

5TH EDITION



AT-SOUTH Bulletin





E D I T O R I A L

Despite having the knowledge and skills to take part in civic processes, young people remain underrepresented in political processes. Zvishavane youths believe the unfriendly political environment limits their potential to contribute towards political and economic development, as a result, they are lobbying for the creation and expansion of democratic spaces that will enhance their active participation. This newsletter brings to awareness the efforts of CYDT to motivate and entice youths to research more on civil rights through hugely successful civil rights competitions. These competitions saw young people participate in vibrant and exuberant quiz and public speaking programs. The newsletter also shows the work of Nkomwa Foundation Trust (NFT) in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities by challenging the community to welcome people with disabilities and ensure that they are also involved in decision making platforms. The organisation conducted young women political forums that sought to promote sectorial capacity strengthening and was quite instrumental in empowering young women to rise above the existing structural and traditional barriers that continue to militate. All these issues are captured in this newsletter.

Have a happy reading!



Cydt MatSouth



@CydtMat

www.cydt.co.zw

Barriers to youth participation continue to mount



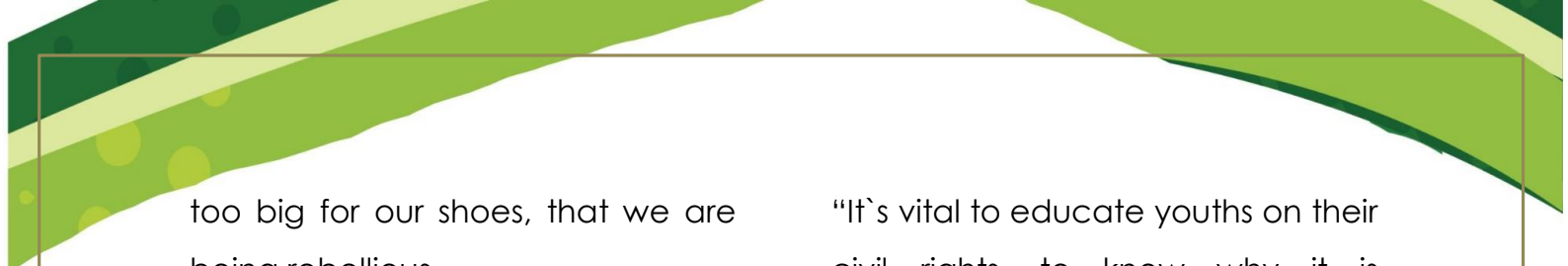
Youth in Zvishavane lamented their exclusion in political processes noting that the political spaces in Zimbabwe have not been friendly towards youth efforts for political and civic empowerment.

During a Youth Civil Rights forum hosted in the mining town by Hands of Hope Trust, youth said platforms for youth to meaningfully participate continue to shrink as

greater representation of youth is perceived as a threat by those in positions of power.

This in turn has made youth avoid participation in politics and related activities.

"It's no secret that the elders who are in power don't want to give up that power especially to us young people. When we try to stand up to contribute to development discourse they say we are getting



too big for our shoes, that we are being rebellious.

“Our rights are threatened more often than not, by being denied platforms to participate, our voices being silenced due to threats of physical harm by state agents and discrimination based on age and gender,” said Manasseh Chikutirwa.


The aim of the civil rights competition was to energize the youth in Zvishavane to not only develop interest in civil rights education but also promote a culture of meaningful political participation while addressing poor access to information, one of the many barriers to youth participation.

“There are a lot of hindrances and uncertainties as to why youths should participate in political processes. Our aim is to empower the youths in Zvishavane with information, to motivate them to participate in political processes by registering to vote, casting ballots and even stand as political candidates in the upcoming 2023 election.

“It’s vital to educate youths on their civil rights, to know why it is important to participate in civic processes to know their constitutional rights so that they make informed decision especially on issues that affect them,” said Millicent Nhutsve, Director of Hands of Hope Trust.

Lack of information, exclusion and discrimination, lack of faith in elections, economic instability, and lack of support were cited as some of the high-level barriers that hinder active participation by young people.

“Many of us young people have lost faith in the elections, we would rather not vote at all than feel as if our votes are stolen every election. We would rather focus on hustling to survive rather than listen to politicians give us empty promises or waste time campaigning for a political post when I know no one will take me seriously because I don’t have the resources to run a successful campaign against an old man who has been in the game for many



years," Tatenda Gwezuva lamented.

To advance youth engagement, it is crucial that young people are perceived as partners to national development through capacity

building, promoting safe and enabling environment for young people's participation and implementation of their ideas.

CYDT Ambassadors For the Youth participation project

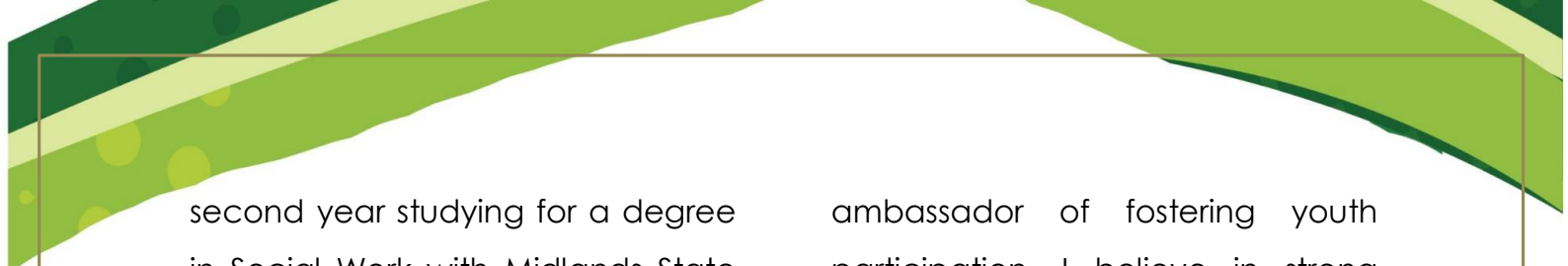
As a way to motivate and entice youths to research more on civil rights, Community Youth Development Trust held youth civil rights competitions in the five project areas, where the project "Fostering youth political participation" is being implemented. The competitions were held as a way of promoting a culture of human rights and education. Participants who entered the competitions went through a vigorous quiz and public speaking competition, just to check on their information and knowledge base of human and civil rights. The winner in all the different project areas became a civil rights ambassador of the project in that

particular project area. Below, meet the ambassadors of the different project areas:

Siphethile Moyo-Matobo

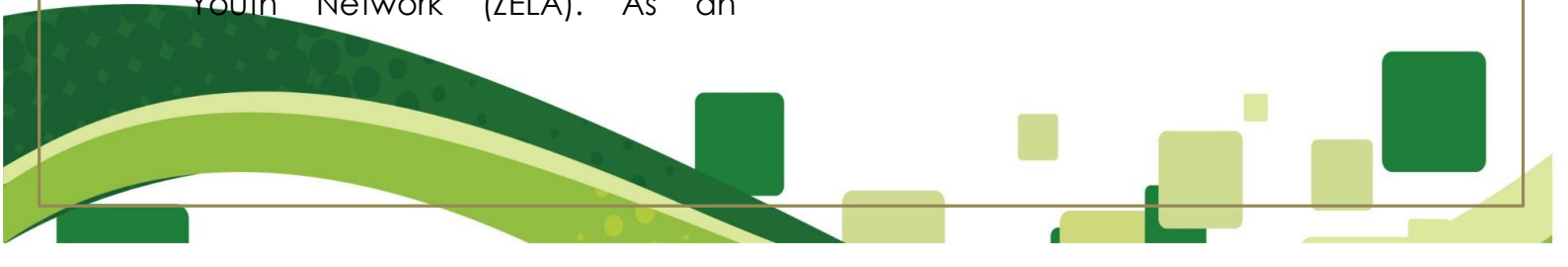


My name is Siphethile Moyo aged 22 years, a self-driven young lady who aspires to be a grounded social scientist. Currently I am in my



second year studying for a degree in Social Work with Midlands State University School of Social Work. My ability to identify community problems, mobilise teams, young people and initiate solutions define me as a transformative leader. From the period of last year, I have been actively involved within Matobo District as a youth development facilitator mainly focusing on societal break down issues which usually threaten livelihood options. This work has seen me championing Sustainable Development Goals within my community in the areas of poverty reduction, disease fighting, climate action and sustainable natural resource management. To pursue this vision, I have been actively involved in mobilisation and convening of youth dialogue spaces and initiating advocacy campaigns in Matobo district mainly partnering with organisations such as Matobo Youth Development Initiative (MYDI), Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT) and the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association Youth Network (ZELA). As an

ambassador of fostering youth participation, I believe in strong collaboration and networking as a solution to dealing with challenges bedwelling our communities, nation, and the global village. Young people are the majority of the population in our country consisting about 70%, hence we need them to be actively involved in many processes or activities pertaining to development as it is their future which is being put at stake when uninformed decisions are made by their leaders and this can be achieved through education awareness on Human Rights and Constitutionalism. A just society that upholds the principles of active youth participation and inclusion is what I envision and will stop at nothing to realise this goal.



Tendai Dhuru- Beitbridge



My name is Tendai Dhuru, a girl aged 24 years. A fourth-year student at Great Zimbabwe University. I come from a small but yet a vibrant town, Beitbridge. Being nominated as an ambassador for fostering youth participation was a dream come true. Youth participation is a crucial subject in any dimension political, social and economic. The subject of youth participation has been a bone of both administrative and development contention and it is believed that if the participation is effective, development attempts will as well be successful.

Being an ambassador for fostering youth participation to me means

that I have to advocate for an effective and efficient participation of youths in decision making processes, local economic development initiatives in Beitbridge town. Youth participation allows youths to have voice in choosing priorities and developmental projects that can pave way to a sustainable development within Beitbridge community.

Few youths in Beitbridge participate in issues that concern development of their town and this result in lack of consented effort among actors to push development from a centralized viewpoint with a common goal of boosting the economic performance and state of the locale they operate from. Hence, as an ambassador for fostering youth participation. I should make sure that there is an effective active youth participation so that the outcomes should reflect the desires and aspirations of the local community.

Nokuthaba Ncube- Gwanda



My name is Nokuthaba Ncube, young lady from Gwanda town. Being an ambassador means that I have to work closely with youths all the time. As we are moving towards 2023 the year of elections, I will embark on a survey to find out why youths have lost hope in voting and occupying the political public spaces. The goal is to make them realise their potential as youths in bringing about change from grassroot level.

-We have started the WhatsApp engagement with youths to find out about their views in elections.

-I plan to support all youths who

want to enter in the public offices from all levels
-will also do a door-to-door survey to encourage youths to participate in the public spaces, let them know that they have a voice too.

-more engagements on WhatsApp will be done, as this is the mostly used platform by the youths. The aim is to find out their challenges, whats hindering them in participation in the civic spaces and come up with achievable solutions towards that.

-Discussions on the constitution will be done, so that youths know their rights that are under section 20 of the Constitution. This will help them to realise that it is their right to participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life.

Perfect Patimile Mpofu



Perfect Patimile Mpofu, 24, is a climate change and human rights activist, an agriculture student teacher and poet from Plumtree boarder Town, Zimbabwe. Being an ambassador for the "Fostering Youth participation" means a great deal to as it gives me a platform to increase young people's responsiveness to issues that affect them. It also gives me a platform to represent other young people and address their issues to the appropriate authorities and ensure that young people's participation increases in all sectors of leadership and development.

To increase youth participation, I would ensure that information reaches young people in a way that is appealing to them. With the current improvement to modern technology, young people find it boring to attend formal workshops where they seat and discuss human rights or any other topics that affect and should to them. I will increase youths' knowledge on human rights by using social media platforms such as twitter, Facebook, ticktock etc. This is where most young people can be found and the information will be in the form of #tags, videos, drama, poetry, art and music which is interesting for the young people to watch.

I would also make sure children at primary schools level are socialised to grow up knowing their human rights and the importance in being involved in the decision making processes that affects them in the future. This will ensure that the next generation youth will be better equipped, well informed and participate in decision making

processes.

I would encourage young people to create safe spaces for them to discuss issues affecting them and also find ways to discuss those issues with the responsible authorities. To be able to participate in all decision making processes that affect them and their future. I would also raise awareness on the importance of youth inclusion on all sectors in the

country as young people are an integral part of the population and the most affected population.

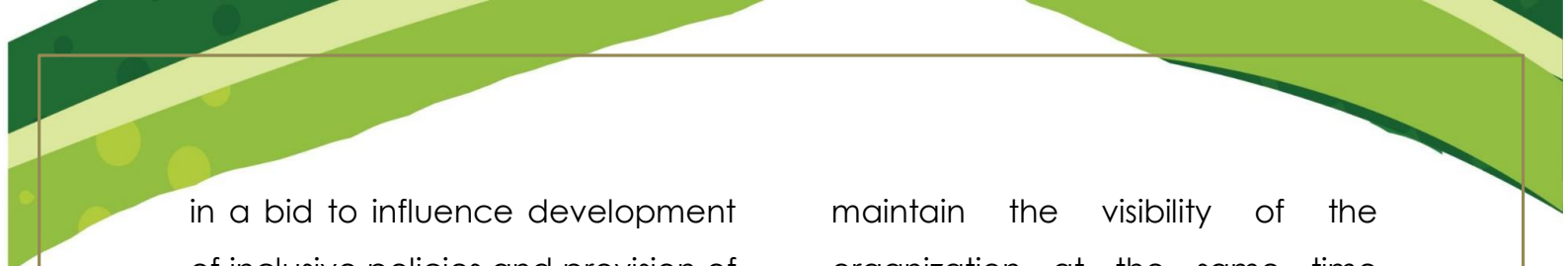
I believe active youth participation is key to a better tomorrow as the young people today are the parents tomorrow. Young people are also the largest chunk of the population and hence their voice should be heard and valued.

Disability is not inability!!!

The Nkomwa Foundation Trust (NFT) is a disability led Community Based Organisation operating based in Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. The organization was founded in 2018 and formerly registered as a Trust in October 2020 with the aim of promoting the rights of Persons with Disabilities at the same time contribute towards creating communities that embrace persons with disability as equal human beings.



The organization has gone a step further by trying to improve engagement between Persons with Disability (PWDs) and policy makers



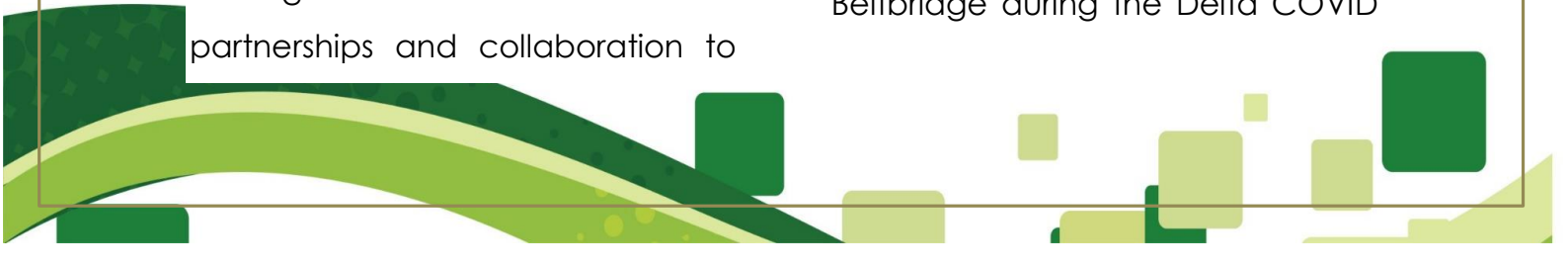
in a bid to influence development of inclusive policies and provision of services that responds to their needs. This is being done through town hall meetings between local authorities and the community of disabled persons across Gwanda, Matobo, UMzingwane and Beitbridge. Speaking to the Director for NFT, Pick Nkomwa, he had this to say:

“Our mission is to uplift and support Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), promoting their rights, and helping them achieve their aims for self-sufficiency and sustainability in the future while our vision is to create a conducive environment, inclusive society and built on trust, respect and equality, where a solid foundation for persons with disabilities is laid to ensure they live a life they choose,” Nkomwa said.

The Foundation's main programming focuses on advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in Matabeleland South province and beyond. Since inception, the organization has managed to maximize in partnerships and collaboration to

maintain the visibility of the organization at the same time promote public education on the rights of persons with disabilities. It has managed to conduct a number of educational forums so as to challenge discrimination against persons with disability through advocacy and awareness raising. At one time, the organization managed to engage Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights to represent one of its members who was subjected to sexual assault but failing to meet justice due to failure by Police to conduct investigations. After the engagement of lawyers, the person managed to get justice and the perpetrator is now remanded in custody waiting for finalization of the case. All this points out to the commitment of the organization in fighting for the rights of persons with disability.

The organization has also managed to source utilities, clothes and hygiene packs which were distributed to 80 persons with disability in Gwanda, Matobo and Beitbridge during the Delta COVID



19 variant. It has also sourced and distributed 20 assistive devices such as wheelchairs and clutches to members who are in need of these devices.

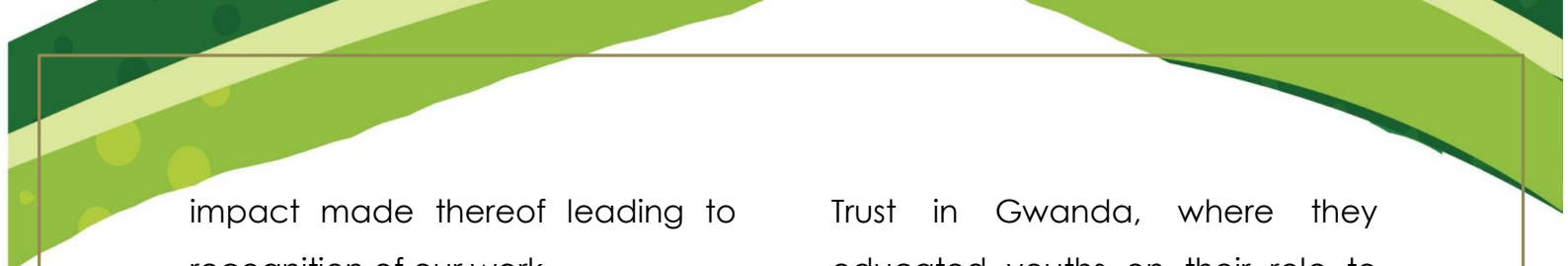
“To maximize on raising awareness and public education on preventative measures and precautions in the light of COVID 19, the organization managed to share electronic brochures to their beneficiaries which went viral increasing the reach of the organization. In a bid to increase self-reliance of the target group, the organization managed to capacitate a total of 25 persons of disability on detergents making through vocational training. To this date we have 3 persons with disability benefiting from our economic empowerment desk, through accessing small start-up funds,” added Nkomwa.

Realising the importance of education even amongst people with disabilities, The Nkomwa Foundation Trust has managed to assist beneficiaries with school needs at primary and secondary

level. Also, training on economic empowerment was

It has also managed to assist 7 beneficiaries with school needs in Secondary level and 5 beneficiaries at Primary level. Training on Economic empowerment were done in collaboration with Bible Society of Zimbabwe. All this feeds into the organizational thematic areas that include economic empowerment, educational support, welfare and care.

The organization, has become a safe space for persons living with disabilities, in that whenever they face challenges, they are able to go to the organization for psycho-social support and representation. NFT is now regarded as a strategic stakeholder by local authorities, social services department and women affairs ministry on issues around inclusivity promotion and planning. As such, the organization has been participating in national and regional level research papers seeking to ascertain the needs of the persons with disabilities, a situation that further confirms the




impact made thereof leading to recognition of our work.

In its line of work NFT has collaborated with many like-minded organisation as they advance different needs and issues of people with disabilities. NFT has also collaborated with Disability Resource and Advocacy on research on caregivers of differently-abled children, a process that assisted us to consider coming up with child friendly policies targeting those with disabilities. Another collaboration was between Zimbabwe Red-cross in celebrating International Women's Day mainstreaming the rights of women with disability as a way of promoting their inclusion and participation. In December 2021, they also collaborated with Matobo Youth Development Initiative in Malaba Village where the community educated members on the rights of persons with disabilities. Again in December 2021 they facilitated a meeting with Community Youth Development

Trust in Gwanda, where they educated youths on their role to safeguard rights of fellow youths with disability at community level. This was done on the International Human Rights Day. Also worked with Souls Comfort Trust in raising awareness on disability rights in Gwanda rural as a way of changing community and leader's mind-set, practice and attitudes on people with disability.

"We are quite grateful for the collaborations that we have done with other organisation so far. We currently have an ongoing program with Isango Elihle, an organisation based in South Africa that promotes economic empowerment of youths with Albinism. Again, during the first week we partnered with ALASO Academy and Sunrise sign language academy to train stakeholders and our members on sign language as a way of promoting improved interaction and communication with the deaf community," Nkomwa added.



Press statement

Call For legal Framework that enable effective youth participation

Realizing that youths are a positive force to transformative social change and economic development, there is need for stakeholders to come together and push for effective legal framework that support their sustainable participation and engagement at local levels. The national developments that have seen the finalization and signing of the 3rd Youth Policy are recognized as a positive step towards youth empowerment thus if such policies are fully implemented.

It is worth noting that the calls for youth empowerment have been ongoing for decades and it is high time such processes are devolved to local levels where the majority of the young people are located. Participation is a central component of good governance which is a key ingredient in social and economic development. As a youth concerned organisation, it is our call that local government institutions at the aforementioned levels should localize the National Youth Policy and promote a culture of youth participation in local decision-making spaces.

Lack of youth participation in critical sectors limit their development and influence in pushing for youth friendly services and policies. It is worrisome that relegation of youth to the periphery of decision making continues despite the energy and commitment displayed by the youths to be more engaged in public life for them to be authors of decisions relating to their socio political and economic needs. Notable, there is mutual feeling among the youths across the province on the need for a comprehensive legal framework that promote institutionalization of youth participation and engagement so as to remove that political tag that is always associated with advocacy. At the same time, young people are of the opinion that their inclusion in formal decision-making spaces from local to national level is important and feeds into the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

This calls for an effective implementation plan of the youth quota provided for in the 3rd National Youth Policy. The plan should be made public for accountability purposes and easy to follow up. CYDT also calls upon the government to consider amending the constitution such that it provides for the youth quota so that youth participation in public spaces and decision making becomes a constitutional matter. We also call upon for unified efforts in creating safe spaces for youth effective participation.

Breaking Free From stereotypes:

Young women Forums boost their political interest...lobby For young women quota.

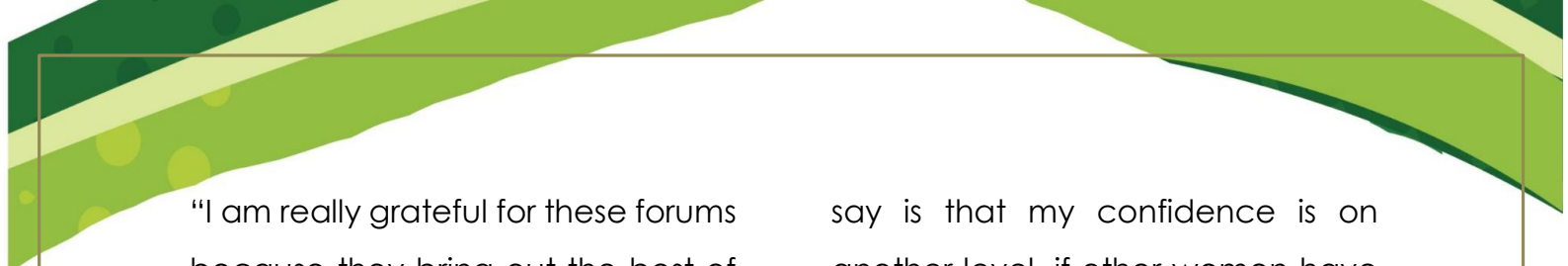
"Young women want to drive their own destiny."

We hear this all the time but the sentiments were most definitely felt during the young women political forums organised by Community Youth Development Trust in Matobo, Bulilima, Gwanda and Beitbridge.

The forums sought to promote sectorial capacity strengthening and was quite instrumental in empowering young women to rise above the existing structural and traditional barriers that continue to militate. The forums were premised on constitutional rights and sections. They also served as a platform to close inter-generational gaps between older and younger women within the political arena.



Women in Matabeleland South are painted as object, nurturers, emotional and bearers of culture. Societal myths and tradition suggest and enforce that decision-making, politics, and leadership are not suitable for young women. Womanhood is often associated with being timid, reticent and diffident, which differs from the characteristics expected of a politician, which are ascribed by the same society, as strong, assertive and confident. Speaking on the side lines of the forum in Bulilima, Ntando Sibanda had this to say.



"I am really grateful for these forums because they bring out the best of me. Activities I attend with my male counterparts are quite different in that they always want to dominate the space, however, these forums that were specific for us young women made us come out of our shells and speak from the heart," Sibanda said.

Participants across the project areas felt that the forums helped boost their confidence as well as foster solidarity among young women. They gave them a common voice to address the structural and cultural barriers underpinning young women's political participation and leadership.

"Being able to share experiences in a safe and open environment helped identify common challenges. The forum bolstered my leadership skills and also afforded me the opportunity to forge relationships with established women political leaders. All I can

say is that my confidence is on another level, if other women have done it, why can't I," asked Sinothando Mathonsi.

It is also during these forums where young women have called upon powers that be to increase young women's representation in politics. The young women identified 3 priority areas namely; nurturing young women's political aspirations, supporting young women candidates for political office and empowering young women in office, investing in their future. They are also calling for a young women's quota as the current women's quota does not have clear provisions on how to include young women, does not extend to local government. Therefore, this means that young women shall always be in the periphery of decision making because even on the 10 seats for the youths, nothing is specific on young women.

