



YOUTH POSITION PAPER ON DEVOLUTION AND DECENTRALIZATION

National Association of Youth (NAYO)
Shared Partnership Agreement (SPA) Project.

Abstract

The position paper unpacks the position for Youth on the Devolution and Decentralization policy that was presented by President Mnangagwa on the 31st of August 2020. It gives an overview of the policy document reiterating that the document is in line with the constitution and clarifies gray areas on devolution and decentralization that the Constitution of Zimbabwe amendment number 20 of 2013 left. It then elaborates on the legal frameworks that allow for youth participation giving a regional perspective before giving policy recommendations to government and to the youth sector. Central to the recommendations is that youth have a role to play in devolution and their participation should be enshrined in all the Acts that will be amended to facilitate devolution. It concludes by stating that devolution is an integral aspect of democracy that brings decision making where policy, programme and project implementation takes place.

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list of acronyms.

DDP	Devolution and Decentralisation Policy
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
VA	Village Assembly
VIDCO	Village Development Committees
WADCO	Ward Development Committees

1. Introduction

Devolution and decentralisation in Zimbabwe have been marked by legislative enactments, directives and pronouncements, creating structures and procedures to facilitate devolution of responsibility and power to lower levels of government. The Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 provides the framework for devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities. The Devolution and Decentralization Policy (DDP) was launched on the 31st of August by president ED Mnangagwa in which devolution is seen as an integral part of democracy that brings decision making where policy, programme and project implementation takes place. The DDP facilitates the setting up of standards, regulatory provisions and the monitoring framework within which the devolution process should be administered. This position paper reiterates that Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 guided the devolution and decentralisation policy. It conceptualises devolution as a form of decentralisation, as the political variant concerned with the legal transfer of decision-making and implementing powers as well as resources within the three tiers of government. This position paper places the role that youth should play in the decentralisation process taking lessons from best practices as they unfold in other countries.

Youth in Zimbabwe remain poorly represented in local governance processes and are unable to effectively engage in Parliamentary processes due to a lack of knowledge. Government has instituted a youth quota in parliament as a mitigation measure to solve this predicament. The devolution and decentralisation policy is hoped to enhance youth participation once its implementation is on course.

1.1 System of Government.

Zimbabwe is politically and constitutionally a unitary sovereign state. Section 5 of the constitution places a three-tier governmental structure of i) national government, ii) provincial and metropolitan councils, and iii) local government (Rural and Urban Councils). Zimbabwe has 10 provinces, including 2 metropolitan provinces, 92 local authorities comprising 60 Rural District Councils (RDCs) and 32 Urban Councils. In a devolved system, sub-national government tiers have clearly and legally recognised jurisdictional boundaries within which they exercise their authority and perform their functions (Treisman 2002). The provincial tier of government is to be constituted by eight provincial councils and two metropolitan councils whereas, the local tier of government or local government consists of urban and rural local authorities. Ideally the three tiers of government should operate in a “distinctive, interdependent and interrelated” manner. (Thornhill 2002) alludes that ‘Distinctiveness’ means that the constitution allocates certain functions and powers to each sphere which then has the final decision-making power on those matters. The ‘interrelatedness’ means that the exercise of autonomy by a tier is supervised by the other tier of government. ‘Interdependent’ means that each tier must exercise its autonomy to the common good of the country by co-operating with the other tiers.

2. The Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013 as a basis for the devolution and decentralisation policy

The Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 is the supreme law of the country which overrides any law, practices and conduct that are inconsistent with it. The Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013 created the mechanisms for devolution implementation. Chapter 14 of the 2013 constitution of Zimbabwe states that “there must be devolution of power and responsibilities to lower tiers of Government in Zimbabwe”.

- *Section 195 of the Devolution and Decentralisation Policy justify the existence of the policy as being there to facilitate (a) preservation of unity across the country and prevention of all forms of disunity and secessionism; (b) promotion of citizenry and communities’ democratic participation in Government programmes and activities; and (c) the equitable allocation of*

national resources and the participation of local communities in the determination of development priorities.

It aims to provide recognition of the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their own development. Much of the constitutional clauses are yet to be codified into law. The constitution is not however a perfect document that entrenches all the necessary aspects for effective devolution and decentralisation. It however provides the starting point towards the establishment of a non-centralised form of government in Zimbabwe. The constitution had not adequately defined executive and legislative powers of provincial governments. Further, it left unresolved the duplication of National Assembly and provincial-metropolitan council membership in terms of checks and balances. These issues were thereby clarified by the DDP. Below is an analogy of the constitutional clauses as mentioned in the DDP.

2.1 Devolution and Decentralisation policy document and constitutional sections

Chapter 14. PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Section 264(1)	Devolution of power among the three tiers National government; Provincial Metropolitan Councils and Local authorities
Section 264 (2)	Objectives for Devolution
Section 265(1)	General principles of provincial and local government
Section 270(1) (a), (c) and (e)	Functions of provincial and metropolitan councils (1)(a) social and economic Development (c) conservation, improvement and management of natural resources (e) monitoring and evaluating the use of resources
Section 276(2) (a) (b)	Functions of Local Authorities (a) power to make by-laws, regulations for effective administration (b) levy rates and taxes, raise sufficient revenue
Section 273 (1) (d)	General provisions relating to provincial and metropolitan councils (d) appointment, conditions of service and removal of employees

Chapter 17. FINANCE

Section 299	Parliamentary oversight of State revenues and expenditure
Section 301	Limits of State borrowings, public debt and State guarantees
Section 302	Consolidated Revenue Fund
Section 303	Withdrawals from Consolidated Revenue Fund

Source: Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013

As demonstrated above the DDP is crafted in line with enforcing these constitutional sections. The DDP also elaborates on the importance of citizen participation through section 48, that notes that “Capacity building initiatives targeted at local citizens, in order to empower them to hold local officials accountable and the need for Provincial/Metropolitan Councils and Local Authorities interface with citizens in the management of local affairs (section 48). The role of youth in the devolution process is only explicitly mentioned in section 72 that calls for the inclusion of disadvantaged groups such as the youths and women in economic activities. Youth and woman participation are however elaborated at length in the constitution of Zimbabwe under the following sections

2.2 Citizen Participation in the Constitution

Section 13 (2) (3)	(2) state must involve people in the formulation and implementation of development plans and programmes that affect them (3) Measures referred to in this section must protect and enhance the right of the people, particularly women, to equal opportunities in development.
Section 17 (1) (a)	Gender Balance (a) the State must promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men;

chapter20(1) (b)	Youth (1) State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must take reasonable measures (b) have opportunities to associate and to be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life;
Section 58	Freedom of assembly and association
Section 59	demonstrate and petition
section 62(1)	Access to information held by the state or by any institution or agency of government at every level

Source: Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013

Section 264(1) of the Constitution states that whenever appropriate, Governmental powers and responsibilities must be devolved to Provincial and Metropolitan Councils and Local Authorities which are competent to carry out those responsibilities efficiently and effectively. It calls for a standard of competence before political power can be devolved to three tiers of Government namely (i) National Government (ii) Provincial and Metropolitan Councils; and (iii) Local Authorities. From the above it can be noted that while the DDP clarified devolved responsibilities, it did not however link devolution directly to the youth. It lumped citizens as one category yet should have disaggregated on how the different sections of the citizens were to be affected.

2.3 The devolved responsibilities.

Olum (2014) argues that the success of devolution is hinged on satisfying the preconditions for devolution which include institutional mechanisms (i.e. interface of institutions and harmonisation of operating systems; clear institutional anchorage to handle devolution issues), capacity development; creation of spaces for participation and engagement by diverse policy actors. The responsibility to implement the devolution policy is placed on the office bearers in the three tiers of government. Section 17 and 18 of the DDP provides the implementation framework by sighting that Provincial and Metropolitan Councils and Local Authorities will have operational autonomy in compliance with the country's Constitution, relevant Acts of Parliament, and the unitary character of the State. By that provision the DDP delegates defined central Government powers down to lower tiers and levels of Government. Therefore local, political and economic governance powers to designated Provincial and Metropolitan Councils, as well as Rural District and Urban Councils.

According to Section 268 (1) of the Constitution, the provincial councils are composed of a chairperson of the council; senators; two senator chiefs; president and deputy president of the National Council of Chiefs; all members of the National Assembly; women members of the National Assembly; the mayors and chairpersons as well as ten persons elected by proportional representation. Composition of metropolitan councils for Harare and Bulawayo is outlined in Section 269 of the Constitution as composed of mayor (who is the chairperson of the council); all members of the National Assembly; women members of the National Assembly; Senators elected from the metropolitan province; the mayors and deputy mayors and the chairpersons and deputy chairpersons by whatever title they are called of all local authorities in the metropolitan province concerned., Be that may constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.2 seeks to alter sections 268 and 269 of Constitution specifically certain provisions on provincial councils from all members to 10 members and also to change the selection procedures for the chairperson. If amendment number 2 sails through then this will affect devolution by limiting the voice of the citizens in these councils

Section 32 of the DDP spells out the devolved functions of all Provincial and Metropolitan Councils. These include the following:

- Planning and implementing social and economic development activities;
- Coordinating and implementing government programmes;
- Planning and implementing measures for the conservation, improvement and management of natural resources;
- Promoting tourism and developing facilities for that purpose; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the use of resources.

Local authorities are to be managed by councillors elected by registered voters in the urban and rural areas concerned (section 274(2) and 275(2)(b) (Constitution 2013). They have the right to govern their own initiative, the local affairs of the people within the area for which they are established. The provincial and district administrators' roles are now elevated from political administrative status to economic development-oriented ones. They are now responsible for monitoring and evaluation programmes and processes in their respective districts and provinces. The DDP outlines the role clarity and devolved functions in service delivery, staffing devolved mandates and devolved financial management.

Information as presented by the Ministry of Local Government and Public work set out a devolution programme that decentralises economic activities that provinces should pursue. These economic activities provide an entry point for youth involvement in the devolution process.

2.4 Provincial Economic Activities in summary

Province	Opportunity for Youth to Engage
Bulawayo	Horticulture, Dairy farming, Poultry Gold; Hospitality, Conference facilities, Museums; Pharmaceuticals, Beverages, Cement Manufacturing, Rail stock, Maize and Wheat milling, Cooking Oil Refinery, Metal Foundries, Clothing, Welding Consumables, Paint Manufacturing
Harare	Wheat, Dairy, Poultry, Limestone Hospitality, Conference facilities, Museums Fertilisers, Pharmaceuticals, Beverages, Cement Manufacturing, Maize and Wheat milling, Cooking Oil Refinery, Metal Foundries, Clothing, Agro foods, Meat Processing, Metal Foundries, Tobacco Processing, Coach Building, Car Assemblies
Masvingo	Sugar Cane, Cotton, Maize, wheat, Crocodile Farm ranching Asbestos, Gold, Limestone, Chrome, Iron, Coal Hospitality, Heritage Sites, Game Viewing, Boat cruise Sugar Processing, Meat processing, Ethanol Distillation, Animal Feeds, Maize and Wheat milling, Cotton Ginning
Midlands	Maize, Cotton, Dairy, cattle ranching, wheat, sorghum PGMS, Chrome, Gold, Diamonds, Asbestos, Coal, Nickel, iron ore, Copper, Limestone Hospitality, Heritage Sites, Museums, Game Viewing, Boat Cruises, Fertiliser, Steel, Cement, Ferrochrome, Malt, Opaque Beer, Yeast, Footwear & Leather, Milk & meat Processing, Cotton Ginning, Welding Consumables
Mashonaland West	Maize, Tobacco, Cotton, Dairy, Ranching, Wheat, Fishing, Soya Beans PGMs, Gold, Tin, Tantalite, Chrome, Copper, Nickel, Cobalt Hospitality, Heritage sites, Kariba Dam Paper Manufacturing, Farm Implements, Milk processing, Food Caning, Weaving, Chrome smelting, Cotton Ginning
Mashonaland Central	Nickel, Gold, Tin, Tantalite, Chrome, Copper, Nickel, Cobalt, Tengendenge Village, Mana Pools, Mushumbi Pools, Mavhura Donha Mountains Maize, Tobacco, Dairy, Citrus, Wheat Milk Processing
Mashonaland East	Tobacco, Wheat, Maize, Dairy Gold, Lithium Cement, Meat Processing, Timber processing

Matabeleland South	Cattle Ranching, Cotton, Dairy farming, wheat, Gold Mining, Limestone, Coal, Diamonds Hospitality, Game Viewing, Cement Manufacturing
Matabeleland North	Cattle Ranching, wheat, Dairy Farming, Cattle Ranching Gold. Coal, Coal Bed Methane, Tin, Tantalite Hospitality, Conference Facilities, Water Falls, National Parks, Safari areas, Timber manufacturing,
Manicaland	Tobacco, Bananas, Wheat, Maize, Timber, Dairy, Tea/Coffee Horticulture, Macadamia Nuts Gold, Bauxite, Limestone, Diamonds Hospitality, Water Falls, Mountain Climbs, Scenery views Game Parks, Heritage sites, Bvumba & inyangani Mountains Milk processing, Timber processing, Confectioneries, Fuel Refinery, Tea Processing, Meat processing

Source: Government of Zimbabwe 2019

The youth have two opportunities to engage in the DDP. First as implementors where their role is to ensure that they make use of all opportunities that economic development provides such as increased spaces for business, innovation and enterprise development under agriculture, tourism, mining and manufacturing. This is in line with the National Youth policy document of 2013 that is currently under review. The National youth policy notes that there should be a 25% provision for youth participation in all economic activities. For example, in 2019 government availed ZWL\$703 million (Government of Zimbabwe 2019) that went towards financing these financial devolution activities in accordance to section 301(3) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Section 301 (3) of the constitution of Zimbabwe provides that a budget of at least 5% of the national revenues raised in any financial year should be allocated to the provinces and local authorities as their share in that year. Therefore, the youth can be part of the implementation process. Secondly, they can drive the devolution agenda from within by taking up influential positions as councillors, members of Parliament and also participate in platforms that are set up in the devolution programmes. They can also save as technocrats by taking positions in councils as District administrators, Finance Officers, Engineers, etc. This is where they innovate and deliver on critical governance functions as planning, monitoring, evaluation and implementation of devolution projects. In this regard no youth should be left behind.

3. Youth participation and the legal frameworks

Local democracy can only be protected by citizens who are capable of effectively articulating demands to elected officials. The constitution also set the age for youth as being in the age range of 15 to 35 (section 20(1)). A number of legislation and policies are also critical in ensuring youth participation. These includes the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15), Rural Councils Act (Chapter 29:13), Regional and Town and Country Planning Act (Chapter 29:12) and the Provincial Councils and Administration Act (Chapter 29:11). The Urban Councils and the Rural District Councils Act will be amended in line with the devolution policy. Bills that have direct impact to the implementation of devolution include the Traditional Leaders Amendment Bill and the Provincial Councils and Administration Bill. This bill if passed will facilitate the devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities to Provincial and Local Authorities in accordance with Chapter 14 of the Constitution. This will facilitate enhanced coordination between Central Government, Provincial Councils and Local Authorities, within the context of the DDP. The Public Finance Management Act Mandates Provincial and Metropolitan Councils as well as local authorities to mandatory submissions of annual budgets and financial performance reports. The Rural District Councils Bill will give rural district councils greater autonomy, as enshrined in the DDP and Constitution. The Traditional Leaders Amendment Bill will amend the Traditional Leaders Act into line with the Constitution and provide for the establishment of Provincial Assemblies. These Acts and Bills if passed gives space for youth participation in the devolution process. Currently the Acts have a brief mention of how youth can participate. To enhance youth participation, we proffer the following to be included in the Bills.

3.1 Legal Framework and Youth Participation

Legal Framework	Youth Participation as provided in the Act in current state	Youth Inclusion Mechanisms that can be added into the Bills for consideration
Provincial Councils Acts 1998 Chapter 29:11	Membership in the provincial council — President to appoint (iii) one shall be appointed to represent youth in the province.	1. Youth representation in the Provincial development committee from CSO in addition to the representation from the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Arts and recreation 2. The youth should appoint their own desired person into the provincial's council and not the president
Traditional Leaders Act 1998 (Chapter 29:17)	Section 22 on interest groups. Every village or ward assembly shall ensure the adequate representation of women, the youth and any other interest group on the village and ward development committees in such proportions as may be prescribed.	1. To ensure that 25% membership in the Ward Development committees are youth 2. 25% of the village development committees are youth 3. To ensure that 25% of the village assembly are youth
The Urban Councils Act 2015, CHAPTER 29:15	Section 36 on Youth Centres; To provide and operate youth centres and facilities or amenities connected therewith	1. Section 87 on Meetings open to the public. There is need for private meetings resolutions to be justified to the public before being enforced.
Rural District Councils Act 2002 Chapter 29:13	Section 43 (2) (g) to make grants of money or loans for the establishment, maintenance or support of— youth movement; Section 46; To provide and operate youth centres and facilities or amenities connected therewith.	1. there should be 25% representation in all committees as Area committees; Roads committee; finance committee; Ward development committees; Rural district development committee; Environment committee and other subcommittees

The process of realigning the Rural District Act and Urban Councils Acts to the Constitution provides an opportunity for thorough review to ensure that all areas of potential conflicts are clarified and harmonised. While addressing the state of the nation address on 22 October 2020, president ED Mnangagwa noted that other Acts will be amended to enhance devolution of powers and functions to the lower tiers of Government. These includes the

- Regional town, Country and Planning Act;
- Environmental Management Act;
- Roads Act;
- Public Health Act;
- Education Act;
- Shop licence Act;
- Housing Building Act;
- Water Act; and the
- liquor Licencing Act.

Youth participation in the devolution and decentralisation policy is guided by the National Youth Policy (2013). This policy states that at the provincial and local levels government authorities should work in

a cooperative and harmonious manner when designing and delivering programmes and services which address youth development needs and opportunities. However, the youth component is not adequately mainstreamed in the devolution and decentralisation policy.

The Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17) provides for the establishment of Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) in line with the Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29:13). The VIDCO is accountable to the Village Assembly (VA) and outlines community project priorities. The VA elects and supervises the VIDCO, reviews village development plans before submission to the Ward Development Committee for incorporation into the Ward Development Plan. VIDCOs are thus a platform for youth participation. The rural District council Act (Chapter 29:13) allows for Ward development committees. These platforms allow for youth participation and will be critical in the devolution exercise.

The constitution provides for participation of all citizens in the development initiatives of the country. Section 264(2) seeks to facilitate among other things democratic participation of people in making decisions that will affect them; enhance citizens' participation in the management of local affairs and development; provide a mechanism for equitable sharing of the country's national and local resources; and enable fiscal capacitation of the lower tiers of Government. It is this clause that necessitates youth participation in the devolution and decentralization process. The devolution policy recognizes the need to amend the current Local Government Acts in order to provide a greater level of Local Authorities' autonomy and to minimize interference in the local affairs of subnational Tiers of Government by the Central Government. It is during these amendments that there should be greater involvement of the youth in processes.

3.2 Models of youth representation and participation at various levels of Government

Many countries the world over have adopted constitutions, which legislate different forms of devolution and decentralization models of their governance structures and systems. Countries with platforms for stakeholder consultations and dialogue platforms have implemented devolution better than others and achieved greater youth representation. Countries that have achieved greater youth participation have local Youth Councils that are legally established within the municipality with an advisory role on youth issues. This is the case for Rwanda, Kenya, Portugal¹, Turkey, Sweden. The other model includes provision of simulation exercise of local parliament done by young people that promote the understanding of how democratic processes work. It is in this view that the Junior Parliament of Zimbabwe and the Junior Councils work as effective models of participation. Zimbabwe can back these institutions by giving it legal provisions so that it reports to decision making in the country.

Some countries are implementing quotas for youth to increase their participation in governance processes. Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Uganda², among other countries, have adopted quota systems to bolster the representation of youth. These take the form of reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative); legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative) and voluntary political party quota. For example, Rwanda's quota system for the youth is facilitated in their 2003 Constitution that calls for two youth representatives in the lower house. Under legal quotas, in Kyrgyzstan by law 15% of the candidates of all political parties list have to be under the age of 35. Peru has legal quota for that facilitates for those under 30 in local and regional elections.

At the regional level various statutes call for youth participation. The African Union (2015) identifies decentralization as the strengthening of sub-national levels of government's fostering of people's

¹ <https://dypall.com/2017/11/27/an-overview-of-the-first-study-visit-of-the-project-boosting-youth-participation-at-local-level-november-2017-south-of-portugal/>

² <http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/yt/yt20/quotas-for-youth>

participation and delivery of quality services suggesting that constitutionalisation of local government is a means rather than an end. The African Union vision 2063 also champions the adoption of devolution as a governance framework. Therefore, the move by Zimbabwe to adopt a devolution and decentralization policy is in line with regional trends. Youth participation on governance frameworks is enshrined in the African Youth Charter (AYC) and the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) developed by the United Nations. The African Youth Charter theoretically emphasizing the role of the youth as 'partners, assets and prerequisites for sustainable development' (African Union, 2017)

Tilburg (2008) identifies five conditions that should necessitate devolution and decentralization based on experience from Africa and Asia. These are:

1. Introduction and implementation of appropriate legal reforms, including the legalization of local institutions and their decision-making powers;
2. Institutionalization of a financial resource base at local level through revenue generation and tax collection;
3. Initial assistance to local governments institutions and capacity building by central government, either or not supported by donor organizations;
- 4 standardization of local governments accountability, transparency and responsiveness;
5. Enhancement of the roles and performance of local interest groups in participation. Rwanda has managed to satisfy these conditions with massive capacity building of local levels including to woman and youth organizations.

Kenya has put in the right institutional framework for youth involvement in governance processes. They include the State Department for Youth, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender established in 2018 manages the youth policy, youth empowerment, mainstreaming youth in national development. The Kenya Youth Development Policy (2019) the execution machinery instituted for improving the quality of life for the Kenyan youth. The Kenyan Youth Act of 2009 ensures that youth are represented in every governance process in Kenya. To empower the youth Kenya established the Uwezo Fund (Public Finance Management Act 2014) to provide technical and financial support to Youth, Women and Persons with Disabilities in Enterprise development. The National Employment Authority Act, 2016 which established the National Employment Authority which provides a comprehensive institutional framework for employment management, increasing employment by the youth in government institutions. The Kenya Youth Opportunities Programs also ensures that the youth take part in governance programs. All these can be replicated in Zimbabwe

Malawi started implementation of devolution in November 2000 by the use of district assemblies (DA). It implements districts policy focus initiatives that empowers districts to plan and implement district specific projects that were previously under the jurisdiction of central government. Malawi decentralization policy was adopted in 1998. To date they are twenty-eight District Assemblies which allows for grassroot participation in decision making which consolidate the democratic process. The Composition of the DA is administered by a secretariat and an assembly led by a chairperson chosen from among the councilors. The assemblies allow for youth participation.

Youth in Zimbabwe have an opportunity to participate in the devolution process through occupying public Office through election i.e. as councilors; Parliamentarians; junior council; member to ward development committees and other various committees. There are various models that include structures that enable youth to provide inputs and influence policy-making processes and structures that enable youth to learn about policy-making processes that Zimbabwe can be used such as:

- national youth councils
- youth parliaments (local, national, regional, international)

- local processes that feed into policy-making processes (e.g. youth mayors)
- forums (local, national, regional, international)
- peace processes (in post-conflict contexts)
- participatory or structured social dialogues and youth observatories
- participatory planning (e.g. budgeting and budget advocacy), monitoring (e.g. social audits, community score cards, and other citizens' oversight mechanisms) and research
- youth consultations and panels
- youth juries, mock trials
- opinion polls, online surveys/consultations, and petitions
- civil society organizations-initiated platforms.

Therefore, youth participation has to move from manipulation and tokenism, which do not constitute real participation, to higher levels of participation in which young people initiate, direct, and share decisions with adults as demonstrated in the Roger Hart's "Ladder of Youth Involvement"³. The youth can have a direct impact on decision-making within their own youth communities, such as through youth-led NGOs, student councils, and youth parliaments with competencies and budgets. Youth can be effective through collaborative participation, where young people effectively take part in regular political decision-making processes, including as voters, or as members of parliament, political parties, or advocacy groups. Zimbabwe has structures that can facilitate youth participation that needs to be enhanced to facilitate meaningful participation. By ensuring that youth participation is legally enforced in the Provincial Councils Acts 1998 Chapter 29:11, Traditional Leaders Act 1998 (Chapter 29:17), The Urban Councils Act 2015, CHAPTER 29:15 and the Rural District Councils Act 2002 Chapter 29:13.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

A devolved system increases citizen participation in holding the state to account which is critical for local democracy. The youth have a role in developing or consolidating local democracy and citizen engagement. As the country kickstarts the process to amend the Acts that resonates with the DDP, the role of the youth should be explicitly mentioned. The youth should form synergies with local authorities engage in the economic programs of decentralization across the 10 provinces as facilitated by the Ministry of Local Government and Public works. In as much as the DDP is largely on the administrative front, however it allows for greater citizen participation in agenda setting and decision-making process.

4.1 Recommendations for legal processes on devolution and decentralization

- The youth should push for greater youth involvement in platforms that are embodied in Acts that are to be amended in line with the devolution and decentralization process. These can come as legal quotas in local authorities' platforms as ward development committees, village development committees.
- The National Youth Policy has to be included in the documents to be amended in line with the devolution and decentralization policy.

³ Roger Hart, "Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship," Innocent Essay, no. 4, (Florence: International Child Development Centre, 1992), http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf.

4.2 Recommendations for Youth Lobby and Advocacy

- There is need to lobby more youth to get into active politics so that they become councilors and members of parliament so that they amplify the youth voice in key decision-making platforms
- Demand for a quota system that mention the involvement of 25% youth component in all devolution platforms requiring citizen participation.
- Advocate for greater monitoring and evaluation of the performances of the three tiers of government by the youth especially on service delivery issues and on the economic activities' programs
- Ensure that more youth are capacitated to hold duty bearers to account when government rolls out capacity building initiatives under their DDP community engagement programs.
- NAYO should work in liaison with the Ministry of Local government and public works to ensure that more youth are interfaced with policy makers in planning and implementation of projects under the devolved structures. It should work constructively with provincial and local authorities through a collaborative strategy
- Create coalitions and networks in order to put pressure on government to implement the DDP provisions on citizen capacity building for transparency and accountability
- In line with the DDP strategy engage donors to assist Zimbabwe in capacity building of local authorities so that they effectively implement devolution.

4.3 Recommendations to Government

- As promised in the Devolution and decentralization document, government should come up the monitoring and evaluation framework that will guide implementation of the policy
- Constitutional amendment No 2 is against the devolution and decentralization Policy and should be revoked.
- The government should provide a roadmap on when citizen capacity building will be held to enhance participation by the citizens.
- Speedily realign existing legislation so that it complies with the DDP, without compromising proper consultation with citizens, civil society and specifically the youth sector actors.
- Government should profile youth friendly messaging that resonates with youth demands
- Legislations that are to be amended in line with the DDP should ensure that they explicitly mention the role that young people should play
- Listen to youth voices and open strong lines of communication through which the youth may air their views and also contribute in governance.
- The DDP and other Acts and information pertaining to devolution is in English and may need to be translated into the other official languages recognized in the Constitution to ensure understanding and active participation of the general public.
- The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary education should align the curriculum of training institutions with the emerging skills gaps driven by devolution process

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