel that voting is not an effective way to change societies and the system is corrupt.
- Where young people stand up for themselves, an example is where young people in Mashonaland Central chased away *mashurugwi* that where terrorizing people in Bindura
- Where young people do not fear, for their future is now and they are the leaders of today, a nation where youths are empowered and initiate development initiatives in their communities and not to wait for the government to proffer solutions.
- A nation with policies that are youth driven, that gives power to youths to make their voices heard and it does not give ceremonial posts to them.
- With a reformed security sector which does not fear illegal gold miners, they was an incident that happened where a victim was told to negotiate with the illegal miners by the security sector
- Respect for human dignity and the right to life
- Where they are full opportunities that are given to young people without favour
- Solution oriented, innovative, creative youths and have business ideas.
- There is need of changing systems and structures because as it stands structures, processes and systems that are there do not give the youth the ventilation to do what they want.



Figure 1 Youth Representative from Macheke makes an intervention during the Combined Provincial Meeting held in the 'Youth Village'

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Education system should encompass sports and be transformed from being a learned system to an educational system with life skills so that young people can rely on themselves and not wait for the government to create jobs. In addition, education system should invest in creative industries, as it will help in addressing the anti-social behaviours affecting young people because of the issue of drug abuse.
- The State, every person (including juristic persons) and all institutions and government agencies must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights and freedoms set out in Chapter 4 of the constitution of Zimbabwe (declaration of rights).
- Job opportunities for young people, as it stands they are in the informal sector yet they have degrees.
- Accountability and Transparency of Government and elected leaders.
- Support to young people with capital, young people are innovative, creative and have solutions to some of the challenges affecting them
- Land use for agriculture, young people in Zimbabwe are not benefiting and given land.
- Need for supportive policies that make the environment conducive for youth involvement and participation.
- Free education, unity, respect for human rights and justice should prevail to everyone.
- Resources should benefit people living in those communities e.g. the black granite in Mash East should benefit the community, also young people should seek information on granite mining to understand more on the pricing of the mineral and where it is exported to
- Sharing of ideas and create space to dialogue and provide solutions to the issues affecting youths
- Youth development within African countries, they have been a decay of social togetherness due to lack of unity of purpose
- Freedoms to association, assembly and expression as provided for within the constitution.
- Youth inclusion in economic development i.e. the ministry of mines and the ministry of agriculture should include young people in its programs

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Young people are used being by politicians during campaigns to instil fear in communities so that they align to their agendas and values thereby influencing voting patterns by way of coercion.
- Lack of a stable currency and continued shortages of hard cash or currency in the economy.
- There is no access to clean water at health facilities, expectant mothers are encouraged to bring their buckets of clean water on the day of delivery, thereby affecting maternal health
- Lack of an even playing field and opportunities as thwart young people's participation, hence young peoples' rights and voice must be heard.
- Corrupt law enforcement officers, they are so many cases of rape, but the victims are walking scot-free

- Unfair labour practices, people are working for long hours and not being paid appropriately
- Massive exploitation of natural resources, even if they employ young people in those sites, their remuneration is relatively low
- There is need to separate business from politics because if a young person has an idea to develop a community, they are suppressed because they are said to belong or affiliate to a certain political party. This is a product of polarization within the country.
- Lack of democratic space to be aligned to a certain political party you wish to belong
- The ideas that young people have on developing the nation they are being hijacked by the old people when they share them,
- Lack of information as young people do not have information on critical issues that affects them.
- Increasing Drug and substance abuse by the youth
- Child marriages and child prostitution is now very rampant because of the issue of poverty
- The elders are not creating space and supporting young people
- Economic situation has worsened the plight of young people
- Nepotism and corruption have badly affected societies
- High levels of depression due to economic hardships
- Lack of Recreational spaces, community halls have been turned into public drinking beer halls and residential spaces
- Poor service delivery from local government and lack of accountability
- Poverty has intensified anti-social behaviour i.e. robbery and theft from street kids and other citizens
- Communities are highly polarized and the ruling political party dominates in every thing

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- Undertaking collective process to define the youth struggles as a collective and with one voice
- Making use of platforms that are available to speak with one voice as youth – current voices and efforts are need cohesion.
- Although youths are not a homogenous group, there is need to share ideas and listen to each other
- Like minded youth organizations such as NAYO and others should work together and transfer power to the marginalized groups
- Change of mindset, young people must be courageous enough to claim their spaces
- Young people should participate in council meetings and consultations that are held within local authorities
- Networking and supporting each other
- Power representation - young people should stand for themselves
- Approach the Ministry of Youth to create spaces, lobby for our rights because the ministry was created for youths.

Mashonaland West Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- A peaceful community of Kadoma, free from violent attacks from Makorokoza (informal artisanal miners)
- Decent jobs and employment opportunities that allow for utilization of skills set from education gained.
- Where young people actively participate in national development processes across all the 'spheres of life' including involvement of youth in policy making and design.
- Intergenerational leadership where leadership renewal is institutionalized.
- A nation that addresses the issue of substance abuse and violence in substance use disorder
- Freedoms to expression, association and assembly
- Where a nation directly invest in poor communities through community development banks, credit unions, loan fund and microfinance institutions
- Revival of industries
- A nation that invests in research and development
- Government's support to the arts sector
- Promotion of entrepreneurship education because it is a powerful tool in fighting youth unemployment. The Ministry of Youth should invest in entrepreneurship programs
- Corruption free Zimbabwe
- A nation that invests more in education and making it more affordable, in Kadoma school going kids are now engaged in illegal mining
- Poverty-free nation
- An education curriculum that responds to the demands and needs of the job market and enable for youth to explore diverse forms of talent including creative industries and sport.
- A nation with legal and policy frameworks that support youth.
- Where young people supports each other and vote for other youth candidates during electoral processes
- A nation which is self-reliant on its own resources
- A nation that embraces a multi-party system and this will help in strengthening democracy
- Where young people are knowledgeable on their rights and government policies that concern them.

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Youth Primacy and Agency
- Involvement of youth in matters that affect them.
- Access to basic health care
- Decent lifestyle

- Government should support mentorship programs for young people as this will help in curbing the issue of drug and substance abuse
- Decentralization of opportunities for young people across sectors
- Safe spaces in which youth can voice up, be heard and organize without fear of victimization.
- End of poverty in all its forms
- Access to information and internet, connectivity helps in linking communities.
- Young people should demand their spaces to be heard
- Independent institutions
- Youth networking forums
- Government and other stakeholders should create a friendly youth environment where young people can share ideas and implement their projects

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Nepotism in terms of accessing opportunities for wealth creation e.g. mining, agriculture and employment opportunities. These tend to be confined to those with political affiliation to the ruling party.
- Lack of constitutional awareness among the youth – this has had an adverse effect on the civic participation of youth at the local authority level. In addition to this, youth are not aware of the policy frameworks governing them, for instance, the National Youth Policy.
- Young people are pulling each other down in processes within the community.
- High increase of murder cases in Mash West by machete gang, they are also endangering the free movement of people across communities.
- Lack of freedom of expression.
- Fear of being tortured and intimidated by state security agents for engaging in civic actions.
- Sewage bursting and a general decline in service delivery – sadly communities have normalized this situation with no efforts by citizens to engage the local authority.
- The youth empowerment bank has not decentralized to communities and their requirement of collateral disenfranchises youth.
- Access to family planning, many young people are not knowledgeable on the topic
- Lack of toilet and water facilities in some communities (there is one borehole that serves ward 1 and ward 4)
- Sanitary wear for girls is not given much priority yet this is a health issue – young women are resorting to unsafe forms of sanitary wear that expose them to infections and harm.
- High increase of sexual harassment of young women due to dressing
- Normalization of Gender based Violence across communities.
- Poor maternal health care - expectant mothers are told to bring their own candles, bucket of water and gloves as health facilities are not equipped with these critical tools.
- Increase of child beggars. This in turn exposes children to harmful practices such as human trafficking among others.



Figure 2 Youth Representative from Mashonaland West stresses a point during the provincial Meeting

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- Young people should support each other and be united
- Attend to community dialogues and consultations
- Initiatives should be community driven not the individualistic approach
- Use of social media platforms
- Young people should convene their own meetings and forums
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other organizations should come together
- Young people should share their problems and come up with solutions
- Creation of youth friendly media platforms
- Young people in Mash West should approach the city fathers so that they can refurbish different sporting facilities.
- Have more trainings on citizen journalism

Midlands Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- Job opportunities for young people
- Good infrastructural development
- Meaningful youth participation in governance processes
- Vibrant youths who are not afraid to air out their issues
- Recreational facilities for young people who are into sport and entertainment
- Hungry-free nation, poverty has been exposing a girl child into prostitution
- A nation with a strong currency that can compete on the international stock markets
- Young people that holds leaders to account
- Need for domestic policies that open up opportunities and support young people.
- State of the art education that is responsive to the needs of the economy and global job market
- Affordable and accessible health care services
- Corrupt free Zimbabwe
- A country that tolerates diversity to each ethnic groups
- A country where people are satisfied with their environment
- Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals by young people with innovative ideas
- Where young people register to vote, vote and defend their vote
- Where the taxation system is fair to all citizens
- A democratic country, where the constitution is respected
- A nation that manages its resources well and have policies in place which broadly benefit all citizens (pro poor)
- Freedom to demonstrate
- Where policies are influenced by economics and not politics
- Revival of industries and refining and processing of minerals should be done in Zimbabwe
- People in the Diaspora should come back and develop Zimbabwe
- A nation with a youthful President, this will help in representing and addressing issues of young people
- United citizens led to the development of the nation.

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Financial support from the government
- Access to the internet for connectivity
- Good and effective transport system
- Good education system that allows people to get job opportunities
- Affordable sanitary wear
- Recreational facilities

- Recognizing the value of the youth, due to economic challenges, the pressures are hard for young people as they are now taking care of the elderly and children
- Health and safety awareness (safe environment) for artisanal miners
- Freedom of expression
- Active citizenship where people participate and be involved in policy making
- Grassroots' involvement in policy making
- Platforms where young people are not suppressed
- Freedom of association
- Young people's rights should be recognized
- The education curriculum is too theoretical without innovation side
- Where young people participate in politics
- Employment and decent salaries
- Creation of an environment which is pro-youth, which create avenues for youth in businesses,
- Create policies that supports youth in business as it stands the process of registration is cumbersome
- Young people's involvement in decision-making processes
- Young people need to research, reach out and be knowledgeable on issues- the starting point can be the constitution
- Youth friendly employment opportunities- not the requirement of 5 to 10 years' experience
- Good health facilities and services
- Promotion of entrepreneurship programs in schools, this will help in creating jobs.
- Need of creative industries in Gweru, as it stands there are no movie houses and other creative youth spaces for entertainment
- Inclusion of PWDs in the mainstream society, the infrastructure is not disability friendly
- Government should support youths in agriculture by giving them land and design other youth programmes
- Provision of affordable shelter to youth
- Government that is transparent, a lot of promises remains unmet

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Corrupt practices at the Vehicle Inspectorate Department (VID)
- Poor service delivery (no water supplies, potholes, water-wells are still closed yet it's almost rain season)
- No medical services
- High fuel prices is causing the increase of pricing of other basic commodities
- High percentages on Eco-cash transactions (40%)
- Victimization of social media posts
- Externalization of funds by politicians in power- this is affecting the economy because hard cash is short in circulation '
- Corruption practices when one needs a vacancy at colleges and universities
- Unfair justice systems (others are given a jail term of 5 years yet politicians are given bail outs), the judicial system is favouring the elite and justice is not exercised fairly especially on young people
- RTGS is not working, hence a need to embrace a multi-currency system

- There is no strong body that represents young people which is linked to human rights lawyers so that young people are not unfairly treated by the justice system
- High levels of corruption by state agencies and entities
- Councils are not prioritizing on service delivery, they are focusing more on meetings and giving each other per diems
- Mashurugwi are terrorizing ordinary citizens and state securities are not acting on the matter.
- Opportunities in government are acquired through favouritism, you have to be linked to someone in order to access it and girls are ending up sleeping with the bosses in exchange of job opportunities
- Less representation of women in power, there is only one female MP and one female Councillor, the participants urges women to support each other and occupy critical posts
- High levels of corruption and poor governance as highlighted in the Auditors General Report, the cash transfers that were given to the Ministry of Social Services were not disbursed and the money was later transferred back to the Ministry of Finance. The Gweru City Council is still auditing books of 2014
- National debt is affecting development
- The nation is continuing to borrow yet it has vast resources
- Leadership crisis, it is self-centred
- The nation has been accepting lies from the government, in 2018 they reported that the Command Agriculture has yielded so much grain but at the moment the nation does not have grain to feed its citizen
- Youths are not involved in the devolution discourse
- There are certain communities that are privileged than the other, where there is always water supplies and no power cuts
- Vendors are always victimized
- No funding opportunities for young people
- The national broadcaster Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) TV broadcasts fake news
- Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) apprentices interviews are only a window dressing processes, the company already have their own people they give those opportunities

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- Young people that works in civil society organizations need to be the ambassadors to other young people in marginalized and remote areas and help to share information
- Making use of community halls to educate other young people
- Use of social media
- Young people need to be united and young people need to join youth associations, movements and organizations
- Socialization among young people and share opportunities
- Young people need to have the same goals and vision
- Replace heroism with nationalism
- Opportunities are not circulating to everyone

- Young people should have one agenda without having to wait for organizations to create platforms and invite young people
- Need to approach the Council so that they can allocate a youth Centre for young people to regularly meet
- Penetrate rural communities as most efforts and platforms are urban centric thereby failing to reach those in rural communities.
- NAYO should partner with other youth organizations in demanding for recreational facilities for young people.
- Young people should not look down upon each other



Figure 3 Youth representatives standing wait for a chance to speak before Conversation shifts to the next level in Midlands Meeting

Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- A nation that can move from past partisan politics and focus on developmental issues which can later translate to accountability and social security of its citizens
- A nation with affordable health and education services as these are basic rights that people should have.
- A nation with a government that admits when it fails in addressing social, economic and political issues/ a truthful government
- Good and effective service delivery systems and frameworks
- Effective youth participation, youth leadership, because young people are not actively involved in decision making and this points out, why they are always left behind in all the processes within the country.
- In policy making and design, young people should be involved and not only limiting their involvement in policy consultation.
- The national budget should prioritize in addressing the welfare needs of the masses.
- Decentralisation helps in resource accountability as it stands due to centralisation, authorities have been failing to account.
- Resuscitation of Bulawayo industries to help generate employment opportunities for young people.
- Provision of free sanitary products to women, the high cost of sanitary wear is exposing women and girls to vaginal infections such as rashes and cervical cancer as they are resorting in using unorthodox material during menstrual cycles.
- End of nepotism and tribalism has they affect the development of the nation, the Manicaland Province has been vocal about devolution for many years but as soon as people in Matabeleland raise the issue, they are singled out and made to look like troublemakers attempting to divide the country.
- A country with generational inclusivity, there should be equal representation of each generation in all the sectors, for example if a Minister is a person above the age of 35, his/her deputy should be a person below 35 years.
- The need for specialisation in the education sector, it should encompass talents and other fields outside academics.
- Unity of purpose, Peaceful nation
- Meaningful youth participation in all development processes
- Where citizens demand their rights and got involved with policy-makers to demand accountability and transparency in public funds.
- Freedom of expression without fear of being abducted
- Inclusion of PWDs in public services such as the education and health sector
- A nation with clear policies that are beneficial to everyone and there is need for wider consultations before policies are being implemented an example is the 2% policy without the citizens knowledge.
- Servant leadership where the main goal of the leader is to serve
- A nation that invests in its own health system

- Safe spaces as they help in giving one a sense of empowerment, which ultimately build up confidence, they offer opportunities to marginalized voices to speak out without fear of their experiences being diminished and they provide a place for healing.
- Closing the generational gap between the old and younger generation
- The post for the Minister of Youth should be occupied by a young person
- All the political parties should give young people critical posts



Figure 4 Youth delegates follow through proceedings at the Bulawayo Metropolitan Meeting

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Free/affordable, safe, sustainable and eco-friendly sanitary wear because it is a human right issue.
- Quality medical care services
- Specialisation in the education system
- Right to education
- Recreational spaces helps young people in managing stress, enhances peer relationship and interpersonal skills, thereby reducing the problem of drugs and substance abuse
- Functional youth centres
- Drug rehabilitation centres because of high levels of drugs and substance abuse
- Inclusivity in decision making processes
- Social care and protection

- Access to the internet
- Freedom of expression and freedom after expression
- Access to opportunities
- Availability of capital for youths to start their own businesses/ economic and financial freedom
- Ability of youths to be the masters of their own destinies
- Good governance with transparency and accountability
- Ensure safety in the transport system and the Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO) buses should have a time schedule
- The government should prioritize in giving stands to young people, they have been on the waiting list for a very long time
- The pricing system which is been used in the country for basic commodities is not fair, one product is priced using three currencies (RTGS (hard cash), US, RAND) depending on the mode of payment.
- The Members of Parliament (MPs) and Councillors are engaging in systems that are not favourable to young people, they engage with residents associations
- Need for a truthful President, as it stands all the trips that the President has been embarking and all the deals that he has signed has not bring any meaningful development to the nation.
- The collateral requirement in accessing youth loans has remained a challenge to youth financial inclusion.
- Young people are not being represented and involved in residents meetings
- Young people need to occupy spaces and challenge the status quo.
- The 3% retention fund from the local authority should fund developmental programmes including roads rehabilitation, street lighting, construction of clinics
- The need for young friendly initiatives i.e. the entry requirement for job qualification that they need 5 to 10 years' experience is discriminatory to young people and it must be challenged by the youths in Zimbabwe.

The things that we see going wrong around us

- The economic situation in the country, is forcing citizens to use ZUPCO buses which is not friendly towards women and persons with disabilities
- High levels of unemployment and what is worsening the plight for young people is that Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA) and the councils are giving the same young people the responsibility of pegging roads. If confronted they argue that, those people are trained and at the moment they have no funds of training others or you will be directed to other different offices
- Water crises and power cuts
- Poor social service delivery
- Corruption
- Youth centres are not fully funded to capacitate young people
- The reintroduction and increased user fees at hospitals for pregnant women could increase rates of maternal deaths for some women will be opting to deliver their babies at home
- Increase of illegal money changers
- Politics of exclusion and ageism

- Failure of the MPs and Councillors to remove their political jackets when they are executing their duties
- Lack of urban renewal/ infrastructural development
- Partisan politics
- Chinese contractors are always given tenders for infrastructural development for example the new Parliament building yet they are destroying the environment
- Political elites are getting way with corruption
- Zimbabwe doesn't have its own currency
- The State broadcaster, ZBC TV is always broadcasting fake and biased news due to flawed reporting processes and they are in support of the government, hence citizens remains misinformed.
- Porous borders
- Failure of leaders to work together
- False feedback by Member of Parliament who barely hold community meetings
- Unequal distribution of resources
- Continuous shutting down of industries
- The emergence of cartels and increase of illegal currency traders
- Misuse of funds by officials
- The National cake is being distributed along partisan lines
- Inability of the government to use Zimbabwean resources to back up the national currency
- The issue of gender equality is now disadvantaging the boys for they don't have a ministry to present their issues, for girls and women they can approach the Ministry of Women Affairs.
- Corruption specifically in accessing primary documents such as a passport

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- The youth expressed how they were angry due to tribal marginalization and unresolved conflicts on Gukurahundi, and the only way to build solidarity is by addressing the issue in order for other generations to live a better life. The more they do not acknowledge that Gukurahundi happened, the more the anger.
- The National Peace and reconciliation Commission (NPRC) which was established to address the issue of Peace and Reconciliation has failed in addressing this issue of sustainable peace and transnational justice, in its quest to address the challenge; they have left out a critical component on "Truth-telling".
- Youths should organize themselves and partner with other like-minded youth organizations that resonates with their struggles
- There are a lot of youth networks and what is required is to come up with strategies to connect with those networks
- Youths need to organize themselves in action groups- move beyond meetings to action
- A need for a uniform and well defined vision to guide the youth, they should not work in isolation but can also borrow mobilisation strategies from their predecessors and look into what brings youth together
- Harness the power of social media, youths can formulate a hash tag and begin a movement around that.

- Through Provincial Youth Indabas.
- Have a framework to mobilize, share knowledge and find solutions.

Things that unites young people in Bulawayo

- Church Sunday chillers
- Sport funerals of peers
- Alcohol social media
- Drugs buses (ZUPCO)
- Parties schools
- Demonstration

What unites young people within Civil Society Space?

- Youth centres
- FGDs
- Community working groups
- Dialogues
- Sports galas
- Youth indabas.

Matebeleland South Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- Implementation of the constitution, giving full effect to its provisions.
- Vocational training centres should cater for courses such as fashion and fabrics, hairdressing and food and nutrition so that those who fail their ordinary levels can sustain their lives
- Institutions should empower young people
- Financial institutions should support young farmers who have decided to take agriculture as a business
- The Ministry of Agriculture should aggregate youths into groups and create an enabling environment towards value addition and beneficiation. Also support youths through programmes such as Command Agriculture
- Currency issue needs to be addressed
- A nation with a well-functioning economy, Zimbabwe has vast resources and they should be used for developing the nation.
- Corrupt free Zimbabwe where resources for infrastructural development are not misused
- Devolution should be implemented
- Where young people are passionate about national issues
- Decentralization of power
- A nation with independent institutions such as Zimbabwe Elections Commission (ZEC)
- Full participation of young people in civic space and development processes
- More young people standing up for public offices
- Where young people support each other, as it is with women. When women stand up for leadership position they will get support from women-led organizations

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Renovation of stadiums
- Job opportunities for young people
- Youth friendly centres for SRHR
- Addressing the issue of drug and substance abuse
- Economic empowerment
- A youth quota that is permanent
- Freedom of expression and participation
- Protection of Human Rights Activist
- Legislative reform agenda should fulfil its obligation of aligning all laws to the constitution
- Safe spaces for young people to discuss on issues that matter the most to them
- A youth commission

- A nation where no one is above the law
- Identity rights and documentation- most young people do not have identification documents and this is depriving them from exercising their to education
- Sporting avenues
- More schools are needed, in Gwanda they are only 2 schools, one being a secondary school and the other one a high school
- National healing framework for the country
- Need for engagement processes for young people after every period of four months
- Young people advocating for the removal of clauses in the constitution which speaks of the realization of rights subject to the availability of resources
- The new education curriculum should borrow the concept of STEM-so that the nation can have more science students and engineers
- Provision of sanitary products to students in schools
- The Ministry of Youth should have an MOU with Government Ministries so that young people are not left behind in all consultations done on policies to be implemented.
- Nation healing and truth telling will help in addressing the issue of Gukurahundi



Figure 5 A Youth Representative from Gwanda making a contribution to the Conversation

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Structures created in political parties disenfranchise the involvement of young people- e.g. a youth leader who is 57 years old
- Young people were expecting a paradigm shift from the way things were done in the first republic but as it stands things are now worse
- No spaces created for young people/ information centres
- No job opportunities
- High prices of commodities
- Resources are not benefiting the communities
- There should be term limits for people that holds positions in public offices
- Currency challenge
- The system of governance is not working
- Lack of servant leadership, they are not serving the interest of the people
- Young people are viewed and labelled for wrong reasons
- Leadership is not sincere to young people
- Elders are planning and designing the future of the youth
- Zimbabwe is regarded as a poor nation yet it has vast resources
- Zimbabwe was once a bread basket of Africa but now its citizens are in poverty
- Lack of freedom of association and expression
- National holidays are being politicized
- Government is still using old archaic laws that were crafted during the colonial era
- Economic depression and the narrative has always been that sanctions are affecting yet its corruption
- Unfair taxation system- the imposed 2% is affecting the poor
- Doctors strike due to lack of medication
- Lobola demand as being exposing women to abuse
- Lack of government solution to the power cuts challenge
- Fake promises during the 100 days plan also that government is paying its debt to Electricity Supply Commission (ESKOM) yet in communities people spent 3 days without electricity
- The President has acknowledged that they are high levels of corruption in the country but no one has been bought to book
- Safe spaces for young people has been penetrated
- The newly amended laws also infringe on people rights e.g. the Maintenance of Peace and Order (MOPO) Bill

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

How to build youth solidarity

- Move beyond partisan politics
- Support each other, young people with one vision and one common goal
- Multi sectoral approach-not just involving youths in civil society
- Civil society organizations should connect the communities on issues that affects them
- Deal with the mindset of individualism
- Include young people with diverse skills

What brings young people together?

- Sports and entertainment
- Policy dialogue meetings
- Funerals
- Sexual reproductive health rights issues
- Edutainment
- Church
- Clubs

Things that unite youth

- Gwanda is a smallest town and people feel that they are the most marginalized
- Music

Matebeleleland North Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?



Figure 6 Youth delegates follow through proceedings at Meeting in Lupane as facilitator explains the structure for the Conversation

- A country where people are free to participate, and there is inclusivity
- Employment opportunities for young people
- Respect of freedom of assembly, political participation, freedom of speech, rule of law and other basic human rights
- Where education loans are availed to students who cannot afford to pay their fees
- Entrepreneurship education is the way to help and support young people.
- The education curriculum should meet the market and industry demands
- Young people should come up with innovative ideas on how to solve the challenges which affects them, community driven initiatives
- Sanitary wear being made available for girls at zero cost as it is in condom distribution especially to rural women.
- A place where young people are regarded as equal citizens to their older counterparts

- A Zimbabwe that is political tolerant and respects diversity
- A united Zimbabwe
- Where the Minister of Youth is a young person and the whole ministry is run by young people.

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Decent work
- Freedom to express their views
- Rehabilitation facilities and programs that helps in curbing drug and substance abuse examples are: India invested money in media industry and Brazil invested in sports
- Access to opportunities regardless of tribe
- Unity among tribes in the nation
- Vocational training centres and a Youth Fund
- Youth empowerment
- Mentorship programs to help curb the issue of drug and substance abuse
- Youth clubs to nurture talents
- The education curriculum should help in identifying talents in people
- Funding of the arts sector
- Employment adverts are posing a barrier to young people's in accessing them , i.e the requirement of 10 years of work experience
- Free sanitary wear
- Health centres and facilities should be decentralised an example is that of contraception pills that are not accessible to people in rural communities
- Information dissemination- it should reach out to people in marginalized communities
- Naming and shaming university students should be addressed, the community needs to change their mind set on how they view students

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Youths are excluded in policies and law making
- Fear is used as a tool of silencing young people
- Women abuse i.e. young girls being forced to marry at tender ages and this should be put to an end
- Lack of access to vital information that empowers young people to make decisions
- Zero investment in the construction and maintenance of youth spaces- there is only one facility that caters for soccer
- Commercialization of basic rights such as health services and education services
- Use of young people as political tools
- Polarisation of young people along political divisions

- Closure of channels of expressions such as demonstrations by the government
- Exclusion of youth from leadership positions
- Lack of inter-generational dialogue
- Lack of servant leadership, people in leadership positions are not undertaking their duties in serving the people, they are thinking of themselves
- Corrupt security system sector, they are not doing justice
- Men are being left behind in empowerment programs- much attention has been put to women, they are now getting more opportunities than men
- State land is being misused and only given to people in power
- Nepotism
- Those in power are not ready to address the challenges that are affecting people
- There are some legislative pieces that excludes young people
- Young people are not united in demanding change- there are clauses in the constitution that excludes young people i.e. for one to contest as President, the person needs to be 40 years and for Senator its 40 as well

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- Collaborative activities such as community cooperative projects
- Use of sport to build youth networks
- Improving equal access to education, resources and opportunities
- Reach out to young people in remote areas
- NAYO should distribute sanitary products to youth organizations, this will help youth organizations to penetrate in rural communities

Places where young people meet

- Shops
- Churches
- School
- Political rallies
- Dam
- National holiday celebrations

Manicaland Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- A Zimbabwe that has decent work for all, regardless of status, creed, sex or political affiliation.
- A peaceful nation which respects human fundamental rights and freedoms
- A nation with young women's voice been heard and respected in all facets of life
- There should be freedom of expression and freedom after expression
- A Zimbabwe where there is equitable distribution of natural resources
- There should be inclusion of young people with disabilities in development processes.
- A nation with economic justice
- There should be preservation of cultural systems and norms
- A Zimbabwe where there is separation of powers
- Improved service delivery and access to proper health care
- A Zimbabwe where there is respect of the Constitution.

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Devolution of powers should encompass young people who are competent not to be chosen on partisan lines.
- Duty bearers should be action oriented
- There should be more platforms to engage the duty bearers because as it stands there is lack of engagement between those in power and the citizens
- Young people should be environmentally conscious and participate in climate mitigation
- Employment opportunities to local people should be a priority.
- Natural resources in the province should benefit the people of Manicaland

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Increased disrespect of human rights and young people are heavily affected
- The issue of chasing vendors
- Abductions
- Lack of access to clean and portable water
- Lack of access to decent health care
- Lack of youth quota systems
- Women quota system does not take into recognition the structural issues which exist, such as the number of rural women to be represented, the number of young women and the number of competent women
- Lack of accountability and transparency in the management of natural resources in Zimbabwe.

Masvingo Province

Co-creating an envisioned picture of the Zimbabwe youth want – What does the Big Picture look like for Youth in Zimbabwe?

- The need for the Youth to form consortiums and organize around issues that affects them
- The use of the little resources that the Youth have in order to move forward
- The need for youth to share opportunities that promote their capacities to start new businesses
- The availability of decent jobs and employment for youth
- Key youth issues must be driven by the youth themselves and not to be aligned to the big politicians
- To have all the national economic blue prints implemented
- Fighting corruption head on as the youth
- The presence of good state-people relations without Tsvimbomugotsi (a current practice where citizens are closely monitored by elements of the state with remedial action being taken against those perceived to be speaking or acting against the State). This has induced fear within citizens especially the youth.
- Leadership with transparency and accountability
- Politics must not control everything, economic empowerment issues for youth must not be politicized
- Upholding of Constitutionalism
- The realization of the freedoms of association, assembly and expression
- The provision of free sanitary wear for girls and young women including the disabled
- The inclusion of youth with disabilities in developmental processes
- Youth representatives in councils, because most decisions that are made, negatively impacts on young people because they are not in positions or consulted
- Youths should strategize on how to access resources
- Young people should take advantage of existing structures that supports young empowerment
- Youths need to read and understand policies and participates in development programmes
- Youth who plan their own programmes

Defining the things that matter the most to youth – defining elements of the social contract between youth and the State

- Affordable and easily accessible Health and Education services
- Train youths comprehensively on start-ups and starting businesses
- Youths need to refrain from talk shows to implementation
- Availability of information beneficial to the youth
- Freedom of expression, assembly and association and respect to Human Rights in Zimbabwe
- Meaningful representation of the youth as there is no substitute for Youth representation

- Youth taking the lead and in providing solutions and leadership to change the narrative and shape their destiny
- Education
- Food
- Freedom after expression
- Youths that are recognized and meaningfully participates in all development processes
- Maintaining cultural identity of the country. Great Zimbabwe ruins have great history and significance



Figure 7 Youth delegates pose for a group photo in Masvingo Province following meeting

The things that we see going wrong around us

- Youth vulnerability has led to greediness as they fall prey to powerful people and represent them at the expense of fellow youths
- Youths are overeducated yet they are benefitting nothing from the education
- The education system is irrelevant
- High levels of corruption
- Electricity shortages

- Continuous price hikes and freefall RTGS devaluation
- Unfriendly youth SRH services
- Social media – takes everything as a joke
- Alcohol, drug and substance abuse
- Partial rule of law
- Human Rights violations
- Youth ideas are being stolen
- The unavailability of safe drinking water
- High increase of prices of basic commodities such as bread
- High Mobile Data prices
- The abuse of young people through the use of money and resources -taking advantage of the economic hardships
- Poverty leading to the abuse of drugs and substances by the youths' in Masvingo

Solidarity Building – practical ways to galvanize youth and strengthen agency at the local and national level

- Collaborate with CSOs, Youth Organizations sharing the same agenda
- Demand a portion of Tokwe Mukosi, as an investment opportunity for youths in Masvingo
- Convening a Provincial Youth Indaba
- Mobilizing youths to participate in council meetings as informed citizens

Conclusion

The National Youth Movement Building Outreach dubbed the 'Youth Conversation' was carried out at an apt time which allowed for youth actors working in different thematic areas to interact and co-create a youth agenda to position youth in the current context. In all provinces visited youth actors acknowledged the intervention as creating a platform for youth to come together and address pressing issues within their communities. During the meetings youth made strong commitments in the following areas or issues which are seen as aiding the process of movement building which the conversations contributed towards.

- Joint Youth petition to Parliament over the issue of sanitary wear to be made free and accessible to all given the challenges which young women are facing owing to this. Following the Provincial Conversation in Masvingo Province, youth delegates sourced a container of sanitary wear from Japan in responding to the crisis at Ngoma Huru Rehabilitation Centre which house young women. In addition to this, youth within the province have successfully organized themselves to influence both local authority and government led consultations being held within the province.
- Commitment to close the gap between rural and urban youth within the provinces with delegates from Midlands and Matebeleland South provinces creating youth action teams to conduct intensive outreach to identify and involve in processes youth organizations and activists working within rural communities.
- Youth in Lupane initiated a dialogue process that involves University students and youth from the local community following a realization that a divide had been created between these owing to perceptions being driven by community members. This allows for collaborative youth agenda setting to tackle some of the pressing issues within their community such as access to sanitary wear for young women and early child marriage issues.
- Participation of youth across all the ten provinces in the National Youth Policy Review consultations which were held in the ten provinces. In addition to this, youth took to social media sharing their different experiences utilizing the hash tag #LeaveNoYouthBehind.

The Conversations set a foundation for concrete actions at provincial level to guide movement building through its contribution to agenda setting, cohesion building among youth and its exploration of practical ways in which youth can become to come together within their provinces. The will and the zeal is among youth to lead social transformation and empower their communities beyond the lived realities towards the shared and co-created vision of Zimbabwe.