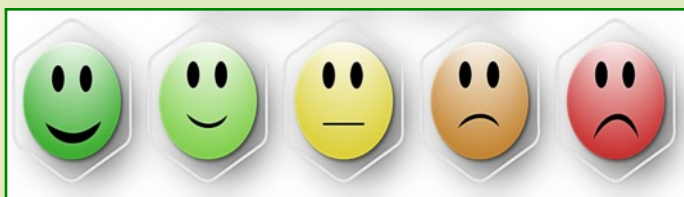


Youth Participation in Local Governance in Matabeleland South Province.



BASELINE SURVEY REPORT

(April-May 2019)



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Acronyms

FGDs	- Focus Group Discussion
KII	-Key Informant Interviews
NEDCO	-Neighbourhood Development Committee
DC	-Rural District Council
UDHR	-Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	-United Nations
VIDCO	- Village Development Committee
WADCO	-Ward Development Committee

I.0 Executive Summary

This report presents the key findings of the Youth Participation in Local Governance survey conducted in five districts namely; Bulilima, Gwanda Rural, Gwanda Urban Mangwe and uMzingwane Districts of Matabeleland South Province during the period from 16th to the 31st April 2019. The survey adopted a mixed method approach through using both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools in the form of an institutional questionnaire, face to face interviews with key informants, Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) and document analysis. Using random sampling, the survey reached out to 20 respondents per district leading to a total of 100 participants with a balanced overall gender composition. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the gathered data leading to the following key findings:

1. Politicised Local Governance institutions which are negative towards critical youth voices. This resulted in youth apathy in decision making spaces such as public meetings, budget consultation processes etc.
2. Politicised community development structures (WADCOs and VIDCOs) whose members were elected on partisan basis.
3. Lack of youth facilities due to under-funded Local Government Institutions. This crippled youth empowerment
4. Economic hardships were forcing young people to prioritise materially beneficial events such as NGO/CSOs meetings and events where there were incentives. Young people devoted most of their time in economically beneficial activities such as mining, vending and in some cases vending with participation in decision making processes such as council meetings being viewed as less beneficial.
5. Youth participation was high in areas where there were active youth organisations (Gwanda Urban, Bulilima and Mangwe).
6. Local Government institutions were using traditional means of communication such as posters and word of mouth and these were not appealing to young people. There is lack of investment on Social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp which are spaces largely dominated by young people.
7. Gwanda Urban was comparatively more prepared ready for Youth participation than other institutions in this study.

However, it should be highlighted that the survey was conducted under a short period of time hence a small sample. Further, the survey was also affected by the unforeseen factors that related to rescheduling of some of the interviews by some respondents who had commitments on the initial agreed times. Although it is acknowledge that the sample of the survey was not representative enough of Matabeleland Province, it should be noted that the findings present a key foundation through which development institutions and Local Government institutions can build towards promoting youth participation in local development processes. It is strongly recommended that a fully fletched study should be conducted in the future so as to gather a comprehensive and district specific information and knowledge regarding the level of youth participation in Local Government. Such a study can be attained through collaboration amongst the various development institutions and its findings will go a long way in development a strategic Youth Participation framework which can be adopted by Local Government with Civil Society Organisations playing an oversight role through monitoring its implementation and periodic evaluating progress towards promoting youth participation in local government.

2.0 Introduction

This research conducted in Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe covers Bulilima, Gwanda, and Mangwe and uMzingwane districts. Matabeleland South is dominantly Ndebele speaking with Kalanga, Sotho, Venda and Xhosa as some of the minority languages found in the area. The economic sector that prevails in the region is largely mining, especially small scale and artisanal mining which is dominated by male young people. To survive, the communities generally rely mining, peasant farming as well as vending due to high levels of unemployment. The province is under ecological region IV which is semi-arid continuously experiencing intermittent droughts, crop failures as well as death of livestock. In 2018, the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment noted that Matabeleland South (see Map below) was one of the ‘poverty crisis’ areas which are water and food insecure.



Matabeleland South Province has been known as a region with a dark history, having endured the liberation war, later civil unrest which led to the Gukurahundi massacres, ultimately leading to political instability and marginalisation of the province. The civil unrest had serious negative impacts that affected the economic and political fabric of the province. This led to the underdevelopment of the Province, to the extent that the most productive parts of the population, whether male or female were compelled to leave their communities to look for greener pastures in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. This productive part of the population that were aged between 20-40 years of age sustained urban and rural households through their remittances. This was however dealt a heavy blow in 2017-18 with the growing strength of the United States Dollar in major Southern African currencies rendering the remittances meagre and not possible to sustain rural and urban livelihoods back home. This further disillusioned this productive age group.

Back home with the reduced inflows of remittances compounded by the economic challenges in the country, the Matabeleland Province had delved deeper into the ‘poverty crises’. Unemployment, poor performance of agriculture and livestock farming has placed communities in the ‘desperate’ bracket. Young people both male and female have become disillusioned against authorities with whom they have held responsible for the difficult situation they are in. The report seeks to provide evidence-based input into youth participation in Local Governance agenda for the benefit of CYDT and relevant stakeholders in Matabeleland South province.

2.1 Background To The Study

Youth participation has been a globally debated concept, with the understanding that young people should be recognised as key players in the development of any nation or community. The calls for youth participation have been an important part of global development objectives, most notably expressed through the Sustainable Development Goals which has coined ‘Leaving No one Behind’ a theme that attempts to ensure that development process are inclusive. In Zimbabwe, civil society have been calling for youth inclusion, more so considering that Zimbabwe’s population is dominated by young people. However, youth participation should be founded on the bottom up approaches whereby young people are involved at the lowest levels of the community for example village level in the case of a rural community.

Local citizen participation has long been acknowledged as a useful tool to enhance public policies as it improves policies’ responsiveness to the population’s needs and quality as citizens make creative and innovative proposals to solve development challenges. Building the capacity of young people and encouraging them to be active citizens partaking in the civic culture of their respective areas is fundamental in growing a healthy democracy.

2.2 Objectives Of The Research

The research is commissioned by CYDT to ascertain the levels of Youth participation in Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. The objectives of the research were as follows;

1. To assess the state of youth participation in Local Governance in Matabeleland South Province.
2. To identify the barriers to youth participation in Matabeleland South and the associated impacts of exclusion.

2.3 Importance of the Research

Youth participation assists councils to understand the needs and aspirations of young people within their community. However, the benefits of youth participation go well beyond a simple audit of age-related needs. Council, young people, organisations that provide services to young people and the general community all benefit from an environment where young people are valued and engaged in decision making.

This research is also of value to government institutions in both central and quasi government levels, as well for Civil Society Organisations as it brings to the surface the needs and aspirations of young people within their community. Understanding the needs and aspirations of young people helps central government, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to better design inclusive policies and programmes that will be youth friendly and thereby creating healthy democratic processes at both the micro and macro levels of government.

2.4 The Challenges that Underlie this Research

The main objective of this research is to try and bring into perspective the thinking, opinions of young people with regards to their participation in local governance. This research is being undertaken under a new founding law that is the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment no. 20 of 2013 and the accompanying national acts and regional protocols. The Constitution provides a good foundation for Youth participation and yet youth

participation in Matabeleland South in local governance is still low which begs the question, with the availability of enabling laws at a national and regional level, why do we continue to have low participation of young people in local governance? Why are policy makers and staff within Councils and Government departments indifferent or choose not to embrace the inclusion of young people? Answers to these questions are multi-faceted and bring in a sample dimension that we have grappled with in this research. How do you ensure that a reasonable youth sample is covered with financial and geographic limitations such as the one presented by Matabeleland South province? The area to be covered was so wide that it would need quite some time to execute the research if tangible results were to be achieved. Hence a small sample size of Youths has been used.

3.0 Research Focus And Terms Used

The research assesses the participation of Youths in local governance in Matabeleland South province to develop a baseline to inform management and policy decision makers. The focus is thus on determining the needs and aspirations of young people in the target areas, whilst focusing on the attitudes, actions and accountability mechanisms of policy makers and service providers. In view of the emphasis on opinions, attitudes, actions and assessment of accountability mechanisms, the research has focused on the use of community score cards and ranking

To this end, the research was thus guided by the following questions;

- a) What are young people's views and perceptions on participation in local governance?
- b) What are the issues affecting the youth and the levels of participation with regards to service delivery as a basic social service?
- c) What mechanisms of youth participation are available and how do youths access these mechanisms?
- d) What dialogue, policy advocacy and influencing are needed to improve youth participation in local governance in the Province?

3.1 Who Are The Youths?

For the purposes of this research, youths are any person whether male or female between the ages of 15 and 35. The research takes note of the different annotations with regards to defining Youth such as the different age ranges provided. For example the UN defines youth as those persons between 10-24 years whilst the African Youth Charter (2006) defines Youths as any individual between the ages of 15-35. On the other hand, the Ministry of Health and the Zimbabwe Statistical Agency consider youths to be between 10 and 24. This shows that there is no consensus on what to call youth and as such there is need for guidance in this research on who are defined as youth.

3.2 What is Participation?

Acknowledging that there is no universal definition of participation, this study borrows from two scholars Arnstein (1969) and Cockburn et al. (2000) to define participation in the context of youth to mean empowering young people and facilitating their active involvement in decision-making on how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated and programmes are allocated.



3.3 Policy Makers

In this research, Policy Makers refers to the high-level elected officials or Civil servants responsible for carrying out legislative and regulatory responsibilities.

3.4 Service Providers

These are the Local Government institutions (Rural and Urban Councils), government departments and Ministry of Youth.

3.5 Model of Participation

LEVEL	ATTITUDE <i>Are Staff in your Council committed to Youth participation and do they....</i>	ACTION <i>Does your Council have a range of strategies and processes that...</i>	ACCOUNTABILITY <i>and does your Council policy...</i>
1-Listening 	Listen to what young people have to say?	enable it to listen to young people's views	require processes for young people to be heard
2-Facilitating 	Ensure young people are able to have their say	provide opportunities for, and assist young people in, having their say	require that young people be given assistance so they can be heard
3-Consideration 	Seriously consider what young people have to say.	ensure young people's views are seriously considered.	require that young people's views be seriously considered.
4-Involvement	Encourage young people to have a real role in decision making	provide young people with a real role in decision-making processes	require that young people have a role in decision-making processes and receive feedback

NB: See the score ranking in the next page

3.6 Score Ranking

SCORE	INDICATORS	STRATEGIES
Below 40	The council does not appear to be supportive of youth participation as it currently stands	Focus on organisational development efforts within council such as awareness-raising. Small steps in youth participation strategies may be more easily accepted. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informing young people about things that might affect them
40-60	While there may be opportunities for initiating new youth participation strategies, there may still be some significant work to do in improving the capacity of the council to support and respond to the results of youth participation.	In addition to the above, youth participation strategies may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking young people what they think about specific youth activities • asking young people for their feedback about services they receive
60-80	Your council will have some youth participation strategies in place. There is a willingness to do more and there are plenty of opportunities to do so.	In addition to the above, youth participation strategies may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking young people what they think about broader population issues • Involving young people in developing solutions to issues that affect them.

4.0 Literature Review

Local Authorities have a political mandate to mobilise and allocate financial resources necessary for the implementation of youth sensitive programmes and projects. For Youths to oversee or enjoy the benefits of these programmes or projects depends to a large extent on the capacity and willingness of respective local authorities to put in place inclusive local governance mechanisms that allow young people to participate. It follows then, that Community leaders and institutions have a responsibility to stimulate popular participation. In this regard, genuine involvement with young people requires a commitment to listening and acting on what is revealed.

Different authorities have argued that Youth Participation is dependent on various factors and H. Sheir in 2001 developed a Youth Model of participation where he describes a range of youth engagement. According to Sheir, to ascertain the level of Youth participation in local governance, one has to test and refine the attitude, actions and accountability of a Local Authority. In responding to attitude, Sheir asks the question whether Council staff are committed to Youth participation and on actions, whether the Council has a range of processes and strategies that deal with youth participation and finally on accountability he asks whether Council policy provides opportunities for accountability.

Other authorities have argued that Youth participation is equal to active citizenship. They argue that active citizenship depends on trust and a willingness to constructively engage with institutions. Without a minimum level of confidence in institutions, such as local politicians, courts, police, and political or religious groups, it is difficult for youth to work constructively with institutions. Trust is an enabling condition for active citizenship and crucial to the engagement of youth in the issues that affect their community or country. Trust must be earned by institutions. Unfair treatment, injustice, or police violence erodes confidence in institutions and without trust; societies tend to resort to confrontation.

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



- Rung 8:** Young people & adults share decision-making
- Rung 7:** Young people lead & initiate action
- Rung 6:** Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people
- Rung 5:** Young people consulted and informed
- Rung 4:** Young people assigned and informed
- Rung 3:** Young people tokenized*
- Rung 2:** Young people are decoration*
- Rung 1:** Young people are manipulated*

**Note Hart explains the last three rungs are non-participation*

Adapted from Hart, R. (1992) Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF Innocent Research Centre
Created by The Freechild Project - <http://freechild.org>

Hart has explained participation in different levels and argues that participation can be viewed as a step by step process and proposes a ladder of participation as shown above. At the lowest Rung (1) participation is non-existent, young people are manipulated and at Rung (6,) meaningful participation is realised. Rung (6) is the level that one desires for young people to be involved and engaged.

12 4.1 Legal Instruments Recognising Participation

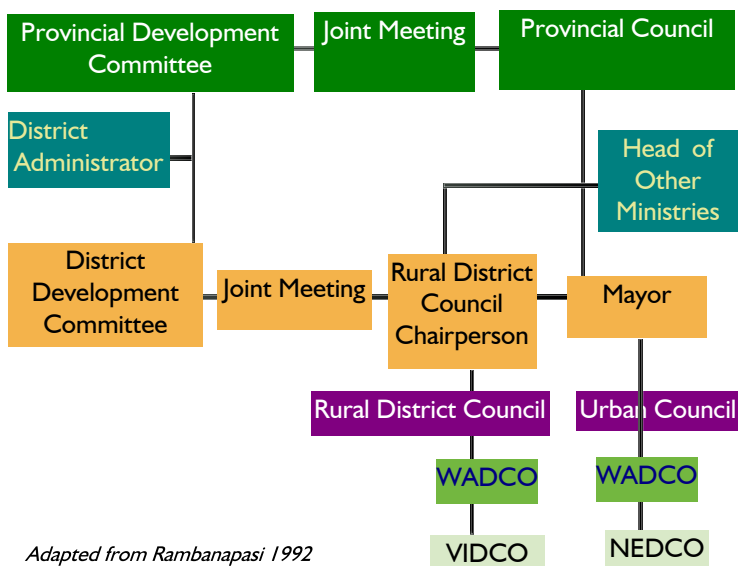
It is important to highlight that participation is regarded as a human right and recognised at a global level through instruments such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948) specifically Article (25) and indirectly articles (19), (21) and (22). Participation is also recognised through the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (1868) Article (15). In the Zimbabwean context, the guiding instruments in relation to youth participation include the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013. Section 20 in particular, sets the youths agenda for the rights of youths in Zimbabwe by stating that the State and its institutions and agencies at every level must take reasonable measures, including affirmative action to ensure that youths:

- have access to education and training,
- have opportunity to associate and to be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life,
- afforded opportunities for employment and other avenues to economic empowerment,
- have opportunities for recreational activities and access to recreational facilities and;
- be free from harmful cultural practices and all forms of abuse or exploitation

The section also notes that all these measures must be inclusive, nonpartisan and national in character.

Further, the Prime Ministers directive of 1984 provides the basis for Youth participation in Zimbabwe. The directive stated the lowest and highest levels of citizen participation in socio-economic and development. In a rural set up, the Village Development Committee (VIDCO) is the lowest unit and the Neighbourhood Development Committee (NEDCO) in an urban setting. These lowest platforms of citizen participation aggregates the needs and aspirations of villages and neighbourhoods at VIDCO level to onward transmission at Ward Development Committee (WADCO) level (Ndou, 2015). The WADCOs comprise of VIDCO/WADCO Chairpersons. WADCOs are responsible for developing local development plans which they forward to the Rural District Council (RDC) or the Urban Council. The RDC or Urban Council then works together with government departments to integrate the local development plans with those of government to come up with a long-term district development plan. The development structures in which Youths in the province can participate in are laid out below.

Below: Zimbabwe development structures



Adapted from Rambanapasi 1992

5.0 Methodology

The research was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. This benefited the study in ensuring a rich and in-depth contextual data. The main data collection tools or techniques included a survey questionnaire; focus group discussions and key informant interviews with community level stakeholders that are important in governance issues at a local community level. Focus Group Discussion questions sought to interrogate the youths on spaces and power dynamics of participation as per the Sheir's (2001) Model of Participation discussed under the literature review section of this report.

The Institutions Youth Participation Readiness Tool was administered to check whether the institutions were ready to listen, facilitate, consider and involve youths in local decision making. Key informant interviews assisted the study to gather specific issues from those who are considered experts including Mayors, Policy Makers, Local Councillors and the Ministry of Youth.

Focus group discussions helped to shed light on in-depth contextual knowledge and information, about the opportunities and obstacles to youth participation in local governance based on youth participants' experiences. These shall happen with the community setting up where these young people reside. Document analysis provided for much needed secondary data to support the findings made by this study, as well as to provide a basis for comparison for this study's findings and other information from other civic society organizations, universities, policy instruments, media sources among others.

To this end, documents such as National Youth Policy, The Constitution of Zimbabwe and African Youth Charter were studied so as to contextualise and create a deeper understanding of how these promote youth participation and pinpoint the gaps. The table below summarizes the techniques/tools used in each of the five Districts.

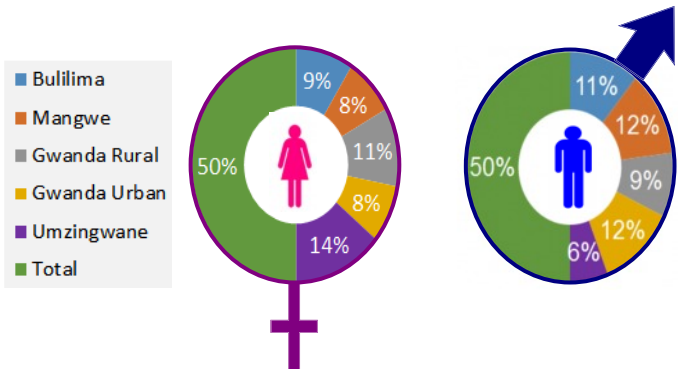
Table below shows the various Data Collection Tools used per District.

District	Youth Participation in Local Governance Questionnaires Score Card	Institutions Youth Participation Readiness Tool	KIIs	FGDs	Document Analysis
Gwanda South - RDC	20		1	2	The Youth Policy and the National Constitution, African Youth Charter
Gwanda North - Urban	20	1	2	2	
Bulilima	20	1	1	2	
Mangwe	20	1	4	3	
Mzingwane	20	1	1	2	
Total	100	4	9	11	

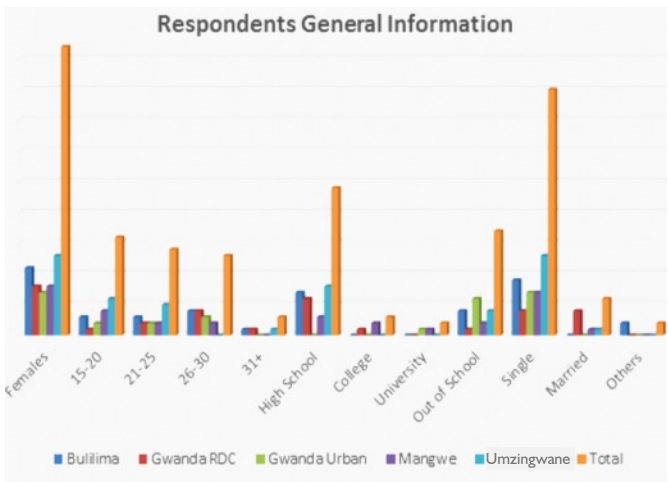
6.0 Presentation & Analysis Of Results

6.1 Respondents profiling and demographics

The research reached out to a total of 100 respondents who were gender balanced. However, there were variations per each district with male respondents dominating in Gwanda Urban (12%), Mangwe (12%) and Bulilima (11%) districts. However, UMzingwane recorded the highest number of female respondents (14%) followed by Gwanda rural which had (11%). Gender aggregation data is presented in the diagram below:



The age range reached out to was between 15-35 years of age in compliance with the provisions in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment no 20 of 2013. There were more respondents between the ages of 15-25 in all the areas under research and most of the respondents were single and in high school. There were very few respondents who responded as others in the gender request for detail but did not disclose in which category they were in. Very few respondents were married with a greater number of married respondents resident in Gwanda Rural District Council.



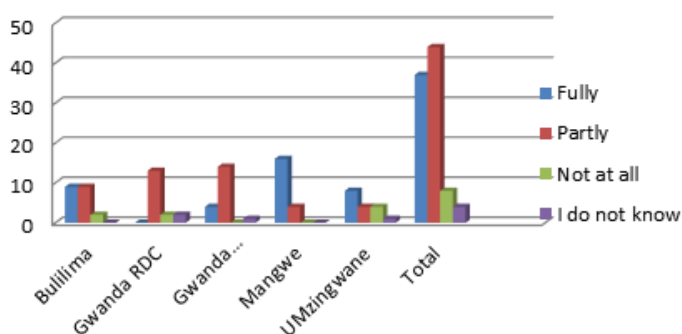
6.2 Youth Rating of Participation In Local Governance

To evaluate the level of youth participation in local governance, a questionnaire with 10 variables was used in which each responded made a rating in relation to a particular variable. The results are presented as below.

6.2.1 Awareness of youth roles & responsibilities as citizens in relation to Local Governance.

Awareness of youth roles and responsibilities as citizens in relation to Local Governance was noted to be partly known by

Awareness of youth roles & responsibilities as citizens in relation to Local Governance

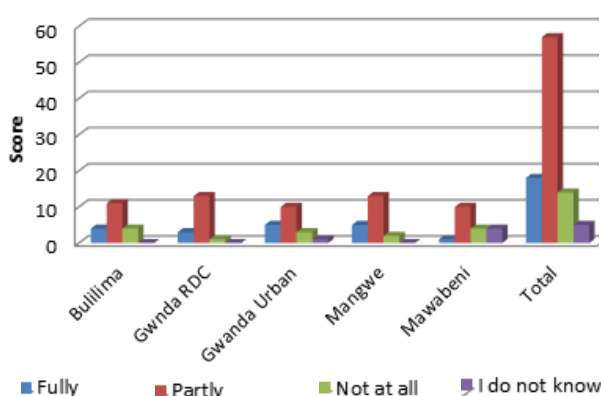


youths with 44 out of 100 respondents indicating that they partly understood their roles and responsibilities. 37 out of 100 youths said that they fully understood their roles and responsibilities as citizens in local governance.

6.2.2 Level of Youth Participation in Different Public Meetings

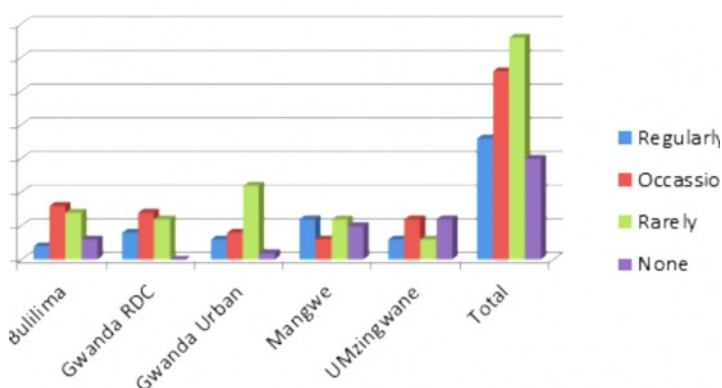
More youths are participating in different public meetings especially those meetings organised by NGOs.

Level of Participation in Different Public Meetings



Even though there is participation, it should be noted that the majority are only doing so at a 'medium' level as shown by 57 out of 100 respondents saying that their participation is at medium. Most youths said that their participation was limited by the stigmatisation and political labelling to those who were participating fully. 8 out of 100 respondents highlighted that they were not participating at all for the same reasons highlighted above. 37 out of 100 youths were fully participating with Mangwe (16%) more pronounced followed by Bulilima and Mawabeni.

Frequency of Youth Participation by District



6.2.3 Capacity to Explain an Issue Rationally to Council and Others

A total of 47 out of 100 youths responded at the 'medium' level with regards having capacity to explain an issue rationally to Council and others. 24 out of 100 youths said that they had a 'strong' capacity to explain an issue rationally to council and others. 20 out of 100 respondents indicated that they were 'poor' when it came to explaining an issue rationally and this scenario places a heavy burden on youth's ability to self-organise or present their issues in a coordinated or rational manner to policy makers or council staff. This certainly calls for a rigorous effort in building the capacity of youths to engage, dialogue and building their self-esteem. Without confidence and capacity to explain issues, youths will always shy away from activities that will require them explaining anything to authorities.

6.2.4 Opportunity to meet or interact with Councillor each year

The research also established that youths rarely meet with their Councillors, 33 out of 100 respondents in the 5 districts informed the research that they rarely meet with their Councillors. 28 out of 100 respondents also said that they occasionally meet or interact with their Councillor. 18 out of 100 respondents in the five districts regularly meet with their Councillor with Mangwe District having more meetings and interactions than any other district. Gwanda Urban and Bulilima rarely meet with their Councillor. This is an indicator that the mechanisms from the Local Authority policy makers to meet with the residents are either dysfunctional or non-existent.

6.2.5 Opportunity to meet or interact with Council Staff each year

42 out of 100 youth respondents rarely meet or interact with Council staff whilst only 26 out of 100 occasionally meet or interact with council staff. Only 11 out of 100 respondents in the 5 districts regularly meet with council staff. Gwanda RDC has more respondents meeting with Council staff than any other district. This indicates a disconnection between the local authority and residents in the 5 districts under review.

6.2.6 Personal Level of Engagement and interest in your community

There is a medium level of engagement and interest by youths in community processes in the five districts under review. 44 out of 100 respondents said that they were engaging and had an interest in their community activities. There were 30 out of 100 respondents who said their engagement and interaction with their communities was high. The report noted that youths were more prepared to participate in community activities than any other processes. The reasons cited were that the youths knew each other and felt safe working with the people they knew. This was further buttressed by during FGDs in Gwanda Rural, Stanmore area where youth highlighted that they were participating in the construction of a Vocational Centre.

Further, during an FGD in Mawabeni area under UMzingwane district, youth reported that they were involved in income generating projects such as poultry production, money clubs and farming.

'These projects help us earn a living as there is no employment in our community. Our wish is to save as much as possible so that our businesses grow. It would be good to also receive support from other organisations as it is difficult to get youth funds from the ministry' (Female Youth, UMzingwane District).

Further probing revealed that these projects were of low scale and could be more regarded as survival means rather than businesses unless capital injection and skills development is provided to these youth.

6.2.7 Personal Level of Engagement and interest in your council activities

The research found out that there is a medium level of engagement and interest in council activities amongst youth. Bulilima had the highest level of engagement with 27% of the respondents engaging and showing interest in Council activities. Mawabeni and Gwanda Urban had the lowest rate of engagement and interest in Council activities at 3%. The youths in Gwanda and Mawabeni reported that they are often left out of Council activities as they are not informed of activities in time. Youths said that the methods used by Council to advertise or inform residents of meetings do not seem to reach out to youths. The youths further said that they did not trust Council officials and also that the Council processes were intimidating and not youth friendly.

6.2.8 Personal Level of Engagement and interest in civic issues

There is a medium understanding of civic issues in the 5 districts being reviewed with Gwanda urban having about 13 out of 20 respondents, followed by Mangwe with 8 out of 20 respondents with a medium engagement and interest in civic issues. Bulilima had a higher number of youths engaging and with a high interest in Civic issues. Gwanda RDC and Mawabeni have the lowest level of engagement and interest in civic issues

6.2.9 Overall Organisation of Youth Involvement in Local Governance

The organisation of youth involvement in Local Governance was noted to be more pronounced in Bulilima (19%) and Gwanda Urban (13%) where there seem to be active youth organisations mobilising young people to take part in local governance issues. Youths indicated that in Gwanda Urban, CYDT has played a central role in mobilising youths to participate in Local Governance. The Ministry of Youth was also mentioned as having played an active role of helping youths to organise themselves through the Junior Parliament programme.

Organisation of youth involvement was generally low in Mawabeni (6%) and Mangwe (10%). 6 out of 20 youths interviewed said that they are not involved in local governance issues and 5 out of 20 youths in Mangwe also indicated that they were not involved in local governance. In the 5 districts, 31 out of 100 youths said that they were involved in local governance. This means that a staggering 69 respondents were either with no involvement or only marginal involvement in local governance.

6.2.9 Understanding of Activities Available to Youth in Your Community

The study established that there was an increased understanding of available activities for youths that could help in increasing participation in Local Governance. 35 out of 100 respondents were noted to have a high understanding of activities available to youth. It should be further noted, most of the activities that most youths were aware of where those organised by either their Councillor or NGOs. 35 out of 100 respondents had a medium

understanding of activities available to youths in their community. Only 26 out of 100 respondents said that they had low understanding of activities available to them in their communities. This showed that there was a better relationships and trust in communities that could help in increasing participation of young people in local governance.

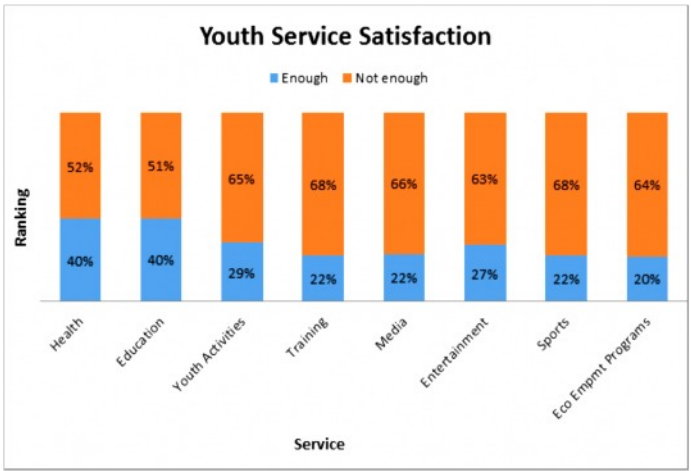
Most youth respondents informed the research that their main point of contact with local governance issues was through the social services facilitated by the local authority and government departments. The research noted that of the eight services (Health, education, youth activities, media, entertainment, sports, youth economic empowerment programs) available to youths only a combined 50% reached out to youths in the five districts. Bulilima and UMzingwane received more positives at 12% followed by Gwanda RDC (10%) and the other districts at 8%.

Despite the Local Authority and other government departments mandated with the responsibility of providing these social services, the report notes that very little seems to be done to improve these services. Youths said that some of them have tried to raise these issues through Civil Society Organisations and their councillors but often met with resistance from the Policy Makers and Service providers.

6.3 Service Satisfaction Ranking

Service delivery according to young people in the province has been poor and has not served its intended purpose as seen above. Youths in Focus Group Discussions spoke of health delivery challenges, unavailability of entertainment and sport facilities. In addition to the challenges they face after graduating from high school or university in not finding jobs. Thus, most youths have resorted to juvenile delinquency, vending and artisanal mining. Most youth have further indicated that they do not trust authorities at Council and government department levels, as they are perceived as being not responsive enough to the needs and aspirations of youths.

The low availability of services to youth was further corroborated by the youth’s response in terms of their satisfaction with the services that they were receiving from the Local Authority and Government institutions. Furthermore, some Youths in Gwanda Urban said that they did not participate in economic empowerment activities that have been presented in the district as most of them came tied together to a political party and demanded that recipients be apologetic or tow the political party conditions for them to access the services.



Other youths also pointed out that they have failed to participate because youth activities are always under funded and end up being postponed or cancelled completely such as in sports and entertainment. Youths spoke of the Youth Games and Expos under the Ministry of Youth as some examples where incomplete or smaller contingents end up being sent because of inadequate budgets.

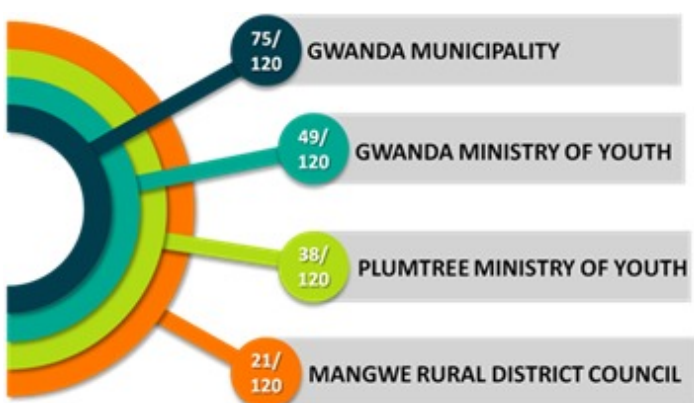
This was confirmed by representative of the Bulilima District Council through an interview:

'In as much as we would want to have many youth activities, we are affected by our budget as we have very limited resources' (Bulilima RDC Representative, April, 2019)

6.4 Institutions Youth Participation Readiness

The research noted that the main channels for increasing youth participation and accountability are the institutions and the relationships between Policy Makers and politicians on the one hand and Service Providers as well as Citizens on the other hand. The research is trying to defend this observation, through administration of the youth Participation Readiness tool. The tool (See Annex) had a set of 10 questions ranked from 0-10. A rating of '0' was indicative of the factor in the institution being completely non-existent. A rating of '10' on the other hand indicated that there was no need for improvement for that factor.

In this regard four institutions tasked with working with youth were surveyed. In Gwanda District, the Ministry of Youth and Gwanda Municipality were surveyed. In Mangwe the Mangwe Rural District Council and the Ministry of Youth were reviewed. The essence of the review was to ascertain whether according to the model of participation as proposed by H. Sheir (2001) the four institutions were *1- Listening, 2- Facilitating, 3- Considering 4- involving young people in decision making*. The results of the research show that Gwanda district had a more open institutional system that was listening, facilitating and considering youth participation but fell short on involving the youths meaningfully.



Gwanda Municipality scored 75 out of 100 indicating that the Municipality has some youth strategies in place and there are opportunities to do more. There was however no indication from the Municipality that efforts to involve youths were done. The graph below shows the different scores attained by the Municipality. The Municipality indicated that they have a thriving Junior Council which is housed in the Mayor's office and providing the youths with a listening ear and also facilitating their participation. The Municipality also indicated that there is an Urban Resilience Programme focusing on youth. The youths are amongst the list of stakeholders in the councils programme list but there has been little effort that has been done so far to involve the youths.

The Municipality also undertakes budget consultative meetings and the youths are invited as stakeholders but very few youths have attended citing difficulties in understanding budget processes. Youths in Gwanda Urban were concerned that due to political polarisation, it was difficult to attend any processes at a local level without being labelled, if one raised issues that were different to the political status quo. In this light many young people said they shy away from such processes. Youths in Gwanda Urban also indicated that since NGOs were active in mobilising young people, they had challenges with their immediate communities who saw Civil Society Organisations as political fronts for certain parties. According to young

people the attitudes of the community and policy makers including. Service Providers have perpetuated the marginalisation of young people in local development processes and decision making. Meanwhile, although local authorities indicated that their policy environment has provisions for youth participation in local governance they reiterated that youths were difficult to reach and encourage on matters of participation. The authorities have also indicated that their institutions do not have adequate budgets or resources to support youth participation. These trends seem to be the same in both urban and rural district councils in the Province.

The Ministry of Youth both in Gwanda and Plumtree although charged with working with Youths were reportedly not ready for youths. Gwanda Ministry of Youth scored 49 and Plumtree Ministry of Youth scored 38 out of a total of 120. This showed that although there may be opportunities for initiating new youth participation strategies from these two offices of Ministry of Youth, there is still some significant work to do in improving the capacity of the Ministry to support and respond to the results of youth participation. The two representatives from the Ministry of Youth informed the Research that the Ministry has a range of strategies and processes that enable it to listen to young people's views such as Child Parliament, Youth Expos, Youth Games as well as Youth Co-ordinators at Ward level. The Ministry also coordinates the activities of Junior Council and Junior Parliament which are supported and endorsed in the country's laws and policies. The Zimbabwe Constitution, National Youth Policy, Gender Policy as well as the Zimbabwe Youth Council were among such instruments.

Despite the availability of enabling laws, the research found out that there is still limited involvement of youths in local governance. Budget constraints were raised by the two Ministries as hampering the activities of the Ministry as well as the strategies and platforms such as the Youth games, Youth forums as well as Youth Expos. The allocation of resources to youth activities in the national budget have continued to decrease in the past years.

The research also found out that despite the presence of the Local Authority and government departments in charge of youths, the following challenges were hampering youth participation in local governance;

1. No platforms are provided by institutions for youth sensitive discussions or processes.
2. No entertainment and sporting facilities are in place. The few facilities are either dilapidated or have been converted to something different.
3. Poor social service delivery.
4. Difficulties in understanding Council processes such as influencing council committees and understanding the Council budget system.
5. No vocational training centres.
6. Declining economy and increasing unemployment. Youths also complained of being exploited by employers working more hours in their respective places of employment and thus losing out on local processes.
7. Poor communication and dissemination of local level development processes.
8. Female respondents noted with concern that the timing of meetings by the different institutions were also not friendly to females and thus they would avoid being part of such arrangements for example meetings after hours

7.0 Conclusion

Generally, there is lack of youth participation in local governance as evidently noted in this report. This means local government institutions programmes and projects fail to cater for the needs of youth people hence promoting imbalanced development. The study noted that institutions that claimed to promote youth participation reduced participation to mean attendance in platforms such as meetings which was also recorded as low.

It is important that civil society organisations and other like minded institutions find ways of addressing this issue for improved governance by local institutions. Recommendations gathered from young people detailed in this report should be implemented especially by youth focused organisations such as CYDT with periodic evaluations of impact and progress conducted.

8.0 Recommendations

In the process of administering questionnaires, score cards and interviews, the respondents recommended a host of suggestions that could be adopted to mitigate the challenges they were facing with regards to youth participation in Local Governance. In addition, the research team after analysing the collected data drew up specific recommendations to the five districts towards improving youth participation in local governance and these are itemised below.

8.1 Recommendations To Local Authorities

8.1.0 The Local Authorities need to establish a Youth satisfaction survey that will help them to understand the needs and aspirations of young people.

8.1.1 Local Authorities and Government departments need to improve the way they communicate and feedback information to Youths. Instruments like community feedback platforms, online newsletters and bulletins as well as youth satisfaction surveys need to be developed and used effectively.

8.1.2 Policy Makers at Local Authority level need to enhance their interface with youths by improving the way they announce and distribute invites to meetings.

8.1.3 There is real need to continuously engage and advocate for resources allocation to activities that seek to promote youth participation in local governance issues from local authorities, rural and urban councils and national budgets so as to counteract the challenges that prevent youths from realizing their full potential.

8.1.4 Flexible programming, which enables young people to fully participate in local governance including appropriate timing of meetings.

8.1.5 Provide opportunities for youths to participate by removing barriers such as discriminatory gender norms, poor budget allocation, labelling and a general denial of information.

8.1.6 Support establishment of safe places at community level, where youths can meet and discuss issues that concern them, build their self-confidence and capacitate each other on governance related issues. Safe places will facilitate establishment of strong youth groups that can demand access to their rights and occupation of spaces that have a direct effect on their lives.

8.1.7 There is a need for strengthening the relationship of the Youth Potential team with the Ministry for Youth and Sports and to make the concerned officials more aware of the Youth Potential activities and initiatives. This will help in greater awareness of Youth Potential and provide Youth Potential participants with greater access to programs and resources managed by the Ministry.

8.1.8 Establishing of Youth Info and Career Centres led by nonpartisan youth in smaller municipalities and RDCs in the various districts.

8.2 Recommendations To Ministry of Youth

8.2.0 Ministry of Youth and Sport should work with youth organisations to clean the soiled image of the Ministry as a partisan institution to bring about the new developmental role of the Ministry.

8.2.1 Ministry of Youth and Sport need to assist the Zimbabwe Youth Council to connect with youths and youth organisations and not to be detached from the rest of the Youth processes at local level.

8.2.2 Popularising and expanding Youth structures such as Junior Council, Youth Desk e.t.c, to ensure youths enjoy right to self-determination by influencing decisions taken for them.

8.2.3 Budget and allocation of resources to young people's issues is important. While the signing or ratification of international instruments as well as existence of policies and laws that promote youth participation is commendable, the absence of a matching budgetary allocation seriously undermines the participation of youths of governance.

8.2.4 A joint NGO and Ministry of Youth friendly budget consultation process may help to make youth voices heard.

8.2 Recommendations To CYDT And Other Development Players

8.2.0 CYDT, Tjinjubabili Trust, YES Trust noted by youth as active CSOs in the Youth sector should have joint programmes with local authorities and government departments focusing on behaviour change programmes to facilitate youth participation through awareness raising and mobilization.

8.2.1 CYDT should take an active interest in rolling out capacity building programmes for policy makers, service providers on the following;

- Dialogue and engagement
- Budget Advocacy
- Social accountability
- Facilitation
- Communication

8.2.2 CYDT and Local institutions should combine to participate in exhibitions like the local Gwanda Agricultural show to promote Youth participation in local governance and at the same time help to spruce up the images of the Local Authority and government institutions amongst youth

8.2.3 CYDT and This can be done through lobbying RDCs for a Youth Desk manned by young people to ensure issues affecting young people are catered for.

8.2.4 CYDT to undertake a budget analysis of both the Local Authority and assess whether these budgets are adequate and progressive with a view to making the budgets Youth Friendly. This will entail checking whether budget lines are put in place that support youth programmes.

8.2.5 CYDT to lead a process of policy dialogue presenting the findings of the report and presenting the plan towards implementing the recommendations to specific Parliamentary Portfolio committees.

8.2.6 CYDT needs to engage the Parliamentary portfolio committee on budgets with regards to lobbying the Committee to help in advocating for the increase to allocations towards youth programmes in the budget.

8.2.7 CYDT and Civil Society Organisations need to improve the way they communicate and feedback information to Youths. Instruments like community feedback platforms, online newsletters and bulletins as well as youth satisfaction surveys need to be developed and used effectively.

8.3.8 Civil Society Organisations and the Ministry of Youth should continue providing ongoing, regular training for youths in order to sensitize/create awareness about young people's political rights including right to participate in governance. Such trainings should explain how youths from all backgrounds are able to advance their interests and change others' ideas and behavior.

9.0 References

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