BRITISH COUNCIL

NEXT GENERATION

Zimbabwe | January 2020

> ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Disclaimer

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> Forewords

The goal of the British Council, in Zimbabwe and around the world, is to build connections and trust between people in the UK and other countries and to develop new opportunities that flow from the relationships we help to create.

Young people are a critical audience for us, especially in Africa, a youthful continent where the dynamism and potential of young people is manifestly evident. But there are challenges, and we need to understand the nature of those challenges from the perspective of young people. Too often, others speak for the youth. But with this research, we aim to give young people a voice in the issues that concern them and that shape their lives, to make sure their interests are listened to and understood.

Next Generation Zimbabwe is a powerful statement of the energy, dynamism and soaring aspirations of young people in this country. It also heeds their anxieties and concerns about the challenges they face. For policymakers and planners, in government or elsewhere, there are warnings about the risks of losing this generation – to dissatisfaction and disengagement, as much as migration – but there is also the clear statement from young people about what matters to them, what they are looking for and what they can achieve.

The research raises many issues and questions: how can we create the opportunities that young people so evidently desire, to meet their aspirations for jobs and livelihoods and to give them a voice in shaping their future? How can we ensure that there are resources and support in place to help young people towards productive and fulfilling pathways when many are simply preoccupied with getting by? How can we guide young people towards the right choices, when the need to make a living means the boundaries between the illicit and the legitimate are blurred?

Young people are not expecting handouts; they are resilient and determined. They expect – and are prepared – to make their own way, to become entrepreneurs. How do the institutions of the state and the business sector help make this happen? How do civil society organisations respond? How does all this happen in a co-ordinated and efficient way that respects the voice of young people in the spirit of 'nothing about us without us'?

The task is huge, but at the very least in this Next Generation report, we have something approaching a definition, a statement of the problem. We in the British Council will listen, reflect and respond; we encourage others to do the same.

Roland Davies,
Director Zimbabwe, British Council

The British Council-initiated Next Generation research could not have come at a better time, with Zimbabwe at a crossroads requiring prudent and well-informed decisions on the political, social and economic fronts. The research findings and recommendations shed light on what needs to be done and give directions on actions to be taken – be it at the level of grassroots policy formulation or at higher levels of local and national decision making.

Historically marginalised in political decision making and the developments of our country, youth in Zimbabwe are starting to take centre stage in political, economic and social developments. This has particularly been the case since the leadership change with a new president and his cabinet, although recycled from the previous regime. While some young people are hopeful that this will bring about affirmative change, it remains a troubling fact that the majority of youth are frustrated at the quality of their livelihoods and the efficiency and effectiveness of government policy. They want secure employment with decent working conditions, access to opportunities and, most importantly, respect for the rule of law and human rights. This report provides a space for young people to share their experiences, hopes, frustrations and ideas for solutions at a time where change is possible, but where fears of diminished human rights, economic uncertainty and a lack of inclusion remain.

Despite the recent change in government and introduction of the tagline 'Zimbabwe is open for business', Zimbabwe continues to perform poorly economically and the youth remain the biggest victims. Most have lost hope and, as seen in this report, believe that their future may be more secure if they migrate to other countries. The severe economic hardship, coupled with a terrifyingly high youth unemployment rate,

is not only a cause for concern but a national emergency. At the heart of it all is a young generation at a loss, despite possessing a strong entrepreneurial spirit and love for their country. Young people in Zimbabwe lack the financial capital or economic infrastructure to navigate the onerous economic milieu. In addition to better financial conditions, a conscious decision to change the status quo needs to be made in order for there to be progressive realisation of human rights and to rebuild the relationship between young people and decision makers, regardless of political affiliation.

As young people, it is important for us to also look beyond the different identities we have and be inclusive as we raise our voice to demand space on platforms that are important in making decisions. Zimbabwe has the potential to create an environment where current and future generations enjoy their rights, freedoms and economic opportunities.

Throughout this report, with the wide range of concerns highlighted by young people, what is evident is the need for a response that is systematic, connected and sincere. The genuine inclusion of youth in consultation and decision making needs to happen not just in relation to employment, but in all sectors of politics, society and the economy, and our government and leading corporates have a role to play in ensuring that young people represent themselves and speak for themselves. Without a doubt, the eradication of tokenistic youth inclusion will result in sustainable and specific policy reform.

The legacy of the current leadership is heavily dependent on how the government engages with the youth population, more particularly the leadership's preparedness to implement tangible youth-inclined solutions. While there are initiatives and programmes for youth empowerment in place, real empowerment is an overall conducive

environment for young people to thrive. We, the Next Generation Zimbabwe Youth Task Force, are excited about this report and strongly believe that it will continue the conversation in highlighting the voices of youth in Zimbabwe. As future leaders, we remain hopeful for a Zimbabwe with strong institutions, governance and bountiful opportunities for all.

Daphne Jena
Juliana Kariri
Varaidzo F Magodo-Matimba
Eric Morgan Moyo
Nozipho Moyo
Bongiwe Nkomozana
Members,
Youth Task Force,
Next Generation Zimbabwe

> Executive summary

Background to the research

Next Generation Zimbabwe is part of a British Council global research series, commissioned in countries that are undergoing or have undergone significant change. In Zimbabwe, it began after a series of political events, including the ousting of President Robert Gabriel Mugabe on 15 November 2017. He had been in power for 37 years. It is in this context that the research sought to understand the realities of young people, aged between 18 and 35, in Zimbabwe.

The research aimed to answer the following questions in relation to youth in Zimbabwe.

- Do young people in Zimbabwe feel like they have a stake and say in the social and political landscape?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe have hopes, aspirations and dreams in their country?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe have an appetite for social change among their generation?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe feel their voices are being heard by their elders, by leaders, by the media and opinion formers?
- What is their engagement in the civic, economic, social and democratic life of their country and what is the aspiration of the youth on influencing their community, country and the wider world?

Summary of the findings

Attitudes and aspirations

There is a general optimism among the youth in Zimbabwe concerning the future. Nonetheless, young Zimbabweans are concerned about the adverse socio-economic and political conditions in the country despite the recent change of leadership. Their optimism is further dampened by challenges such as unemployment, corruption and conflict, which have not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner. A significant number of young Zimbabweans are willing to leave

for 'greener pastures', namely South Africa, the UK, Botswana, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. Being a former British colony, it is no surprise that the majority of young people in Zimbabwe favour movement to Commonwealth countries with vibrant economies where they are likely to secure gainful employment and solve the problems and fears of future insecurity.

Education

The Zimbabwean education system still has a level of international appeal due to the country's high literacy rates and quality of science, technology, engineering and maths education. This has contributed, and will continue to contribute, to 'brain drain' due to the combination of high skills, an absence of jobs and a lack of popular role models speaking up for education. The Zimbabwean education system also faces contemporary challenges in technical capacities, such as digital learning, and a legacy colonial infrastructural divide between urban and rural areas, as well as other continuing infrastructure challenges.

Young Zimbabweans require an education system that bridges the rural–urban divide in order to allow for the equalisation of economic opportunities. Patriarchy and perceptions of the marriage institution in Zimbabwean society are also a major contributor to the gender divide with regards to access to quality education among young Zimbabweans.

Employment

Many young Zimbabweans are rapidly gaining education and skills. This has led to high numbers of unemployment among youth, a lack of security in the job markets and a turn to informal employment. The informal sector is likely to continue growing and will absorb the majority of young Zimbabweans joining the labour force. The low levels of formal employment have weakened the ability of labour

to organise; hence, unions are not as strong as they were in the past, leaving the workers vulnerable. This may also contribute to the aforementioned brain drain, with young Zimbabweans migrating for better employment opportunities.

However, there is a strong entrepreneurial culture among young Zimbabweans, and this could be the engine for future economic growth.

Empowerment

One source of empowerment for young Zimbabweans is in the form of national policies and initiatives aimed at improving their economic participation, skill base, health and agency. A number of such initiatives exist, although political disillusionment combined with economic hardship has seen young people become either unaware or sceptical of such state-sponsored programmes. This lack of awareness, or cynicism, means the initiatives are unlikely to achieve their goals, and therefore more attention should be paid to youth engagement with them.

Participation

Many young Zimbabweans are engaged in community activities, such as community development projects, as a way of making a positive contribution to the community, but they may also see this as a way of making themselves visible to political actors (who may have control over resources) or as a route into employment. While the majority of youth do not think their communities are helping them that much, particularly from a livelihoods dimension, over half of them do feel a sense of belonging there. When it comes to direct political participation, although there is interest, there is also disillusionment. It is not surprising, therefore, that more than 60 per cent were found unwilling to engage in politics and they do not believe that their vote can change things for the better in Zimbabwe.

Media and technology

Young Zimbabweans agitate for a government that understands the importance of functional and accessible information and technology infrastructure. Currently, the rigid media space has failed to evolve with the times, causing social and cultural polarisation and making it difficult for Zimbabwe's national project (building a nation that all Zimbabweans identify with) to take shape.

The youth in Zimbabwe have embraced information technology and use the internet to access information and network on social media. Despite reasonable country-wide access to the internet, there are concerns regarding the youth's state of preparedness for the fourth industrial revolution. There is a danger that if many young people remain unconnected, they might be left behind in the fourth industrial revolution, where skills in information technology such as coding and programming are set to dominate the labour market.

Risks and challenges

The first and foremost emerging risk factor is the negative state of the economy. The weakening economy has largely been accompanied by an increase in skilled labour, owing to post-independence policies on education provision. The increased labour supply has, however, not been matched by an increase in demand for labour or formal employment opportunities; over time, the rift between demand and supply of labour has been widening. This widening rift has been the source of high unemployment and related negative outcomes for young Zimbabweans. Other related factors include family disintegration (with parents forced to work away from home) and the potential for massive human capital losses, as disaffected young people fall prey to substance abuse or migrate to other countries after receiving training in Zimbabwe. Together, these

consequences of the misfiring economy pose a major social risk to Zimbabwe and may yet lead to more confrontations between the youth and authorities.

The second risk factor was that of the hegemonic political order of Zimbabwe. Young people suggest that their political identity has become of significant importance in the country and that they felt it often determined the chance of getting ahead in life. Like many other countries, Zimbabwe still suffers from a patronage system in which benefits from the government are passed down on political grounds, and where it seems that only the ones who toe a given political line become beneficiaries of government youth programmes and receive access to opportunities.

The political environment has become synonymous with violence and intolerance, with limited space for critical debate. Young people have also become quickly disillusioned with democracy, which may have ramifications on voter turnout and participation.

A third risk relates to limited youth participation in community and country. It could be argued that this pattern has been reinforced by the nature of politics in post-colonial Zimbabwe, with young people kept at arm's length with regards to leadership positions.

Causes for optimism

Alongside the challenges they face, there is hope for a better future for young Zimbabweans. The human capital skills base and the positive outlook of the youth in the future were critical points that signified hope for a better society. Zimbabwe has an opportunity to realise a demographic dividend as its share of the working age is greater than that of the non-working age. If managed well, this youth population could be a source of labour that has the potential to drive economic growth.

Zimbabwean youth have a high level of resilience, remain resolute and value being masters of their destiny and providing for their families. If the economic situation does improve, this resilience suggests that the youth of Zimbabwe have a bright future. While there was a lot of community disengagement, there were notable numbers of young people feeling closely tied to their communities, with some volunteering and contributing to the greater good.

Recommendations

Reviewing the conclusions of the research, the Youth Task Force made a number of recommendations targeted at policymakers. These cover the core issues explored in this report, including education and employment, accountability, equality and inclusion, media and technology, and youth policy and participation. The recommendations are based on the findings of the research and the members' own knowledge and experience of working with, supporting and themselves being young people in Zimbabwe.

The full list of recommendations can be found in Chapter 7.

> Introduction

Next Generation research always takes place during or following a time of significant change in countries, and this report is no different. This research comes after the unfolding of a series of political events in Zimbabwe which saw the ousting of Robert Gabriel Mugabe through a military intervention, dubbed 'Operation Restore Legacy', on 15 November 2017. Mugabe, who had been in power for 37 years, was temporarily replaced by his embattled deputy, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, who later contested and won the 2018 presidential elections. However, despite this momentous change, the outcome of the election was disputed by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Alliance, led by the youthful Nelson Chamisa. These events also highlighted the generational divide between the youth and the older citizens of Zimbabwe. In an attempt to address this divide, youth issues were hurriedly pushed to the forefront of government business, yet there was a lack of perspectives on the stories and ambitions of Zimbabwean youth.

As such, the Ali-Douglas Development Consultancy (ADDC) considered the Next Generation research as a chance to tell the story of Zimbabwean youth in their own voice. This also presented an opportunity to discuss more challenging themes in the country, such as race, tribe and the experience of marginalised groups such as disabled people and sexual minorities. Next Generation Zimbabwe sought to examine young people's sense of their lives now and in the future by answering the following questions regarding Zimbabwean youth.

- Do young people in Zimbabwe feel like they have a stake and say in the social and political landscape?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe have hopes, aspirations and dreams in their country?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe have an appetite for social change among their generation?
- Do young people in Zimbabwe feel their voices are being heard by their elders, by leaders, by the media and opinion formers?
- What is their engagement in the civic, economic, social and democratic life of their country and what is the aspiration of the youth on influencing their community, country and the wider world?

The project aims are:

- understanding youth attitudes and aspirations
- amplifying youth voices
- supporting better youth policymaking.

ADDC hopes this work will assist the British Council, and its partners and stakeholders, to develop a comprehensive understanding of the context in which young Zimbabweans live their lives, including identifying the key issues affecting young people, their priorities in life and the key elements in youth development and participation. The analysis in this document provides an opportunity to identify gaps, opportunities, and challenges, as well as changes in trends and issues that need new information to be understood. Overall, the data in this document should enable the British Council and its partners to better plan, implement, monitor and evaluate its youth empowerment interventions, including policy advocacy initiatives.

An overview of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in southern Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers, bordered by South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique. The capital city is Harare. A country of roughly 16 million people, Zimbabwe has 16 official languages, with English, Shona and Ndebele being the most commonly used.

Since the 11th century, Zimbabwe has been the site of several organised states and kingdoms, as well as a major route for migration and trade. The British South Africa Company, led by Cecil John Rhodes, first demarcated the present territory during the 1890s; it became the self-governing British colony of Southern Rhodesia in 1923. In 1965, the conservative white minority government unilaterally declared independence as Rhodesia. The state endured international isolation and a 15-year guerrilla war with black nationalist forces, which culminated in a peace agreement that established universal enfranchisement and de jure sovereignty as Zimbabwe in April 1980. At independence, Zimbabwe had one of the strongest economies in the

world, endowed with vibrant industries, an internationally acclaimed social security net and abundant natural resources, leading to the late Tanzanian President Julius Mwalimu Nyerere's pronouncement of Zimbabwe as 'the jewel of Africa' (Miller, 2012).

Robert Gabriel Mugabe became Prime Minister of Zimbabwe in 1980 when his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), won the elections following the end of white minority rule. He was the President of Zimbabwe from 1987 until his resignation in 2017. Zimbabwe's social and economic conditions started showing signs of deterioration in the 1990's, particularly after the failure of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). This worsened after 2000, following a land reform programme popularly known as the Fast Track Land Reform Programme, where land was taken from the white commercial farmers and distributed among black Zimbabweans. It is alleged that the programme caused displacement of farmworkers and farmers, victimisation of white commercial farmers and opposition supporters, and destruction of private property.

This resulted in concerns of legitimacy in land ownership and a chronic weakening of the country's agricultural infrastructure, all of which then contributed to Zimbabwe's deteriorating social and economic conditions. It also led to the international isolation of the country, another factor in its decline.

On 15 November 2017, Zimbabwe witnessed monumental shifts in its political environment. In the wake of a rapidly deteriorating economy and political environment, Robert Mugabe was placed under house arrest by the country's national army. Four days later, ZANU-PF sacked Robert Mugabe as party leader and appointed former Vice-President Emmerson Mnangagwa, at the time in exile, to complete the presidential term left behind by Mugabe. After two more days, Mugabe resigned, prior to impeachment proceedings being completed. On 30 July 2018, Zimbabwe held a general election that was won by ZANU-PF. Nelson Chamisa, who was leading the main opposition party, MDC Alliance, contested the election results and filed a petition to the Constitution Court of Zimbabwe. The court subsequently confirmed Zanu-PF's victory, making Emmerson Mnangagwa the new President of Zimbabwe.

Robert Mugabe died on 6 September 2019, as this report was being finalised. The economic decline continued after his death, despite a sense that he was the root of the problem, and this has left Zimbabweans conflicted on his life, the end of his reign and his legacy. These conflicted feelings are illustrated in the following quotes.

'Some of us were born under Mugabe and today he is gone. I really don't know if I miss him or not. I think most of what is wrong in this country was because of him, but also we are educated, peace-loving and hardworking also because of him.'
Bulawayo, 2019

> CHAPTER 1:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given the complex and sensitive nature of the subjects under study, the research used a mixed-methods approach. These included focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), audio diaries, a survey and secondary data. Data was collected from Zimbabwean youth in accordance with the guided categories of:

- age group (18–24/25–30/31–35)
- gender (male/female/other/prefer not to say)
- nationality (dual/singular) and education (none/primary school/secondary school/tertiary)
- location (rural/urban [by city], peri-urban)
- wealth and household income
- religion, ethnicity and disability
- distinct socio-economic group (e.g. political affiliation).

Project sampling

The research was carried out in all of Zimbabwe's eight provinces (Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo and Midlands) and two metropolitans (Bulawayo and Harare). In each province, the consultancy team randomly selected one rural ward and the most urban ward as areas of study. The metropolitans were divided into three areas (city centre, high-density and low-density) from which a single ward was randomly selected, making a total of three wards in each metropolitan area. This gave a total of 22 wards for the study.

The sampling process considered youth within the age group of 18 to 35 years old. This group was divided into three classes: early beginners (18- to 24-year-olds), prime youth (25- to 30-year-olds) and young adults/older youth (31- to 35-year-olds).

Quantitative data was used to build a situational picture of the study districts, particularly regarding the socio-economics, specific indicators and demographics. This component was used in conjunction with qualitative data. This broad-based sampling perspective gave a more nuanced picture of the situation in the country.

More detail on the methodology can be found in Appendix 1.

> CHAPTER 2:
DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 Section 20, youth are defined as people between the ages of 15 and 35 years, guided by the Africa Youth Charter to which Zimbabwe is a signatory (Panday, 2006; Government of Zimbabwe, 2013).

Snapshot of Zimbabwean demographics

The Inter-Censal Demographic Survey (ICDS), 2017, estimated the number of people living in private households in Zimbabwe at 13,572,560 (see Table 1 and Table 2). Men and women make up 48 per cent and 52 per cent of the population respectively. The population is relatively young, with 40 per cent below the age of 15 and about six per cent aged 65 and above.

The population in Zimbabwe is mostly rural, with 68 per cent of the total found in rural areas.

People of African ethnic origin make up almost the entire population (99.7 per cent), while those of non-African ethnic origin account for a very small proportion mostly found in urban Zimbabwe (see Table 2).

Christians account for 84 per cent of people aged 15 and above; the largest proportion of Christians belongs to the Apostolic sect (34 per cent) followed by Pentecostal (20 per cent) and Protestant (16 per cent).

Nine per cent of Zimbabweans are categorised as disabled, with a slightly higher proportion of females (ten per cent) than males (eight per cent) being disabled.

Survey population

The distribution of youth who took part in the study is shown in Figure 1 in accordance with the national provinces. The majority of the respondents were early youth in the age group 18 to 24 years. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the study population by sex and age group. Females dominate the 18 to 24 age group and the sample in general, as shown in Figure 3.

The study population was also considered in relation to marital status in accordance with the education, population groupings, gender, and location. The results are summarised in Figure 4 and Table 3. Figure 4 shows that the majority of the youth in the study were not married but occasionally lived with partners, while a large number were married with children.

Figure 1: Study population distribution by province

Bulawayo
18–24   43.4%
25–30   30.2%
31–35   26.4%

Harare
18–24   40.7%
25–30   26.7%
31–35   32.6%

Manicaland
18–24   42.1%
25–30   30.3%
31–35   27.6%

Mashonaland Central
18–24   50%
25–30   29.2%
31–35   20.8%

Mashonaland East
18–24   42.4%
25–30   30.4%
31–35   27.2%

Mashonaland West
18–24   44.4%
25–30   35.3%
31–35   20.3%

Masvingo
18–24   42.7%
25–30   33.9%
31–35   23.4%

Matabeleland North
18–24   36.9%
25–30   29.2%
31–35   33.8%

Matabeleland South
18–24   45.5%
25–30   38.2%
31–35   16.4%

Midlands
18–24   47.7%
25–30   29.5%
31–35   22.7%

Figure 2: Age and sex of the population

Legend:
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 30
- 31 – 35

Male: 40 %, 32 %, 28 %
Female: 47 %, 30 %, 23 %
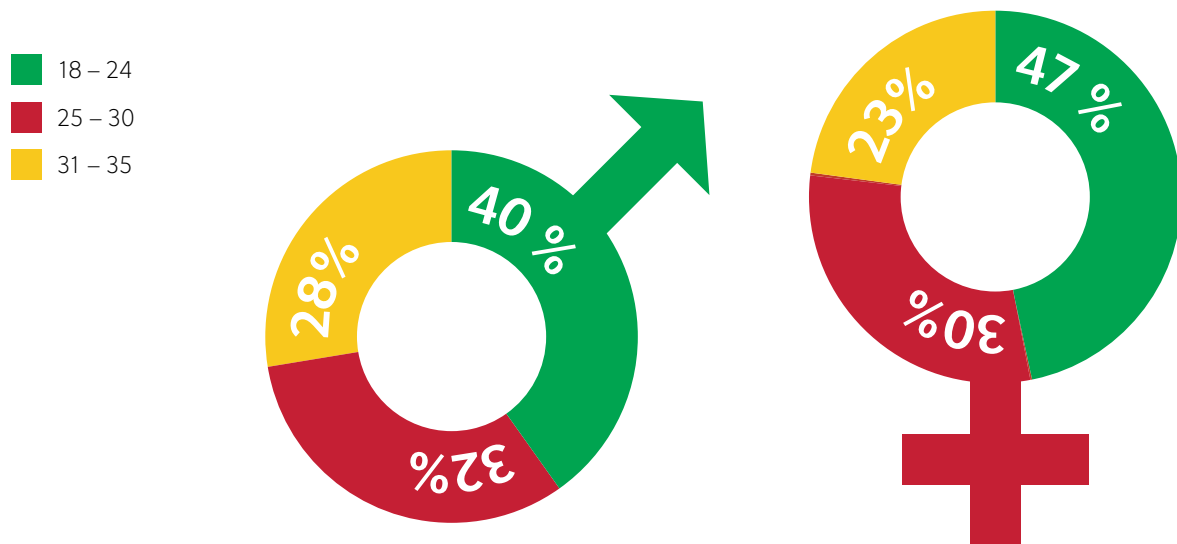
Figure 3: Study population distribution by sex and province
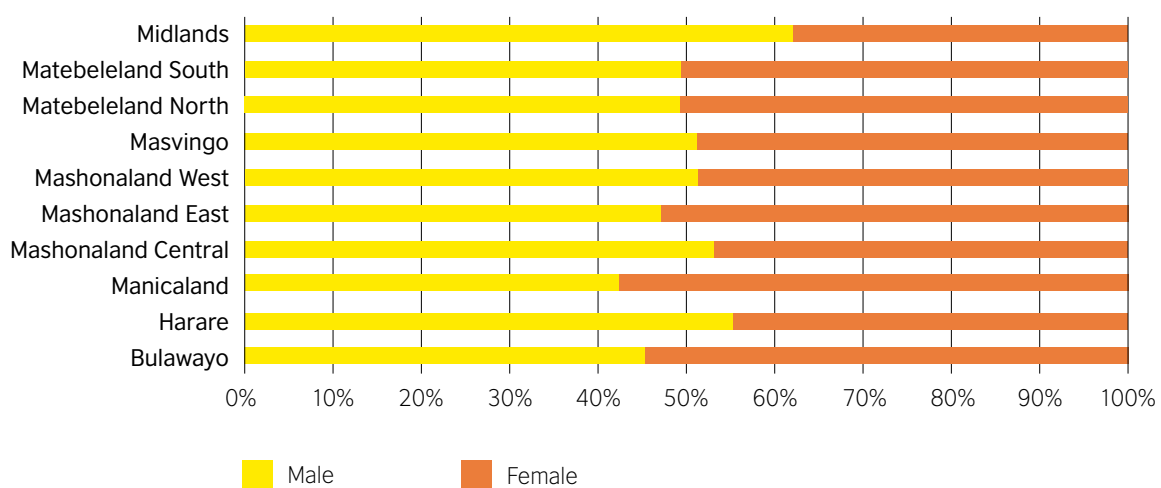
Male | Female

Table 1: Zimbabwe population distribution by age

Source: ZIMSTATS (2017: 9)

Age Group	Male	Female	Total	Sex Ratio
0 – 4	6.8	7.1	13.9	96.0
5 – 9	7.2	7.1	14.3	102.1
10 – 14	6.2	6.0	12.2	102.5
15 – 19	5.6	5.5	11.1	101.1
20 – 24	4.0	4.7	8.7	84.3
25 – 29	3.3	3.9	7.2	85.3
30 – 34	3.2	3.8	7.0	83.9
35 – 39	2.7	2.9	5.7	92.4
40 – 44	2.3	2.4	4.7	95.7
45 – 49	1.7	1.6	3.3	109.7
50 – 54	1.1	1.5	2.5	71.6
55 – 59	0.9	1.4	2.3	66.0
60 – 64	0.8	1.3	2.2	62.3
65 – 69	0.6	1.0	1.6	67.5
70 – 74	0.5	0.6	1.1	77.3
75 – 79	0.3	0.5	0.9	65.4
80 – 84	0.2	0.3	0.5	64.1
85 +	0.3	0.4	0.7	70.8
NS	0.0	0.0	0.1	102.8
Total	47.9	52.1	100.0	91.8

Table 2: Zimbabwean population by racial groups and age

Source: ZIMSTATS (2017: 9)

Ethnic Origin	0 – 14	15 – 49	50 – 64	65+	Total	Number
African	99.7	99.7	99.5	99.3	99.7	13527672
European	7.2	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.1	16998
Asiatic	*	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	9407
Mixed Race	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	00.1	18484
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Not Stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	13572560

Table 3: Marital status according to age

	Single, living with parents	Single, moved out of home	Married with children	Married without children	Divorced/ separated
18–24	69%	16%	9%	2%	1%
24–30	31%	25%	31%	6%	4%
31–35	9%	12%	60%	6%	11%

Figure 4: Marital status of survey participants by sex
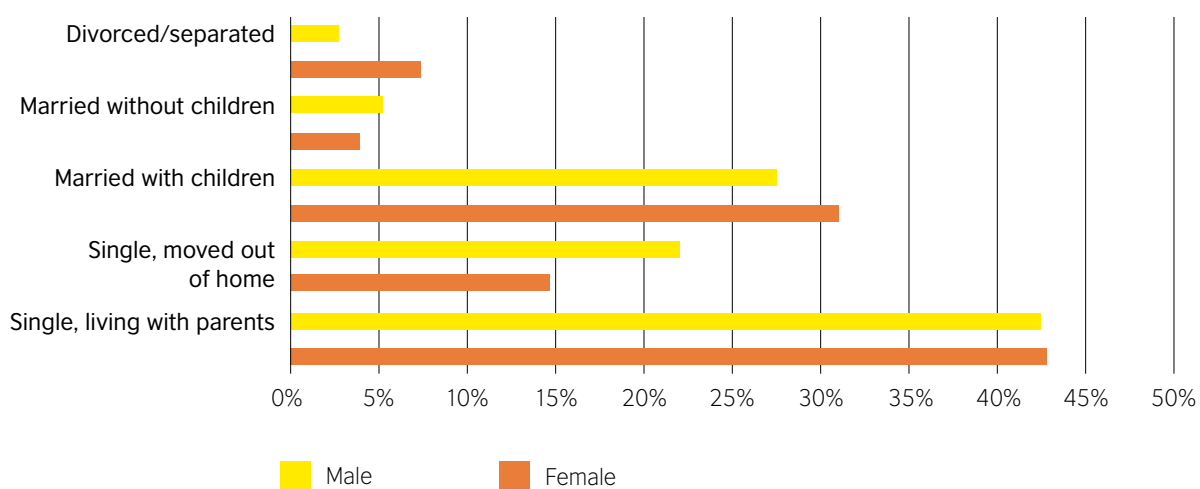
CHAPTER 3:
EDUCATION
AND EMPLOYMENT

Education

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2019), the overall literacy rate among young Zimbabweans in 2015 was estimated at 91.73 per cent. ZIMSTATS (2017) showed that 94 per cent of Zimbabweans aged 15 years and above are literate. The World Economic Forum's Global Information Technology Report 2016 ranks Zimbabwe fourth in Africa in terms of the quality of maths and science education (Baller et al., 2016). The country is ranked behind only the Ivory Coast (first), Mauritius (second) and Tunisia (third) in terms of the quality of maths and science education.

Survey results showed that the majority of the youth completed secondary education, with a significant number having obtained diplomas and degrees at the tertiary level (specialist colleges and universities) (see Figure 5).

Literacy levels may be considered high, implying a high number of young people who can read and write. Figure 5 shows the highest qualifications common among young Zimbabweans in rural and urban areas. The data shows that the majority of young people with higher than secondary education are found in the urban areas of Zimbabwe and that dropout rates are highest in rural Zimbabwe.

In our FGDs and interviews, participants explained that life in the rural areas was generally more difficult compared to urban areas due to the absence of hard infrastructure, particularly information and communication technology, transport, energy and sanitation. From their perspective, this constrained access to tertiary education was the reason for the low levels of quality education. Some scholars argue that during the colonial period, rural areas, which were (and still are) largely populated by native Africans, were deliberately underdeveloped in favour of urban centres dominated by Africans of European descent (Loftsdóttir, 2019; Cogneau et al., 2019; Eddyono, 2018; Mamdani, 1996). Alexander and McGregor (2013) noted that post-colonial governments continued this legacy to promote the politics of patronage and, today, it manifests in multiple spatial discrepancies in infrastructure and human capital quality.

The aforementioned colonial legacy is further highlighted when one observes the rationale for dropping out of school from a spatial perspective, as shown in Figure 6. In the urban areas (favoured by colonisation and with better infrastructure), the reasons for dropping out of school revolve mostly around finances (mostly due to contemporary economic hardship), while in the more rural provinces (historically less developed), there are many more diverse and complex socio-economic issues at play, including early marriage and pregnancies.

A gender analysis of the data shows that the dropout rates are more common among females than males (see Figure 7). Explored further in FGDs, the high dropout rates among young women were attributed to early pregnancies among teenage girls and to the preference to educate male children rather than girls within families.

Figure 5: Highest education levels attained in the different provinces of Zimbabwe

Legend:
- No education
- Completed primary school
- Completed secondary school
- Post graduate
- Refused to give education level
- Secondary school drop out
- In college
- Primary school drop out
- Still in secondary school
- At university
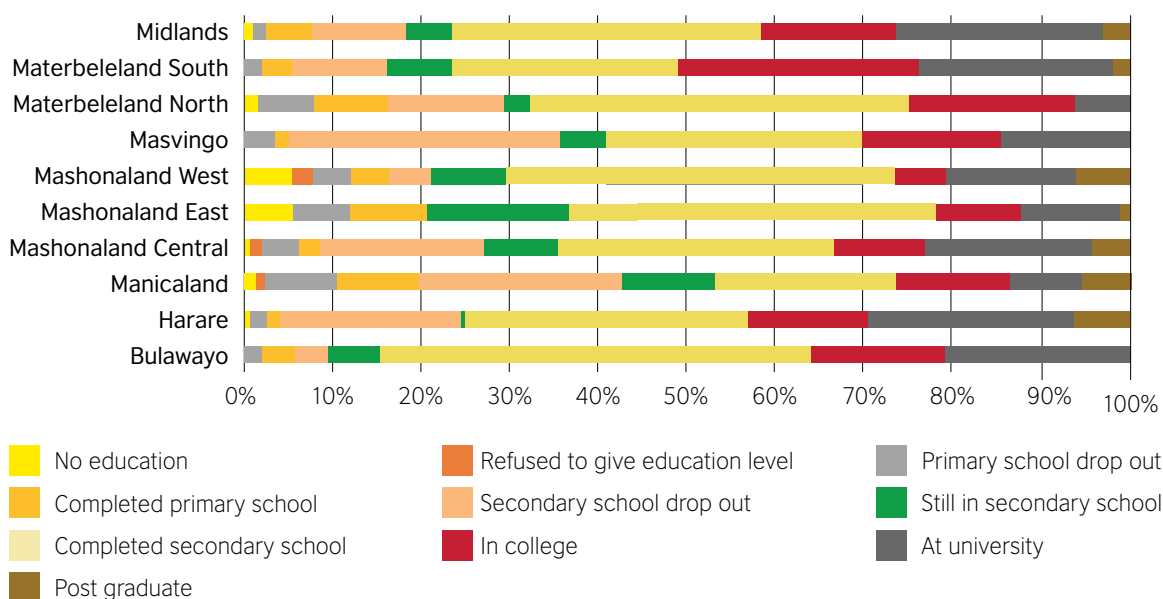
Figure 6: Reasons for dropping out of school in the different provinces of Zimbabwe

Legend:
- No education
- Lack of finances
- Ill health
- Sickness in the family
- Married
- Fell pregnant
- Family disapproved
- No need for school
- School too far
- Family health
- No school necessities
- Work
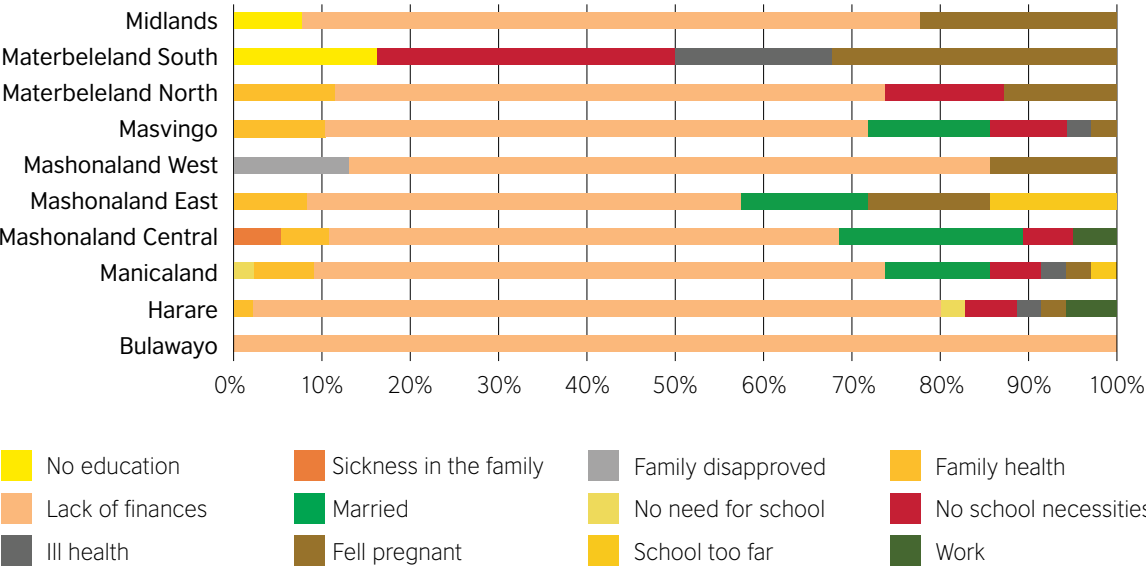
Figure 7: Reasons for dropping out of school according to sex

Legend:
- Male
- Female
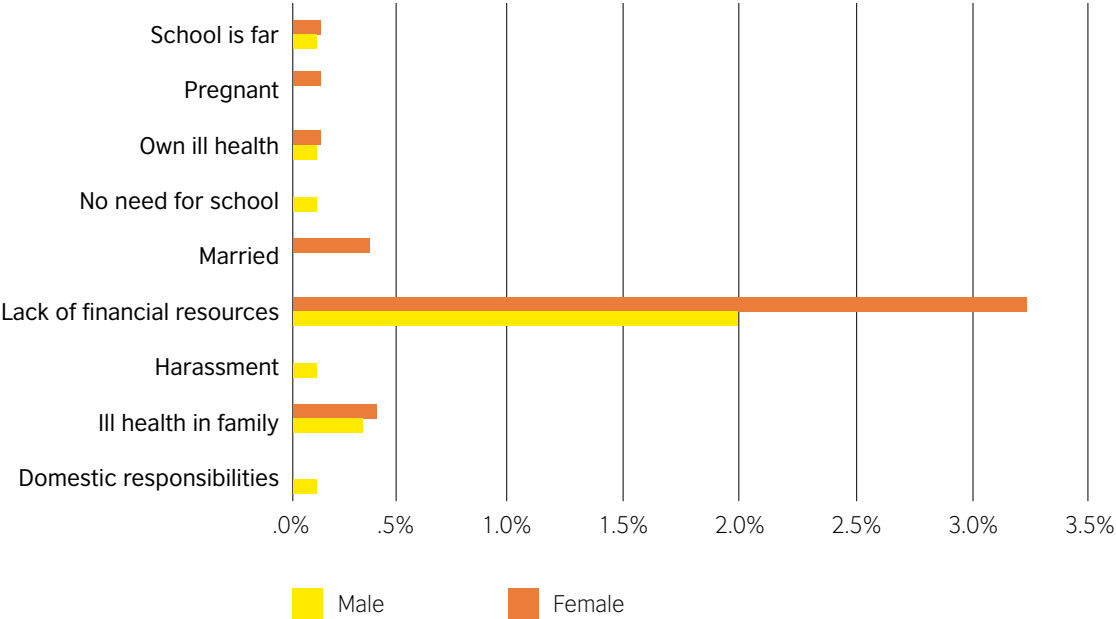
Through the FGDs, the youth explained that economic hardship had also seen the increasing monetisation of the girl child, in terms of both the perceived socio-economic benefits of marriage and household labour. Participants argued that young girls were easily married off with the promise of a better life in marriage. These young girls are often married off to older men. In some cases, the families of the young women were said to consent to such early marriages, as not doing so meant continuing to spend on the girl's upkeep. Thus, accepting the marriage offer would mean receiving the bride price and reduced expenditure on upkeep. In such a situation, in the face of the current economic hardship, parents were often forced to offload their female children.

Young Zimbabweans explained that girls were also in high demand, in comparison to young men, as household labour, often in the form of maids and carers for younger children, elderly people and people confined to their homes. This route is preferred to education as it provides instant income. Another, more dangerous route to income for young women facing economic hardship is prostitution. Respondents made the link between

prostitution and human trafficking as numerous young women in FGDs and interviews explained that a number of their friends had left Zimbabwe in search of a better life, only to end up as commercial sex workers in other countries.

Figure 8 shows this dimension. Observation shows that in the higher echelons of education (i.e. tertiary education), there are slightly fewer female (particularly postgraduate tertiary education) participants than male. This was further explored in interviews and FGDs.

'As a young woman, I'm under more social pressure than a man to get married and have children. I think my family would be happier if I found a good husband, built a good home for my children and husband than if I had a degree.'
FGD participant, Mapungwana, 2019

'Most men want to marry young women, so they approach young girls who may at times be still in school and promise to marry them. It's very hard to resist a genuine marriage promise, you know.'
KI, Bulawayo, 2019

'In rural areas like this one people are very poor and sometimes young girls get married to escape poverty in their homes. If I am married and lucky to have a hardworking man, at least he will take care of me. Age really does not matter in such a situation. What counts is security.'
KI, Dotito, 2019

In these quotes, participants from Mapungwana, Bulawayo and Dotito demonstrate the social and economic pressures that place women accessing and remaining in education second to other possible pathways. As well as being an economic safety net, marriage also offers social approval, as it is held in very high regard in Zimbabwean society. For some, to be married was a more attractive goal than being highly educated. This could reflect the patriarchal society that dominates most of Zimbabwe (Chikunda and Chikunda, 2016; Chiweshe, 2015; Manyonganise, 2015). Also, there seems to be a negative correlation between education and securing a suitable man for marriage, meaning that the more educated a woman, the lower the chances of marriage.

Figure 8: Education level by sex

Male   Female
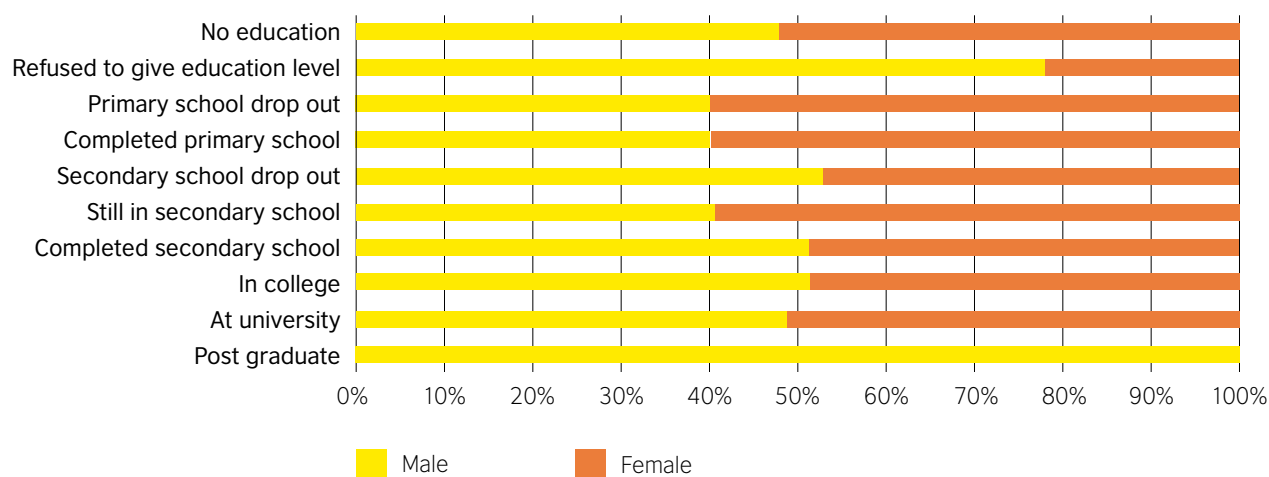
Employment

Zimbabwean youth find themselves in a challenging socio-economic environment where making a living is constrained by numerous factors. The challenges in making a living manifest in high levels of unemployment, underemployment and informal employment among young Zimbabweans. Previous studies suggest that the high rate of unemployment has resulted in the growth of the informal sector where small to medium enterprises have become notable engines of economic growth in Zimbabwe (Mudavanhu, Bindu, Chigusiwa, and Muchabaiwa, 2011; Maseko and Manyoni, 2011).

Zimbabwe, together with other African nations, has made commitments to mainstream social and economic goals, where employment is seen as a cross-cutting objective to be integrated into all policy domains (macro and sectoral) to achieve broad-based, inclusive, pro-poor and job-rich growth (see the Ouagadougou Declaration of September 2004). Therefore, it is critical to understand the impact of the contemporary employment setting given its significance in securing livelihoods among young Zimbabweans.

Studies have shown that Zimbabwe faces problems in resolving issues of endemic poverty, unemployment, under-employment, informality and decent work deficits (ZNHR, 2006; ZEPARU, 2013; ILO, 2016). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), these problems persisted before the culmination of its economic downward spiral in 1997 (ILO, 2016). The limited capacity in the country to absorb the new entrants into the labour market has been largely attributed to the failure in resolving the dual and enclave nature of the economy inherited at independence (World Bank, 2012). In addition to this, the country has failed to create an enabling environment for enterprises to thrive and create jobs and support. The weak implementation of employment-friendly policies, including the National Employment Policy Framework (NEPF), has seen the scourge of unemployment and under-employment, and subsequent poverty, unresolved (ILO, 2016; NEPF, 2019).

The ILO also noted that Zimbabwe faced structural and infrastructural bottlenecks, such as high debt overhang, liquidity crunch, erratic power and water supply, outdated industrial machinery, high cost of capital (or lack thereof), and widespread company closures. This has seen the country experiencing persistent de-industrialisation and the previously highlighted informalisation of the economy. This has also made the country uncompetitive on both the regional and global markets (ILO, 2016). It is within this context that the ways in which youths make a living in Zimbabwe are assessed, paying particular attention to their livelihood and employment options.

Figure 9: Source of livelihood by age
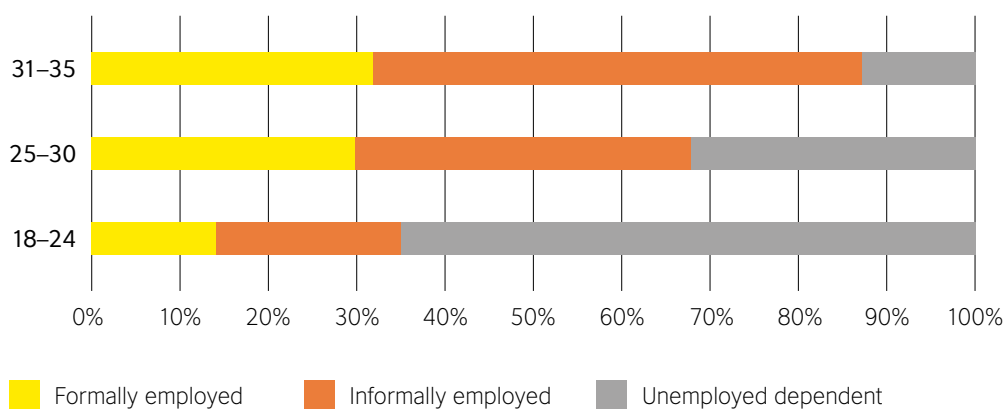
Perspectives on livelihoods and employment

From our research, 24 per cent of young people earned a living from formal employment, while 35 per cent earned a living from informal employment. Forty-one per cent of young people were dependent on other people for their livelihood. The total percentage employed (either formally or informally) was 59 per cent. Figure 9 gives a summary of those youth that either earned a living through formal or informal employment or were unemployed dependants who did not earn their own living. In line with the general economic trends of contemporary Zimbabwe, most youth were not formally employed. The majority of the young cohort (18- to 24-year-olds) were dependents, while there was an almost equal distribution of informally employed, formally employed and unemployed/dependent youth in the middle youth category (25 to 30 years). Less than 32 per cent of the 30- to 35-year-old youth were

formally employed, while over 55 per cent of them were employed in the informal sector and around 13 per cent were unemployed with no viable livelihood options and hence dependent on other people. Figure 10 considers livelihoods and employment from a gender perspective. It shows slightly higher levels of employment (formal and informal employment) among young men than women.

More women (particularly among the early youth group) than men were unemployed and did not earn their own living. This could be rooted in the gender-based social definitions of the young male and female. It has been noted in literature (Wodon et al., 2017; Dammert et al., 2018; Sayi and Sibanda, 2018) that young men are often pressured by social norms to demonstrate their ability to fend for themselves and, implicitly, a future family, while young women are trained in submission and encouraged to await an adequate suitor while under the protection of their families.

Figure 10: Source of livelihood by sex

Legend:
- Formally employed
- Informally employed
- Unemployed dependent
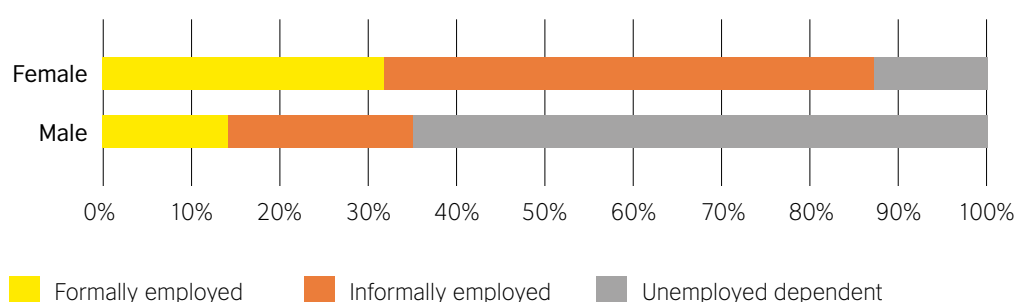
Earning a living within minority groups

Earning a living through formal employment was most common among demographic minorities, particularly youth of Asian descent, and least common among disabled people (see Figure 11). When explored further, FGD participants explained that in most cases, minority groups, especially Europeans and Asians, worked with each other better than native Africans did. The FGDs also revealed that those of European and Asian descent are often left or leave large inheritances and businesses to their children, thereby allowing for inter-generational employment through the family business and so a greater opportunity for financial stability. This is a perception that is also felt and perceived by other minority ethnic groups, as mentioned by some of our respondents.

'White people have always had money and they seem to understand money better than us blacks. One of them once told me that he was using money left to him by his grandparents and had not even started using what his father left him. How many black people do you know who leave such inheritance?'

KI, Masvingo, 2019

'Indians always keep their money at home and in their family. They will never allow you as a black person to be close to their money; they generally prefer to work together. I wish we could also work together like them. Maybe it's because they are few and we are many? I don't know.'

FGD participant,
Harare, 2019

'I think the African and Indian culture are very similar, so from that perspective native African and Zimbabweans of Indian descent should be similar when it comes to business. However, the native Africans have moved away from their culture more than the Indians, and this is shown by overspending on Western-based entertainment. The differences in the ways we abide to our cultural ideologies are likely the reason why we tend to be more serious in business.'

KI, youth of Indian descent,
Bulawayo, 2019

Opportunities to earn a living through formal employment were also shown to be significantly higher for older youth in urban areas (see Figure 12). Such opportunities are visibly lower in the rural area, and this is in line with previously discussed challenges of infrastructure discrepancies and the colonial legacy.

Nature of employment

When analysing limited opportunities for earning a living through formal employment, the ICDS of 2017 argued that the Zimbabwean economy has undergone structural regression following massive deindustrialisation and informalisation (ZIMSTATS, 2017). Despite the notable economic rebound between 2009 and 2018, economic growth has focused more on the exploitation of natural resources (particularly precious minerals) than manufactured products. This has huge implications for employment creation and poverty eradication, given the capital intensity required in mining and its enclave nature.

With this increased dependence on primary commodities, the structure of the Zimbabwean economy has become a typical Sub-Saharan African economy whose fortunes are dependent on the whims of external primary commodity markets.

Figure 11: Sources of livelihoods by population group

Legend:
- Formally employed (yellow)
- Informally employed (orange)
- Unemployed dependent (grey)
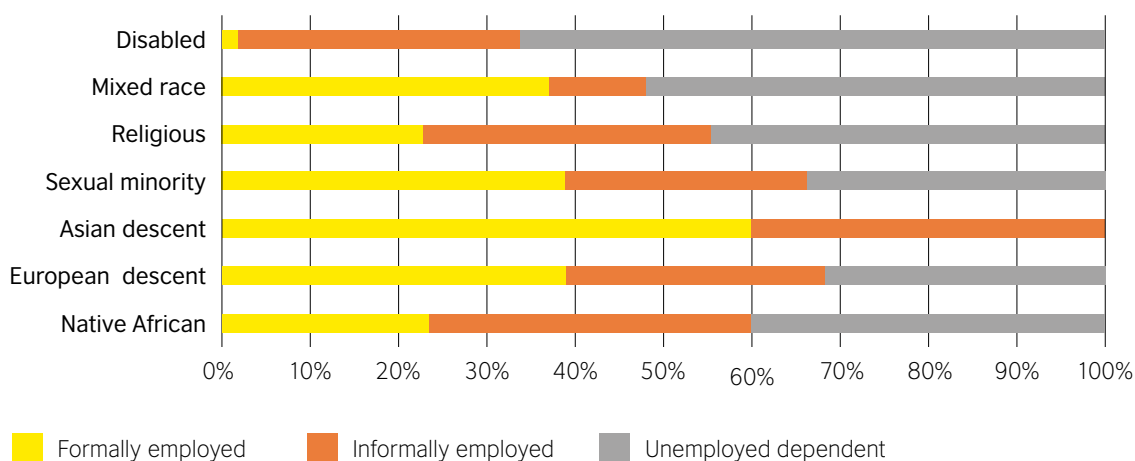
Figure 12: Source of livelihood by age in rural and urban areas

Legend:
- Formally employed (yellow)
- Informally employed (orange)
- Unemployed dependent (grey)
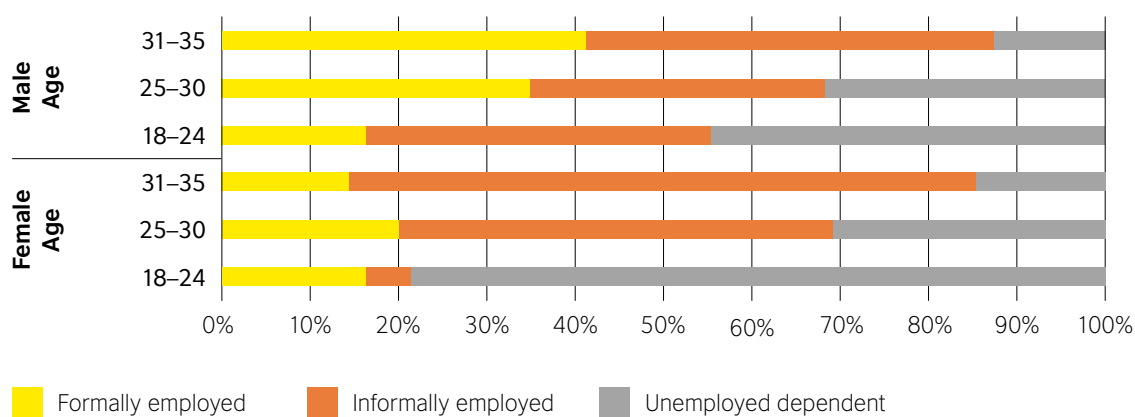
Formal employment-related challenges

Our study also sought to understand the nature of employment, particularly for the few young men and women who were formally employed. Figure 13 shows that older male youth had more secure jobs than women and all other age groups.

Once in formal employment, a number of challenges emerged for young Zimbabweans. Figure 14 shows the challenges that were common among the youth by age group and location (rural/urban). In all age groups and locations, the greatest challenge faced by employed youth is low remuneration. While it is a shared issue,

it is more pronounced in rural areas among the younger youth cadre, who are likely to be unskilled and so not in a position to attract higher wages. Other workplace challenges include limited career development and unfavourable working conditions. Respondents from across the country have given the following quotes which give a first-hand account of life in the workplace in Zimbabwe. Most of the complaints centre on low remuneration and limited tools to get the job done; some of the below respondents from Bulawayo and Siachilaba also shed light on limited employee wellness support, which could lead to high levels of demotivation at the workplace.

'It used to be better when cash was available during Biti's time.[1] *Now we can't get our salaries in cash and we have to go to town to collect our salaries where we spend hours in bank queues. Worse, our employers want us at work on Monday and they do not care how you managed to get back – all they want is to see you at work. We don't even have computers; everything is manual, and this place has serious network challenges. Even getting here by road is a challenge.'*
KI, Siachilaba, 2019

'As a woman, it's hard because I have children I also need to take care of, but here I work odd hours and I end up going home late. But I can't leave this job because my children will suffer even though they suffer now as they don't see me much.'
KI, Beitbridge, 2019

Figure 13: Nature of employment by age and sex

Legend: Unemployed | Employed – full time | Employed – part time | Casual labourer

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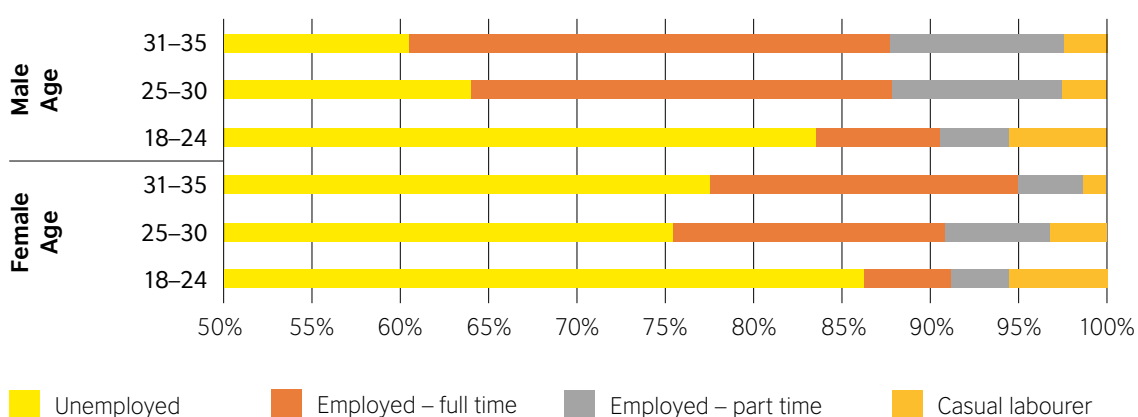
1 > Tendai Biti was the finance minister during Zimbabwe's unity government era (2009–13).

'Work is all right, but it would have been better if the money I make here was mine. I will start my own vegetable garden one day and maybe I will get more. A number here in the irrigation schemes make more than us because they are doing it for themselves.'

FGD participant, Gumunyu I, 2019

Figure 14 summarises the workplace-related challenges noted in the quantitative data, discussed by the respondents above. These mirror the weaknesses of organised labour that characterise Zimbabwe, which have been discussed in detail by Pollack (2011) and, more recently, by Hadebe (2019). The rights of workers have become secondary as people are desperate and jostle for the few available jobs.

Figure 15 shows that, of the young Zimbabweans employed, there are more young women in domestic work, in comparison to young males. Agriculture dominates the labour force activities in rural areas, while manufacturing is more prevalent in urban areas. Despite the participation in agriculture and manufacturing, the high unemployment rates limit the union power of labour in the sector. Although mining is significant in major state policies such as the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset), which dominated the twilight of Mugabe's rule, it is absent from the common industries that absorb young Zimbabweans (ZimAsset, 2013).

Figure 14: Challenges faced by young Zimbabweans at the workplace according to age and location
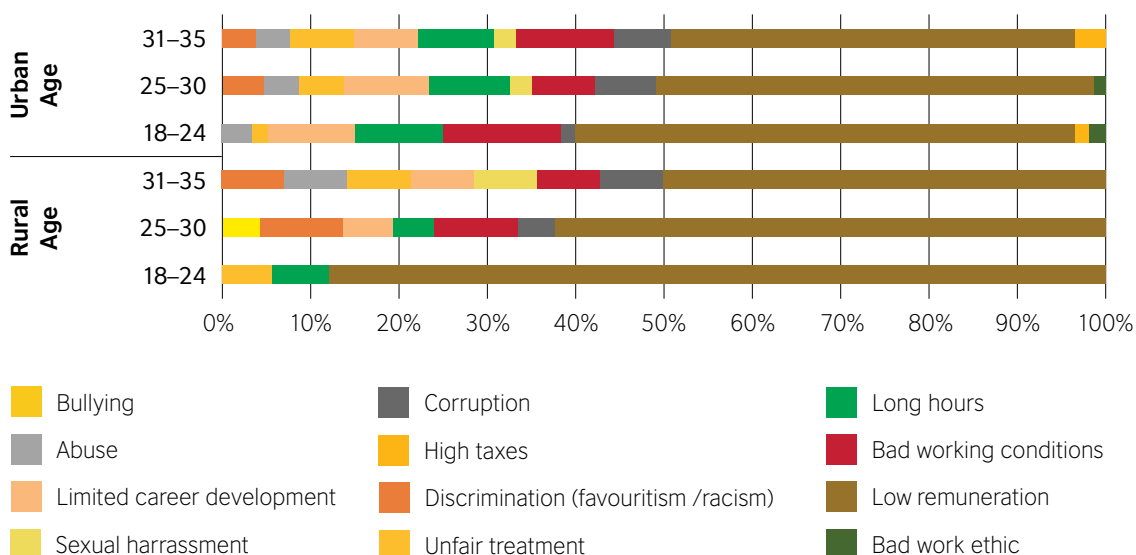
Figure 15: Employment sectors employing young Zimbabweans by age and sex

	Unemployed		Agriculture		Construction
	Domestic		Education		Finance
	Health		Hospitality		Informal manufactuing
	Manufacturing		Professional service		Public order
	Public Service		Telecommunications		Transport
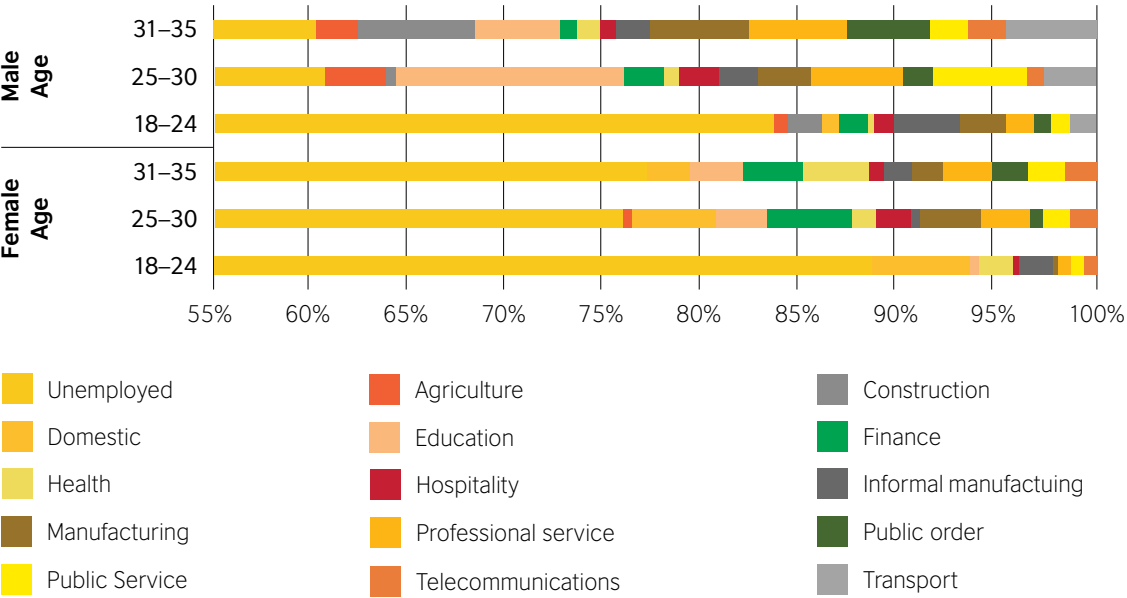
Figure 16: Career aspirations of young Zimbabweans

	Job at NGO
	Job at Private Sector
	Civil Servatn
	Politician
	Entrepreneur
	Farmer
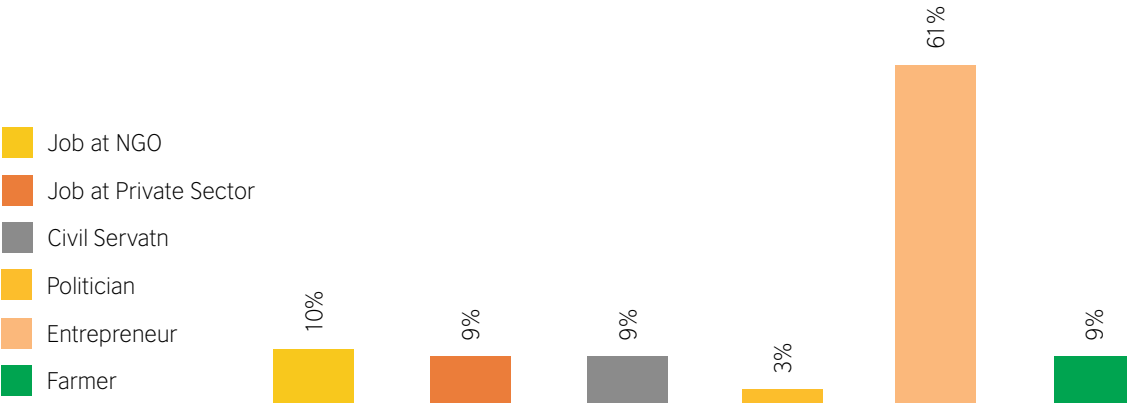
Employment hopes

The Zimbabwean economy continues to shrink at an alarming rate. As it fails to deliver in terms of growth and consequently employment creation, a significant number of youths have, over time, resorted to entrepreneurship as the only means of making a living (Chimhanda, 2016). However, despite some of these challenges the youth:

'Continue to shed light on the hope that entrepreneurship is key to a better future. From the exuberant energy exhibited by most entrepreneurs, it has been established that youth have the innovation and energy that is required to drive successful enterprises and entrepreneurial ventures.'

Chimhanda, 2016

Consider the perspectives from Harare and Masvingo below.

'Entrepreneurship is the answer to all our challenges; only if we can have the discipline and work a little harder.'

KI, entrepreneur,
Harare, 2019

'Truth be told, if we really want to make it big, our fortunes do not lie in formal employment but in entrepreneurship. It is only when you are your own boss that you can really get meaningful returns and care for your family like you would really want to.'

FGD participant,
young professionals, Masvingo, 2019

The majority of young people (61 per cent) in Zimbabwe aspire to be entrepreneurs, as it is seen by some as a pathway that will lead them to financial security and enable them to adequately provide for their families. Figure 16 presents findings on the career aspirations of young people in Zimbabwe.

Considering Zimbabwe's continued political turmoil, it is surprising that young people are not very keen on being career politicians, with only three per cent citing this as an ambition. We will look more at young people's attitudes toward politics in Chapter 5.

Given that Zimbabwe is an agrarian economy, the lack of interest in a career in farming also comes as a surprise. This could be as a result of the politicisation of land, which has limited access to a few politically connected individuals (Sims, 2011), and the bad infrastructure in rural areas where land is readily available. Again, it may also be attributed to the typical low returns on agriculture in Zimbabwe due to high transaction costs, high risk levels, long turnover periods, low return on investment and, in some instances, absence of a market for land due to unclear land tenure systems (Musiyandima et al., 2011). Moreover, agricultural activities are laborious and some require more skill. For it to be profitable, agriculture also requires a lot of financial investment, which most young people do not have access to.

Few survey participants aspired for employment in either the private or public sectors. In the public sector, this may be because of the conditions of service and remuneration; workers are paid meagre salaries that, in most instances, do not inspire any drive for young people to join (Sunduza, 2011). In the private sector, the job market is very small and opportunities for employment are very slim for young people. One young entrepreneur in Bulawayo put it this way:

'Looking at the salaries that employed people get, ha, I would rather remain hustling. In Zimbabwe today, when I hustle, on a good day, I can make a teacher's salary. So why bother [looking] for a job?'

FGD participant,
Bulawayo, 2019

Entrepreneurship and the informal sector

According to Dube et al. (2018), Zimbabwe has witnessed a growth in informal employment over the past decade. General informal employment, which stood at 80 per cent in 2004, rose to 94.5 per cent in 2014. While participation in the informal sector, whether full-time, part-time or seasonal, could point to youthful entrepreneurship and resilience – looking to support themselves rather than rely on assistance – it could also point to the weaknesses of support structures designed for unemployed youth, such as unemployment benefits and other support programmes (Vuori and Price, 2015). Figure 17 summarises the nature of informal employment among young Zimbabweans. Figure 18 summarises the common informal

employment opportunities that exist in Zimbabwe. Trade in goods and services is the most popular informal employment prospect for young people, regardless of age and gender. Given the significance of this enterprise component, it is critical that it be carefully supported through methods that reduce imports and push for trade in locally produced products. This will further stimulate local consumption of local products, thereby improving the overall balance of trade. Supporting informal enterprise might also improve the overall labour absorption abilities of the Zimbabwean economy, as manufacturing increases production to meet informal enterprise demand.

Survey respondents were asked to explain why they began enterprising. The results are summarised in Figure 19.

These findings suggest that the absence of formal employment opportunities, a lack of qualifications and a general interest in enterprise are the dominant factors that push young Zimbabweans to entrepreneurship. This implies that the enterprising spirit among young Zimbabweans is due to both structural challenges (related to education and national unemployment) and a strong entrepreneurial drive. With support, this entrepreneurial spirit could turn into a basis for job creation if young Zimbabweans are assisted in the formalisation and building of their businesses. In this regard, stakeholders involved in entrepreneurial support must be encouraged in all provinces of Zimbabwe.

Figure 17: Nature of informal employment among young Zimbabweans
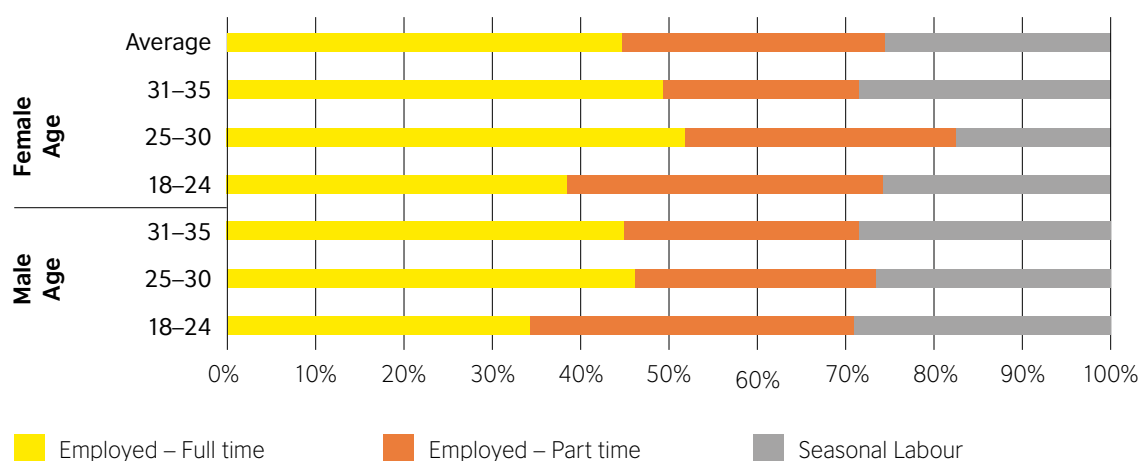
Figure 18: Informal employment labour activities among young Zimbabweans

Legend:
- Betting
- Commercial sex work
- Mining
- Agriculture
- Goods vendor
- Fishing
- Non professional sports
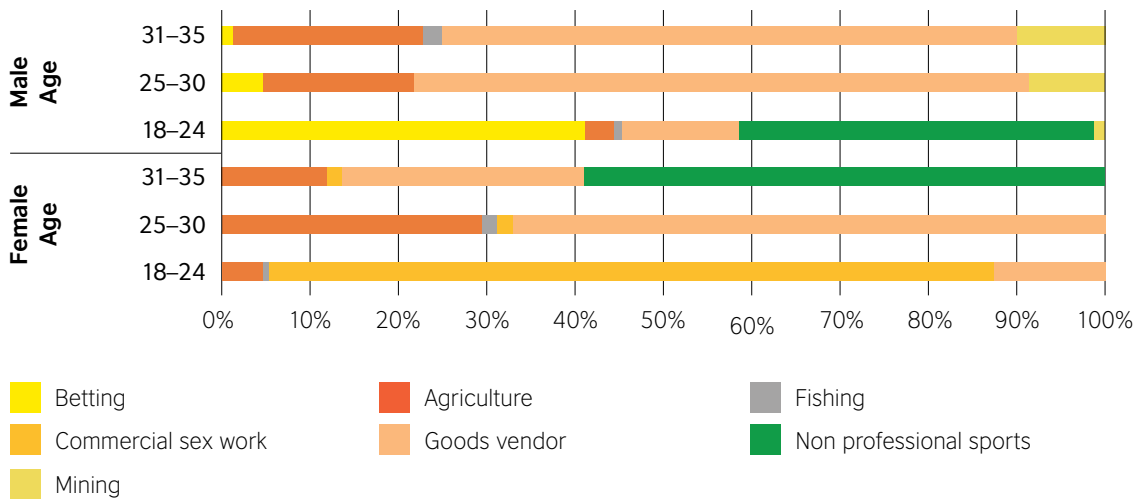
Figure 19: Reasons for the pursuit of enterprise by young Zimbabweans

Legend:
- Influenced by family
- No qualification
- Personal interest
- Influenced by peers
- No other job
- Personal goal
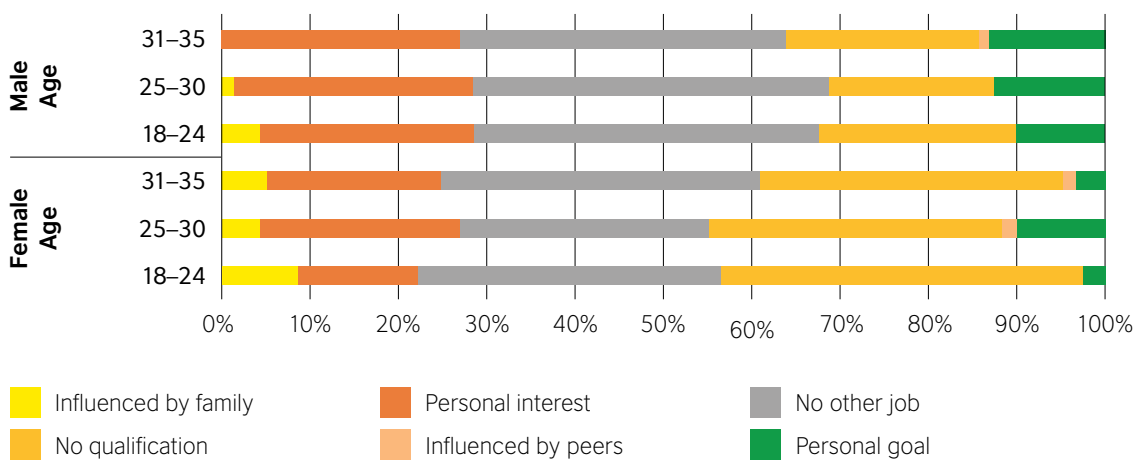
The presence of a positive entrepreneurial spirit does not mean that the pursuit of informal enterprise is without its challenges. Figure 21 gives a glimpse of the multiple challenges faced by young Zimbabweans in their pursuit of entrepreneurship.

Lack of capital is a common business start-up challenge and not peculiar to Zimbabwe. A number of government initiatives (youth empowerment, mining and agricultural loans) have been developed to provide loans to youth, but survey respondents explained that such loans were difficult to access (ZAYIMO, 2018; Youth Empowerment Bank, 2019). One reason given was that the loans were perceived as a preserve of politically connected and financially secure youth.

'Those loans are not for us; they are for those that already have money. I know a lot of friends who attempted to apply but nothing came of it.'
FGD participant, Dotito, 2019

In addition, many youths complained that they did not meet the criteria required by the banks, as most of them struggled to maintain viable bank accounts and did not have the collateral requirements. Despite the availability of collateral-free loans from institutions such as the Youth Empowerment Bank, in 2019 access to finance remains limited. There were also limited opportunities for alternative financing (crowdfunding, microfinance, private or angel investment).

Lack of markets is another challenge faced by young people, and one reason behind this is likely the limited spending power of most Zimbabweans due to a misfiring economy and liquidity challenges. Further research would be needed to better understand whether there is a mismatch between supply and demand – challenges in reading the market correctly may suggest a capacity issue to be addressed.

Figure 20: Reasons for not pursuing livelihood earning activities by education level

Legend:
- Awaiting response
- Ill-health
- No need to work
- Awaiting season
- Do not want to work
- No chance to get a job
- I want to start my own
- Family disapproved
- No need for school
- I am a student
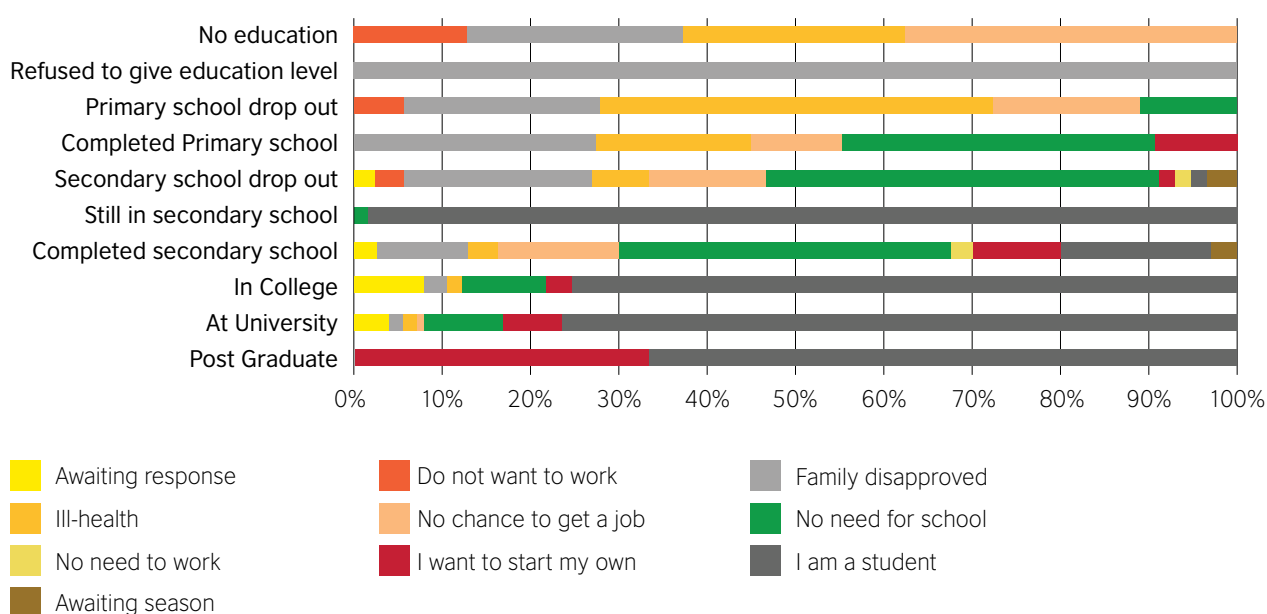
Unemployment

Having looked at young Zimbabweans who are part of the active labour force, the study now turns to those young men and women that find themselves in neither informal or formal employment nor entrepreneurship. Figure 20 shows that education (being in school) is a major reason for not joining the labour force. Key informants explained that education, though expensive, had simultaneously become a human capital building initiative and a refuge from being idle. Young men and women explained that given the limited employment opportunities and the challenges associated with entrepreneurship, it was preferable to wait for better opportunities while improving your education levels.

Young men and women with higher levels of education are often waiting for responses to job applications or for seasons when labour is in high demand. Although there are negative perceptions of the quality of Zimbabwean education and the preparedness it provides, some think that obtaining an education supports an individual's ability to enter the job market. This belief runs parallel to the belief that jobs are unavailable due to the weak economy, as mentioned in previous sections. Thus, education allows for hope in the future and gives young people in Zimbabwe an opportunity to move between alternative labour markets.

Education, however, is not an answer by itself. For some, it is not seen as crucial for employment prospects and financial security, as mentioned by a respondent from Beitbridge:

'Most of us here are qualified in one way or the other. I for one have a diploma but I can't get a job. I know a lot of my relatives who do not have as much education as I have who decided to go to South Africa a long time ago and are doing much better than me. I'm no longer sure if school is really that important for one to secure a job, especially in Zimbabwe. Imagine the very teachers who taught us now beg for money from South Africa-based boys who ran away from the teacher's class. Honestly, that is not fair.'

FGD participant,
Beitbridge, 2019

Figure 21: Enterprise-related challenges facing young Zimbabweans

- Competition
- Cashflow mismanagment
- Unpredictable conditions
- Business insecurity
- Stringent institutional requirements
- Inadequate skills
- Abscence of permanenet premises
- Expensive inputs
- Lack of startup capital
- Corruption
- Limited markets
- Unreliable service provision (water and electricity)
- Low profits
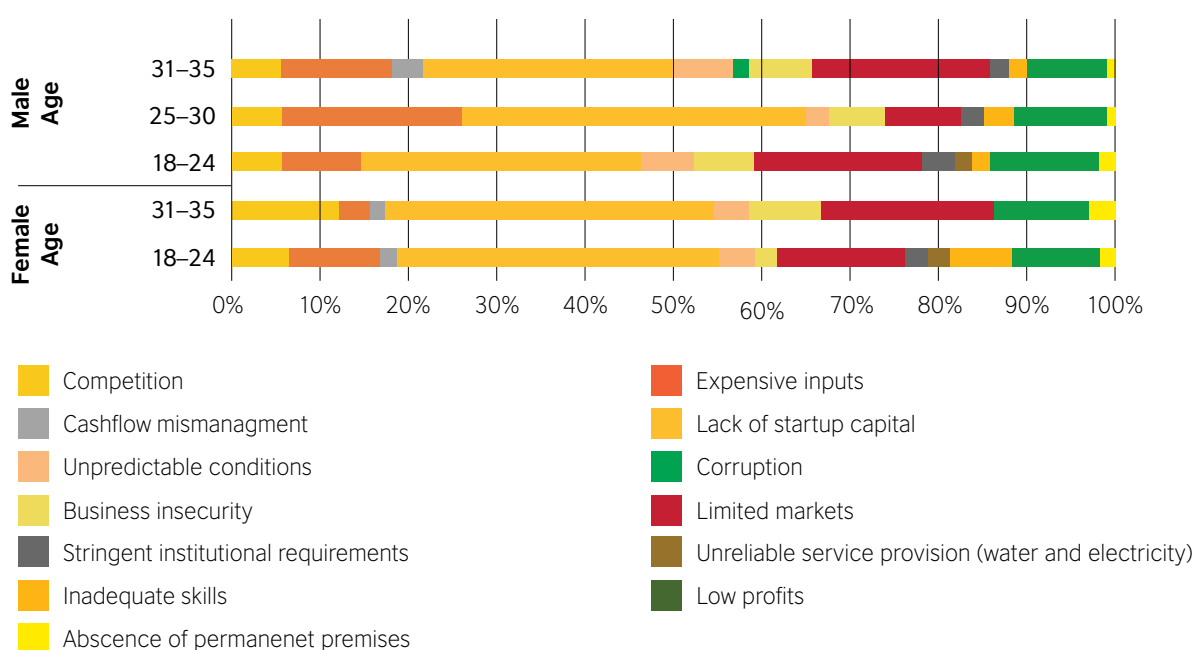
In fact, secondary data suggests that the unemployment rate for people with tertiary qualifications is higher than that of people with only primary education (ZIMSTATS, 2017). This could point to a mismatch of skills between those required by the market and those obtained from institutions of higher learning. This problem has been raised in various spheres (see, for example, Pedzisai et al. 2014; Ministry of Higher Education Report, 2006; Nziramasanga, 1999) and culminated in the review of the Zimbabwean education curriculum (Zimbabwe Curriculum Review, 2013). The ICDS 2017 further explained that due to its supply-bias, the education system was failing to meet the needs of the economy, creating a mismatch between demand and supply. The low quality of basic and further education severely limits opportunities for young people in the labour market, as they lack practical skills and work readiness. This is one of the reasons why the National Youth Policy also highlighted that high youth unemployment was due to an education system that does not adequately prepare youth for the current job market in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy; inadequate training and education materials at all levels; and lack of access to resources, among many other things (Government of Zimbabwe, 2009).

What does this tell us?

Young Zimbabweans require an education system that bridges the rural–urban divide in order to allow for the equalisation of economic opportunities. Patriarchy and perceptions of the marriage institution in Zimbabwean society are also a major contributor to the gender divide with regards to access to quality education among young Zimbabweans. In terms of employment, many young Zimbabweans are rapidly gaining education and skills, which has led to high numbers of unemployment among youth, a lack of security in the job markets and a turn to informal employment.

The informal sector is likely to continue growing and will absorb the majority of young Zimbabweans joining the labour force. There is a strong entrepreneurial culture among young Zimbabweans, and this could be the engine for future economic growth. There are few stable formal jobs in the Zimbabwean labour market, resulting in great livelihood uncertainties for young Zimbabweans. With discussions of migration for better employment opportunities, this could lead to another round of intense brain drain through migration, discussed further on in the report.

In the next chapter, we touch on perceptions of, access to and use of digital and information technology, continuing previous discussions on employment, education and the need to be prepared for the fourth industrial revolution.

> CHAPTER 4:
NAVIGATING THE WORLD

Information technology access and use

The world is facing an imminent fourth industrial revolution and Africa must not be left behind, as it has been argued was the case with the previous industrial revolutions (Cilliers, 2018). Naudé (2017) emphasises that a new age of artificial intelligence is anchored on the availability of an accessible and reliable internet connection. In response to this new reality, the government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, rolled out a countrywide programme aimed at improving internet connectivity between 2009 and 2013 (Nhapi and Mathende, 2019). This programme included a drive to digitalise the government departments. According to Thomas (2019), the mobile phone penetration rate in Zimbabwe is nearly 100 per cent, while the internet penetration rate is about 50 per cent.

The results of this study suggest that a majority (59.8 per cent) of young people throughout the country have access to the internet (see Figure 22). This is slightly above the national rate. However, the fact that 38.3 per cent reported not having access to an internet connection raises concern over young people's readiness for the future. Access to an internet connection was affected by factors including high rates of unemployment, low incomes and the high cost of internet data bundles.

Analysis aggregated by province revealed disparities between urban and rural provinces. Youth in urban centres were more likely than youth in rural areas to be connected to the internet. Metropolitan provinces, such as Bulawayo (79.2 per cent) and Harare (76.2 per cent), had the highest percentage of youth with internet access as opposed to rural provinces like Mashonaland West (38.3 per cent) and Matabeleland North

(49.2 per cent). Of the youth who have access to the internet, over 90 per cent use mobile phones to connect on a daily basis, and just 23 per cent use desktop computers to connect on a daily basis. Despite high unemployment rates among young people in Zimbabwe, most of them prioritised owning a smartphone. Some of the youth in FGDs stressed the importance of a smartphone as a medium that keeps them connected to the rest of the world and ensures that they keep track of all the opportunities that may lead to a change in their fortunes.

'Staying unconnected [to the internet] is very dangerous because opportunities can pass you by. One would rather have a smartphone than good food for example.'

FGD participant, female youth, Gwanda, 2019

Figure 22: Levels of internet access among young Zimbabweans

Have Access: 79.2%, 76.2%, 50.7%, 53.1%, 51.1%, 38.3%, 66.1%, 66.1%, 63.6%, 71.2%, 59.8%

Do Not Have Access: 20.8%, 23.8%, 47.4%, 40.6%, 51.1%, 57.1%, 33.9%, 47.7%, 36.4%, 27.3%, 38.3%

Legend:
- Bulawayo
- Harare
- Manicaland
- Mashonaland Central
- Mashonaland East
- Mashonaland West
- Masvingo
- Matabeleland North
- Matabeleland South
- Midlands
- National
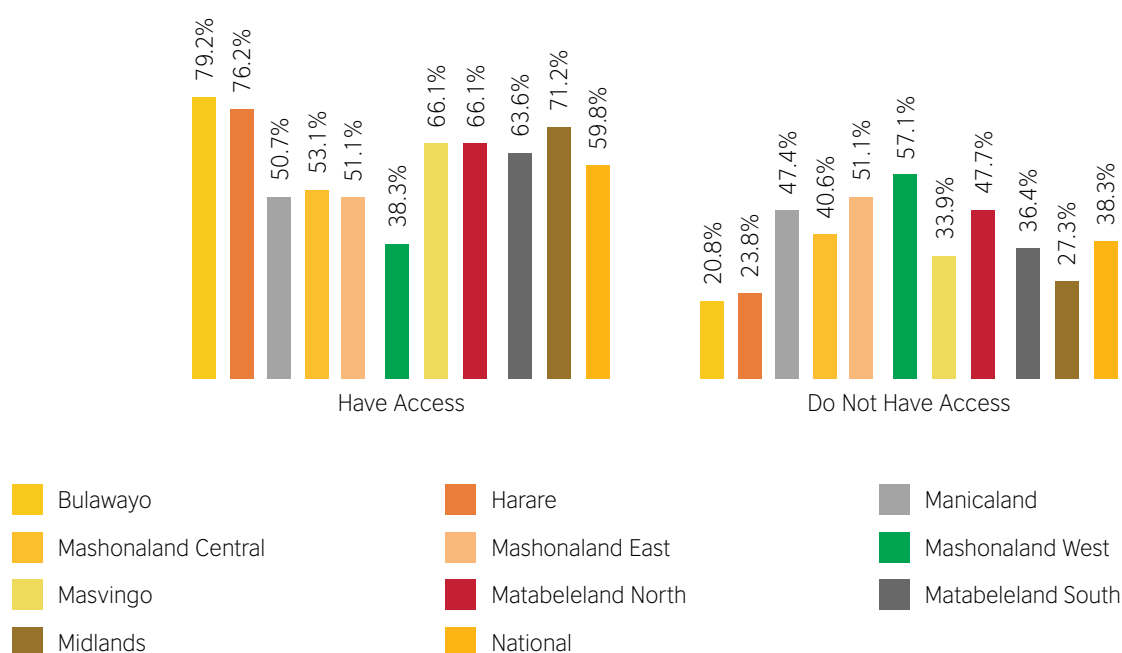
While there is higher connectivity among the urban youth as opposed to their rural peers, Figure 23 shows that the patterns of use are similar. The most prevalent activity among internet users in both urban and rural settings is searching for information. Facebook, listening to music, gaming, email, dating and Twitter are other commonly cited activities. Qualitative data indicated that young people, particularly students, use the internet for academic purposes. Others use it to search for information on current socio-economic trends and keep a lookout for personal and professional opportunities. A lot of political debate in Zimbabwe takes place on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter, which may suggest that youth go to non-traditional platforms for political engagement (Kataneksza, 2018) – this is discussed further below.

Sources of information on current affairs

Media in Zimbabwe remains a contested domain as it has continued to be used as a political tool (Kataneksza, 2018). Reporting in public and private media is politically polarised and is a source of contestation between the state, opposition parties and citizens (Chitagu, 2018). According to Adegbola and Gearhart (2019), the consumption of media content influences political engagements; they argue that media content increases political awareness and also shapes the attitudes and judgements of the masses towards a given political formation.

Young Zimbabweans access current affairs on local and global issues from multiple sources, with traditional media used in addition to newer media. Among traditional forms, television and radio remain the most common (39 per cent) compared to print media where

only 17 per cent reported daily use. Qualitative data also shows that in the rural areas, radio is the most common source as many areas have a problem with accessing a television signal. In some areas, particularly in the borderline provinces (such as Manicaland, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South), people rely on radio stations from neighbouring countries because the local signal is difficult to connect. One respondent said:

'The government should assist through the ICT ministry to check whether people can access radio and television signals, there are some areas where there is no network. Even electronic media, there is a need for everyone to know what's happening so that we can move together in the same direction.'
KI, entrepreneur, Mutare, 2019

Figure 23: Internet use by young Zimbabweans

■ Zimbabwean blogs	■ Dating	■ Email
■ Facebook	■ Gaming	■ Research
■ Instant messaging	■ Newspapers and magazines	■ Music
■ Television	■ Shopping	■ Social networking
■ Social networking for business	■ Twitter	■ Zim_blogs
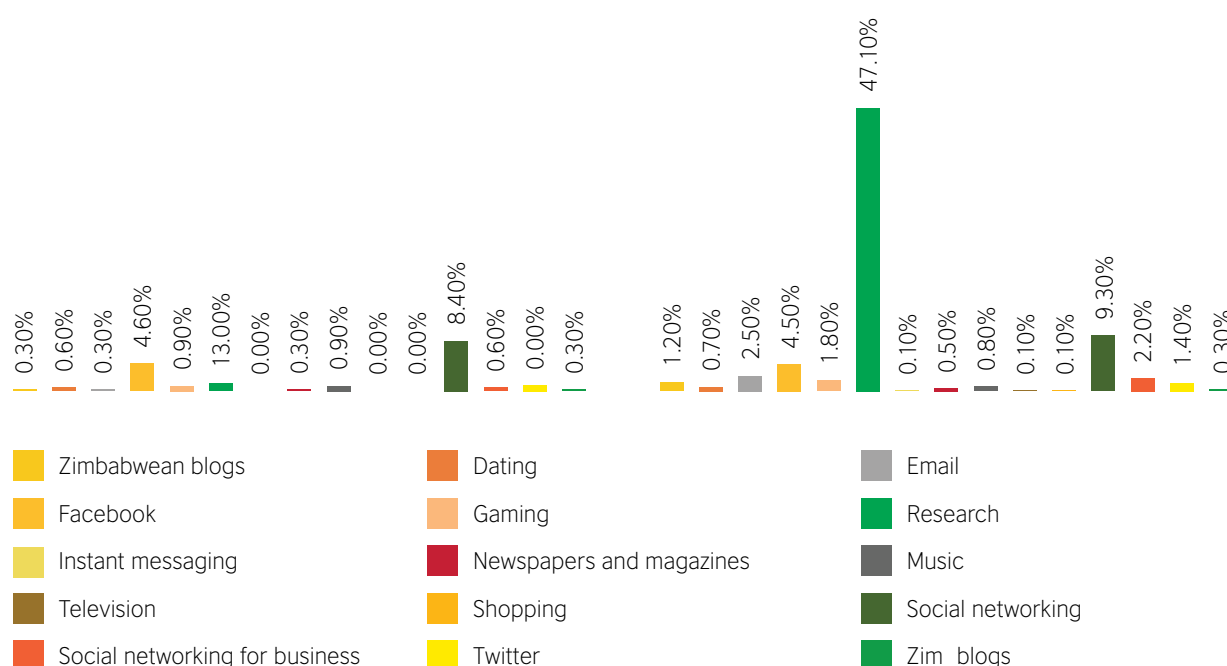
Young people in the urban centres preferred foreign television stations that they access through satellite services such as DStv. Content from other countries, such as South Africa (ENCA, SABC news), USA (CNN) and the UK (BBC), was preferred over local content, with participants citing quality disparities. As such, young people reiterated that when it comes to current affairs on television in particular, most of them are more aware of what is taking place in other countries than in Zimbabwe because they watch foreign news.

'We have satellite television, WhatsApp and social media, which were non-existent when our parents were growing up. Information was passed on through oral tradition, being told by their parents and grandparents, but now we borrow from anywhere, even the way we dress. Look at the way I dress; it's more borrowed from the South African way because we watch a lot of television and we see how other people dress and we get exposed to their cultures.'

KI, political leader,
Bulawayo, 2019

The reliance on satellite television is largely influenced by the fact that Zimbabwe has been dominated by one television station that fails to equitably cater for different sectors and population groups in the country (Moyo, 2009). As such, content from the state broadcaster is often biased towards government programmes and the ruling party (Thomas, 2019). This has resulted in a failure to inspire confidence among youth as most of the information is viewed as propaganda. In this survey, young people were also asked about their most trusted sources of current affairs locally and internationally. Figure 24 presents findings on the most trusted sources of local current affairs.

The survey results presented in Figure 24 show that 20 per cent of youth reported international television as their most trusted source of information on local news, and 16 per cent say the same of radio. Similar patterns were observed in relation to information on global current events with international television trusted by 30 per cent of the youth and radio trusted by 16 per cent. Figure 25 presents findings on the most trusted sources of global current affairs.

Katanezsa (2018) notes that, since 2016, Zimbabwe has experienced a surge in robust political discussions among citizens within and outside the country. These discussions have been taking shape on online platforms that have been relatively free from state regulation. Thomas (2019) notes that in Zimbabwe access to the internet is now synonymous with access to WhatsApp. She further asserts that WhatsApp has provided a platform to distribute alternative narratives on various issues in the country covering gaps that have been left by mainstream media.

'So, the youth have got a lot of access to Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and all these other social media applications where they communicate and it has also become a source of information.'

KII, young professional,
Masvingo, 2019

However, young people also expressed that sometimes information on social media can be overwhelming as it is not easy to differentiate between what is real and what is fake.

'Sometimes social media influences the youth to do stupid things. If you look closely, the biggest source of media used to be the national television and newspapers and now young people will not just pay for a newspaper even if they can afford

it unless they are looking for jobs and no young person can sit and just say [I'm] watching the news. Most of the news that young people are consuming [is] from WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter, and there is a lot of fake news in there.

KII, political leader,
Harare, 2019

As such, young people were overall somewhat indifferent to the positive impact of social media in their lives. Only 25 per cent agreed that social media helps them experience the wider world, while 29 per cent agreed that it made them more open and tolerant of other people's points of view, and 26 per cent agreed that social media contributed to the spread of extremism. In addition, 26 per cent of participants agreed that social media reinforces national identity and 30 per cent felt that they were more connected to their community because of social media. This suggests that the youth in Zimbabwe are alive to the fact that there are obstacles and opportunities that can accrue from the spread of social media.

Figure 24: Trusted sources of current affairs in the country

Facebook
Family
Friends
International online news
International TV news
Local online media
Local TV news
Newspapers
Other social media
Radio

Religious leaders
Snapchat
Twitter
YouTube

5% 6% 9% 4% 20% 3% 16% 4% 10% 18% 2% 1% 1% 1%
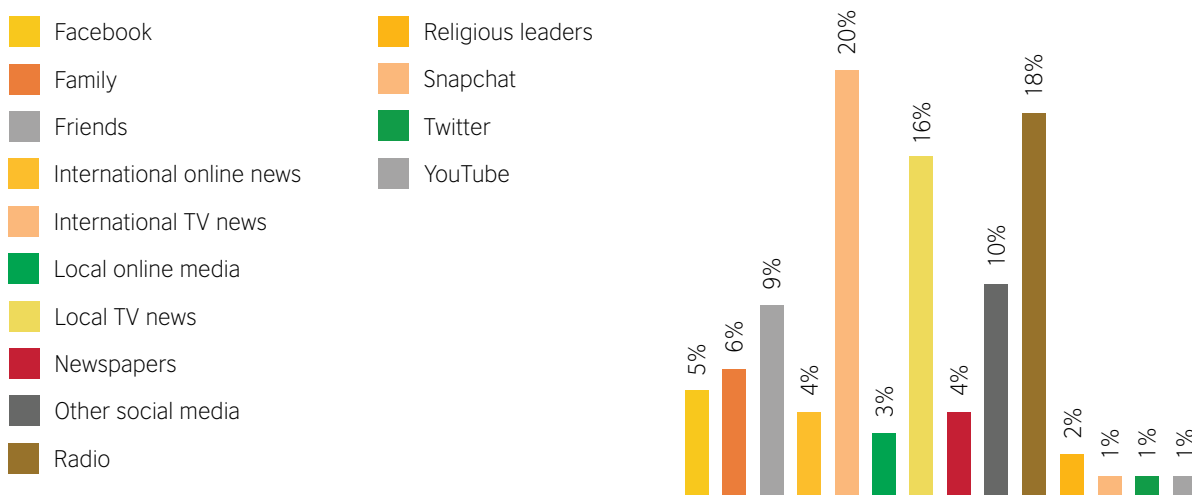
Figure 25: Trusted sources of current affairs globally

Facebook
Family
Friends
International online news
International TV news
Local online media
Local TV news
Newspapers
Other social media
Radio

Religious leaders
Snapchat
Twitter
YouTube

5% 5% 9% 8% 30% 2% 10% 2% 9% 15% 1% 1% 2% 1%
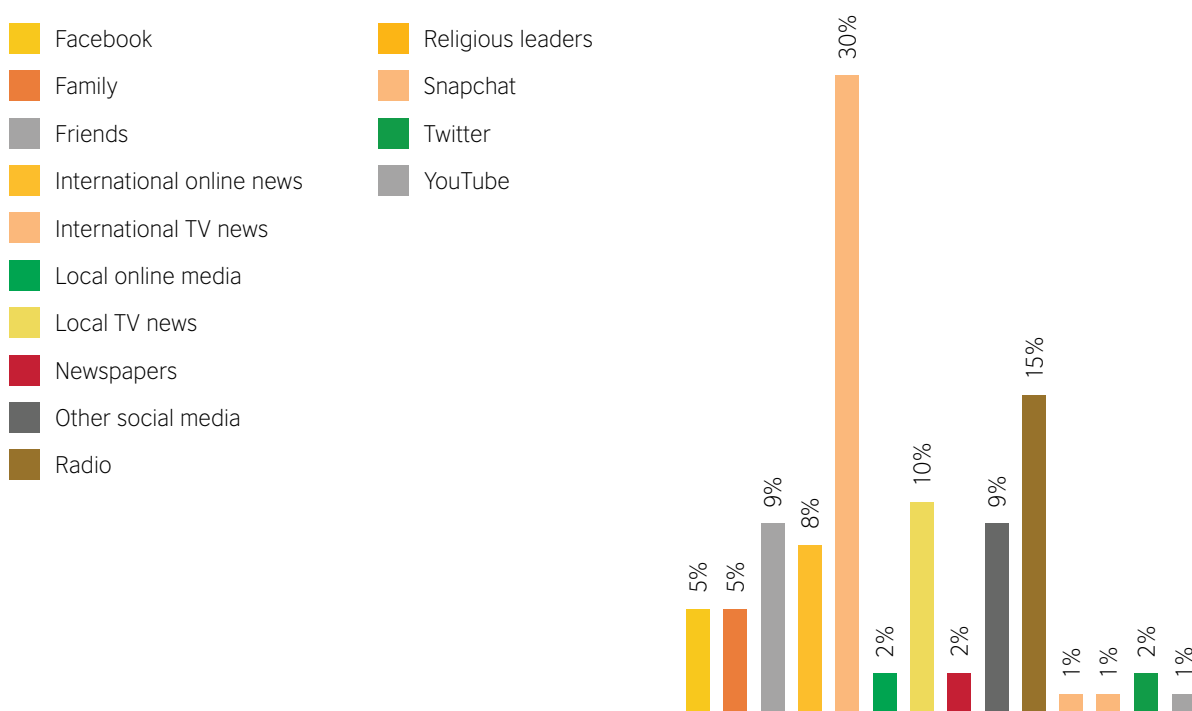
Figure 26: Young Zimbabweans'
attitudes towards foreign countries

8.08 ●●●●●●●●●◖
USA

6.48 ●●●●●●◖
China

6.51 ●●●●●●◖
Japan

6.73 ●●●●●●◖
Germany

6.75 ●●●●●●◖
France

8.01 ●●●●●●●●◖
UK

6.12 ●●●●●●◖
Brazil

5.83 ●●●●●◖
Russia

4.72 ●●●●◖
Nigeria

5.39 ●●●●●◖
India

7.02 ●●●●●●●◖
Canada

7.29 ●●●●●●●◖
Australia

4.83 ●●●●◖
Mozambique

5.91 ●●●●●◖
Botswana

6.55 ●●●●●●◖
South Africa
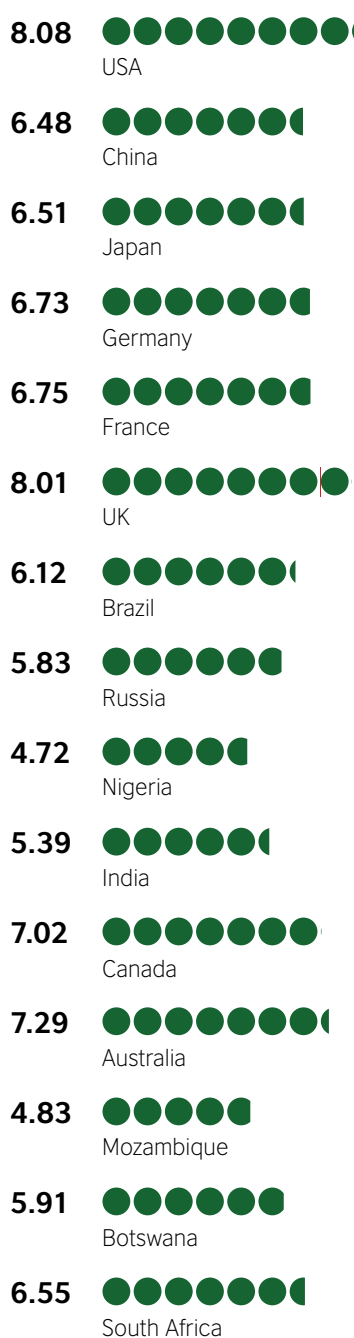
Media, culture and a global outlook

Zimbabwe has received international media coverage because of the protracted economic crisis that has persisted in the country for nearly two decades. Ndlela (2005) argues that most of this coverage was framed in ways that reduced the complex Zimbabwean experiences into a common narrative of tragedy and despair. In addition, Willems (2005) asserts that British media coverage of Zimbabwe generated much debate and the Zimbabwean government framed its fight against imperialism based on the media representations from Britain. While the Zimbabwean government intensified its diplomatic war against Britain through state media, Moyo (2007) argues that the Zimbabwean diaspora creatively used online media platforms as a form of resistance to what was perceived to be propaganda. However, since the new Mnangagwa government came in, they have been sending a message of re-engagement and negative coverage of the West has been kept to a minimum. Young people were asked to rate their attitudes towards foreign countries on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the most negative and 10 the most positive. Figure 26 presents the results of the top 15 countries.

The results suggest that young Zimbabweans have more positive attitudes towards the USA and the UK. These attitudes not only reflect media influence on popular culture but likely also young people's migration aspirations.

What does this tell us?

The world has become increasingly dependent on internet connectivity and young Zimbabweans do not want to be left behind. As a result, youth require a government that understands the importance of a functional and accessible information technology infrastructure. Therefore, for young people, a deliberate effort to ensure increased internet connectivity will open up entrepreneurial opportunities in information technology and increase access to information. In addition, increased internet connectivity for young people means that they will be better connected to the world and more informed about global current affairs. This will allow them to increase their global competitiveness as they will be aware of the global standards in business, innovation and geopolitics.

In addition, a vibrant information technology infrastructure among the youth means that barriers in national cohesion will be broken. Currently, the rigid media space that has failed to evolve with the times has enabled social and cultural polarisation, making it difficult for Zimbabwe's national project to take shape. The proliferation of new forms of media enabled by increased internet connectivity means that young people will have more interactions across cultural, social class, religious and political groupings. This is likely to result in more tolerance among the diverse groups, which is currently lacking. Also, the loosening up of media spaces means that more young people will be able to participate in creating content about their communities and find ways of disseminating through channels that cater for the cultural diversity in the country. The following section explores how young Zimbabweans are positioned in the country's social and political spaces.

CHAPTER 5:
YOUNG ZIMBABWEANS IN SOCIETY AND POLITICS

Setting the political stage

In Zimbabwe, youth have historically been an important force for political mobilisation and activism, in both pre- and post-independence periods (Sarah, 2016). Active youth participation in politics in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the colonial era, when young enlightened black African activists such as Joshua Nkomo and Ndabaningi Sithole rallied and mobilised other young people against racist colonial laws, political repression and other forms of segregation that were being perpetrated by the Rhodesian regime. As the restriction of political space and repressive laws escalated, particularly during the Ian Smith administration, some young black African men and women were forced to flee the country, while others remained and began mobilising politically to form organised fronts of resistance against the colonial regime (Kriger, 1991). Consequently, the period from the 1960s to the late 1970s saw active black youth participation in politics within and outside the country. Young leaders, such as the aforementioned Nkomo and Sithole, mobilised others into nationalist political formations such as the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU, among others). Through the military pursuits of such nationalist movements, many young men and women participated in the liberation of Zimbabwe, either through taking up arms to fight in the guerrilla war or through being auxiliaries, messengers or informers (mujibhas for the males and chimbwidos for the females) supporting the guerrillas (Nyanga et al., 2011). The majority of the above were young people who yearned for independence and freedom from the colonial regime, although some young people joined the Rhodesian security forces as either soldiers or police reservists (Nyanga et al., 2011). Zimbabwe then became independent in 1980.

After independence, many youths were supportive of the new nationalist government. The post-independence government sought to build the country through nationalist policies that saw a massive improvement in sectors such as education and health (Oosterom, 2018). The majority of youth left active politics to pursue education, seek economic opportunities and engage in other development-related issues.

The government established an entire ministry focusing on the socio-economic development of young people and initiating programmes such as the national youth service to more proactively engage young people in nation rebuilding, Political parties maintained strong youth wings which remained important rallying and mobilisation points in political matters.

Formation of the post-colonial state was, however, littered with challenges. These included political contestations between the two leading nationalist parties ZANU and ZAPU, as well as accusations and counter-accusations of attempts at armed insurrection against the government by former liberation fighters. The conflict developed tribal connotations, led to political instability and subsequent military intervention, and resulted in the destruction of property and the loss of civilian life, especially in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces. The two main nationalist parties would eventually negotiate a peace agreement, known as the Unity Accord, in 1987, which led to their unification into one party as ZANU PF. Young people were directly or indirectly engaged in the contestations of that period, largely through their political parties or under instructions from principals.

New challenges emerged in the period leading into the 1990s. The introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) in 1990-91, saw the removal of subsidies and increased liberalisation of the country's economy.

The negative implication was the severe reduction of safety nets in essential social services such as health, education and social protection. With ESAP not delivering the expected benefits, socio-economic conditions for ordinary citizens became worse, discontent grew and incidents such as food riots owing to food shortages in the country ensued. Young people were inevitably caught up as being amongst the most economically vulnerable groups in the country. Further, rural-urban migration increased as individuals sought better economic conditions against backdrop of droughts and economic vulnerability in the rural areas. The migration also saw a rise in demand on social services in the cities – thus putting pressure on dwindling resources, with the same issues emerging with regard to limited employment opportunities. Once again, young people bore the worst brunt of the structural adjustment programme and its negative consequences.

The emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party in 1999 could be attributed to the quest to seek for solutions to the hardships and economic downturn of the 1990s. The backbone of support for this party was in the urban youth population and student movements across tertiary institutions, illustrating the continued importance and engagement of the youth demographic in Zimbabwe in political matters. As the new opposition party emerged, ZANU-PF was also consolidating its youth structures, with subsequent election manifestos underscoring the importance of youth engagement in political processes. Unfortunately young people active in politics also became exposed to manipulation by political players, resulting in conflict. The country's polarised political atmosphere (between the ruling party and opposition) has not helped matters, with young people often enticed and manipulated to escalate

this political polarity. (Amin, 2007, LeBas, 2011).

Over the years, political parties and political actors have continued to find ways to mobilise, engage and get support from young people, fully cognisant of the potential, energy and proactivity of this demographic. Different approaches to successful engagement of young people by political parties and other socio-economic actors in rural, urban, and peri-urban areas has gone on to show that youth in Zimbabwe cannot be viewed as a homogeneous group. Their needs, as evident, are largely driven by socio-political and economic concerns, with geographical, gendered, age-category and levels of education among other factors being key determinants. This thereby sets the tone for our understanding of current youth behaviour, attitude and general practice in Zimbabwean politics and society. This study, therefore, sought to understand, among other things, youth's feelings of belonging and their participation in both the community and politics in general.

Community belonging

Young people were asked about their feelings of belonging in their communities. A sense of belonging allows one to have the freedom to engage in community activities and to feel some form of ownership and attachment to them. Figure 27 presents findings on community belonging among the youth by province and at a national level.

Figure 27 shows that at the national level, an average of 64.2 per cent of youth felt they belonged to their provincial communities. Provinces with the highest percentages of youth with a sense of belonging include Matabeleland North (76.9 per cent), Masvingo (76.6 per cent) and Mashonaland East (76.1 per cent). Provinces that recorded a low sense of belonging include Matabeleland South (43.6 per cent), Harare (43 per cent) and Midlands (40 per cent). This distribution is unexpected; one might expect youth in provinces such as Matabeleland North to have a very low sense of belonging since this was one of the provinces severely affected by political disturbances between 1983 and 1987 (the aforementioned Gukurahundi). One explanation could be that youths felt attached to their provincial communities but not necessarily to the national community.

However, the qualitative arm of the study found that in issues of belonging there were conflicting views between and within individuals. There are some youths who had a sense of belonging to their communities but did not feel the same about the country. This was mainly in the south-western parts of the country, where young people strongly perceived the lack of development in their communities as systematic marginalisation driven by regionalism. The strong attachment to their communities was also linked with their cultural identity.

'Do not ask me about Zimbabwe. I don't know Zimbabwe but I know Lupane. Lupane is my home and I would not want to trade it for any other place.'

FGD participant, Lupane, Matabeleland North province, 2019

'For some of us, it is as if we do not live in Zimbabwe because we don't see any benefits from the government. When it comes to jobs and opportunities it is always the youth in Mashonaland that benefit. We are surviving on things we get in our community and this community has supported us very well […] but not Zimbabwe.'

FGD participant, Binga, Matabeleland North province, 2019

'For me, it would be difficult to live anywhere else in this country. I cannot see myself leaving Gwanda for any other place in Zimbabwe.'

FGD participant, Gwanda, Matabeleland South province, 2019

In addition, other young people felt the economic difficulties have eroded community values. The following excerpt from an FGD in Harare gives further insight.

'The youth are at war with the community. These days there is no love in the community because of poverty; it makes people hate each other and not show each other love. So instead of the youth helping in the community, they bring problems.'

FGD participant, Kuwadzana, Harare, 2019

The findings of this study suggest a perception that community relations have suffered because of the prolonged economic downturn in the country and this has threatened African community values such as **ubuntu/hunhu** (good ethical human behaviour).[3] Our research suggests that young people who are unemployed or underemployed may fall into behaviours such as prostitution or drug taking, putting them at odds with the community. This diminishes the youth's sense of belonging because they are no longer viewed in a positive light. In addition, they also feel threatened by the treatment they receive from the police, who are always treating them as suspects. For this, they blame the government and the style of politics that suppress their freedom; they cannot gather around to discuss issues affecting them, because their activities risk being politicised.

3. > Ubuntu is Ndebele and hunhu is Shona. See also Konyana, EG (2013) Hunhu/ubuntu philosophy incompatible with business ethics? Reflections on business viability in rural Shona communities in Zimbabwe. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science 10/2: 66–71.

Figure 27: Community belonging among young Zimbabweans

Do not feel like part of the community

- 32.1% Bulawayo
- 43% Harare
- 26.3% Manicaland
- 27.1% Mashonaland Central
- 22.8% Mashonaland East
- 39.1% Mashonaland West
- 22.6% Masvingo
- 20% Matabeleland North
- 43.6% Matabeleland South
- 40.2% Midlands
- 32.4% National

Neutral

- 0.0% Bulawayo
- 0.0% Harare
- 7.2% Manicaland
- 5.2% Mashonaland Central
- 1.1% Mashonaland East
- 0.8% Mashonaland West
- 0.8% Masvingo
- 3.1% Matabeleland North
- 0.0% Matabeleland South
- 10.6% Midlands
- 3.4% National

I feel part of the community

- 97.9% Bulawayo
- 55.8% Harare
- 66.4% Manicaland
- 67.7% Mashonaland Central
- 76.1% Mashonaland East
- 60.2% Mashonaland West
- 76.6% Masvingo
- 76.9% Matabeleland North
- 56.4% Matabeleland South
- 49.2% Midlands
- 64.2% National

Legend:
- Bulawayo
- Harare
- Manicaland
- Mashonaland Central
- Mashonaland East
- Mashonaland West
- Masvingo
- Matabeleland North
- Matabeleland South
- Midlands
- National

Figure 28: Community support for youth in Zimbabwe

No community support

- 56.6%
- 71%
- 49.3%
- 64.6%
- 60.9%
- 81.2%
- 60.5%
- 56.9%
- 60%
- 64.4%
- 63.7%

Neutral

- 5.7%
- 0.0%
- 21.1%
- 11.5%
- 3.3%
- 2.3%
- 4.8%
- 10.8%
- 5.5%
- 15.2%
- 8.2%

I have community support

- 37.7%
- 28.5%
- 29.6%
- 24%
- 35.9%
- 16.5%
- 34.7%
- 32.3%
- 34.5%
- 20.5%
- 28.1%

Legend:
- Bulawayo
- Harare
- Manicaland
- Mashonaland Central
- Mashonaland East
- Mashonaland West
- Masvingo
- Matabeleland North
- Matabeleland South
- Midlands
- National
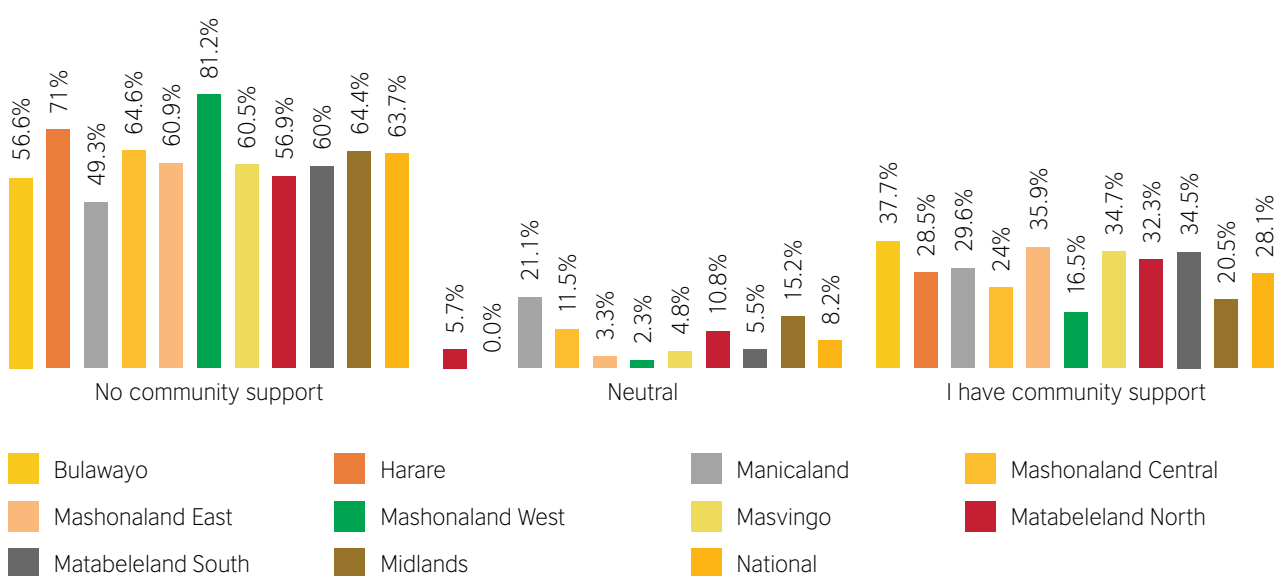
Community support for the youth

Community may mean many things, but one definition is a group of people sharing certain attributes either within a particular geographic boundary or independent of location (Hall, 2009; Miller, 2011), although more recently it is argued that virtual spaces are providing new opportunities for people to engage with others (Theodori, 2005). In this study, the community is referred to as a group of people sharing certain attributes within a geographic boundary. Youth community participation is thus analysed at provincial and local levels. The provincial-level analysis is important because, as already stated in the introduction of Chapter 4, perceptions towards the government of the day tend to be influenced by historical political events in Zimbabwe. These perceptions also affect the way young people view their own immediate communities.

Having engaged the youth with regards to their sense of belonging, the study also enquired about community support for youth. This is important in understanding the extent to which the efforts of the youth are enabled through relevant support structures at local and national levels. In Figure 28, findings on the support for young people in communities are presented at a provincial and national level.

In all provinces of the country, the majority of young people reported that they did not receive the support they needed from the community. The provinces that recorded the least support were Mashonaland West (81.2 per cent), Harare (71.5 per cent) and Mashonaland Central (64.6 per cent). At the national level, 63.7 per cent of young people reported a lack of community support. This poor record of support for young people may be affected by poverty, a poor economy and souring community relations, as noted previously (see also Chapter 5 on empowerment). Qualitative results also showed that there is poor support for the youth at both community and country levels. The following excerpt from a KII in Gwanda corroborates these results.

'The government held a programme in community share ownership trust. It was promising it would support youth programmes but then it is not.'
KI, Gwanda,
youth political leader, 2019

Young people suggest that one way of expressing support is to nurture their talents. The following excerpt from an FGD with youths in the arts in Mutare sheds light.

'I wish most parents would accept arts. Parents complain about paying school fees and there are no results. If a child loves dancing that's who she is. I wish we would be supported in the art industry. If we look at the music industry most artists who have earned names, in their videos they don't show values at all. They should be decent so that we get support and sponsorship. Our movies are also not recognised but we have talented people or it's funding that is needed.'
FGD participant,
Mutare, FGD youth in arts, 2019

Culturally, it may be that most parents still believe that traditional formal education is the only way to success. The findings suggest that young people desire a situation where community values evolve, and they gain acceptance and support in their different talents such as in the arts. It is interesting that the youth quoted above also place the onus on artists to be better role models and to allow parents to see the arts as morally acceptable (see also Chapter 6 on the importance of role models).

While many youths did not see much support coming from their communities, they still felt that they belonged to those communities. This points to the attachment some of the youth have to their local communities and also presents a huge opportunity for positive future development. All the youth need is a little support and they are prepared to work for their communities.

Youth participation in the community

Youth participation in the community seems to be a complex discussion. While participation in community activities was low, as evident through audio diaries, what will be discussed later on is that there is a majority feeling of belonging to their communities, with engaging with community activities such as weddings and funerals being defined as a factor for this. For those who struggled to participate, young Zimbabweans explained that the challenges they were facing had forced them to focus on themselves and their families. This suggests that young people do not have time to spare for activities that don't bring them some form of income to survive the next day.

'They do not [participate], even when it comes to voluntary work, they are not found in such places. Because they want money. It is a problem to them. A few engage sometimes but not much as long as there is no money in it.'

KI, Gwanda youth leader, 2019

The above shows that any effort to lure young people into participating in community projects faces resistance if it is not accompanied by financial rewards. The few that engage in voluntary community work do so reluctantly. Others have associated this detachment from a sense of duty to the community and country to changing generational values. They suggest that the older youth are more likely than the younger ones to be involved in community activities because they still hold community values dear.

'They are very slow [in participation]; they need to be pushed. Maybe as we would make an equation, we look at the old youths who would not be pushed to do some things in community, even in the church, even where ever when there is something to be done. Now […] you would see them spending a lot of time on the internet on their phones [rather] than getting involved in some other things […] That's my experience on the communities that I have stayed and worked in.'

KI, religious youth leader, Harare, 2019

This respondent implies technology affects youth participation in community activities; young people spend too much time on social media and so are physically alienated from their communities.

Community participation can be loosely defined as the engagement of individuals and communities in decisions about things that affect their lives (Theodori, 2005). For young people in Zimbabwe, it also includes initiatives such as educational reform, juvenile justice and environmental quality (Checkoway, 2012). Researchers further note that youth usually participate by organising groups for social and political action, planning programmes of their own choosing, and advocating their interests in the community (Checkoway, 2012).

While many felt that they aren't supported by their communities, as discussed above, and so do not participate in community activities, the majority of young people (64 per cent) still felt they were part of their communities. This sentiment was found to be prevailing in all the provinces, as shown in Figure 29. The main factor that defined this was engagement in social activities such as weddings, funerals and church functions, while about 16 per cent felt their engagement in community development as an important factor.

Figure 29: Response to the question 'Do you feel supported by your community?'
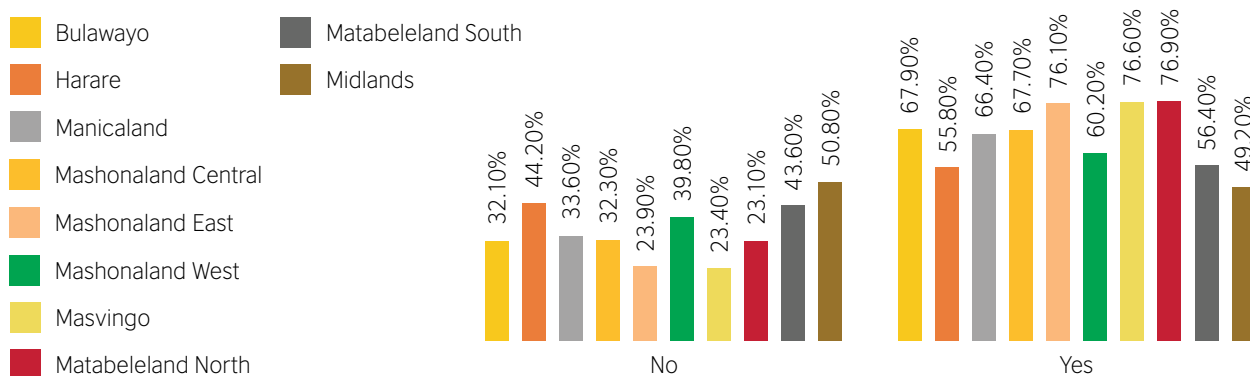
Those young people who did not feel part of their communities expressed sentiments such as not feeling supported and limited involvement in community services as the major factors (see Figure 30).

Even though the majority of the youth felt that they were part of their communities, their participation was lacking when marked against mainstream community participation parameters. The literature on youth community participation in Zimbabwe (see Gregson et al., 2004; Moyo, 2013; Ndebele and Billing, 2011; Kamete, 2007) notes that generally Zimbabwean youth, like many African youths, have been excluded from decision making.

The study further sought youth's perceptions of the support they get from their communities and what they offer the communities. On whether the communities were supportive of youth, the majority of young people in all provinces were unconvinced (see Figure 31).

In the FGDs, a similar perspective also emerged, not only among urban youth but also among their rural peers. Here, too, young people said they felt they were part of their communities, even though they thought that support was only given to youths who supported certain political parties. Youths who were not active in politics did not get any support from the community. According to young people in almost all the provinces, there is a conflation of community and political party activity. One therefore needs to 'belong' if they are to benefit.

'Some youths do get help but there are many who do not.'
FGD participant, Harare, 2019

'Those that are known will just be identified by their names; then, for us, we will be told that we were not seen in the party.'
FGD participant, Bindura, 2019

'They help according to the party you go to.'
FGD participant, Binga, 2019

The youth further noted that more needed to be done for them so that they could fully participate in the development of their communities. This study indicates that volunteering and community involvement activity has increased among the younger generation (challenging the commonly held view of millennials as self-obsessed). While many young people have a poor opinion of their communities, they believe that their lives can only change for the better if they focus on their communities. These are positives that can be harnessed for the youth of Zimbabwe.

Youth also felt that improving employment opportunities, access to financial resources and provision of skills will improve their commitment to their communities (see Figure 32).

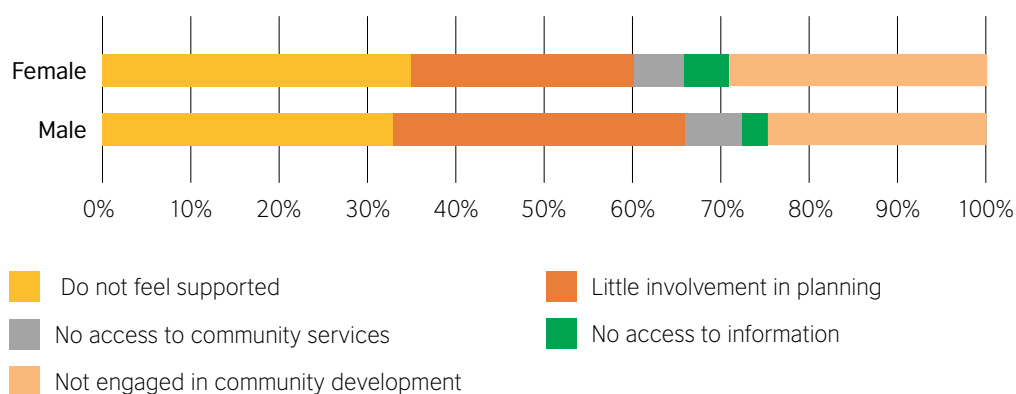Figure 30: Perspectives of community belonging among young Zimbabweans

- Do not feel supported
- Little involvement in planning
- No access to community services
- No access to information
- Not engaged in community development

Figure 31: Responses to the question 'Do you think young people are supported by their communities?'

Bulawayo
Harare
Manicaland
Mashonaland Central
Mashonaland East
Mashonaland West
Masvingo
Matabeleland North
Matabeleland South
Midlands

No: 62% 71% 70% 76% 64% 83% 65% 67% 65% 79%

Yes: 37% 28% 29% 23% 35% 16% 34% 32% 35% 20%

Figure 32: Methods of improving community participation

Female
Male

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Improved access to finance
Employment opportunities
Give value to opinions
Skills development

Participation in group activities

Young people's low community participation did not stop them from engaging in groups within their communities. Church groups were highlighted as quite common among many native African female youths, while males noted sports as one of the major activities that made them get involved in a group. Other groups highlighted in FGDs included, among others, community activity, youth savings, social, political and peer education groups (see Figure 33).

The FGDs revealed that many young people are engaged in community activities such as cleaning exercises and various clubs in urban areas, while in rural areas, youths are called upon in activities such as community

infrastructure construction and political activities. Further probing showed that while there is a strong belief among the youth that they have a role to play in the development of their communities, some of their responses also revealed some form of desperation or coercion.

'Many of the youth participate in community activities with the hope that we can be noticed and maybe get a job or something that can give us money.'

FGD, Bindura, 2019

Here if you don't participate in community activities you get isolated. When opportunities come sabhukus only pick those who have been working in the party (ZANU-PF)-related activities. So you find that

many of the youth participate not because they want to but because of hope that they can also benefit when some opportunities come to our communities.

FGD, Gutu, rural, 2019

When your parents tell you to go and do community work, can you refuse?

FGD, Mutare, rural, 2019

Participation in community activities is highlighted as a way to seek opportunities for employment and eventual financial security, due to limited direct opportunities in the economy and job market.

Figure 33: Most popular groups highlighted in the focus group discussions by the youth

Participation in politics

Analysis of the relationship between youth and politics revealed that willingness to participate in politics was generally very low (more than 60 per cent of respondents were not willing). In terms of 'population groups' (see Figure 34), very few young people of European descent showed high levels of political participation. This might have roots in the fast track land reform exercise Zimbabwe embarked on in early 2000.

'I studied Political Science at university but I cannot put it to practice here in Zimbabwe. My dad would not allow it. He says politics is not for me anymore.'

KII, European descent participant, Bulawayo, 2019

'Since we lost our farm my parents do not want anything to do with politics. We now run our family business quietly.'

KII, European descent participant, Harare, 2019

Surprisingly, sexual minorities were noted to be the second most likely demographic group to participate in politics (Figure 34). One possible explanation could be the demise of the former President, Robert Mugabe, which has liberated space for sexual minorities to actively participate as citizens of Zimbabwe. However, further research is critical to fully understand this scenario.

Figure 34: Most popular groups highlighted by youths in the FGDs
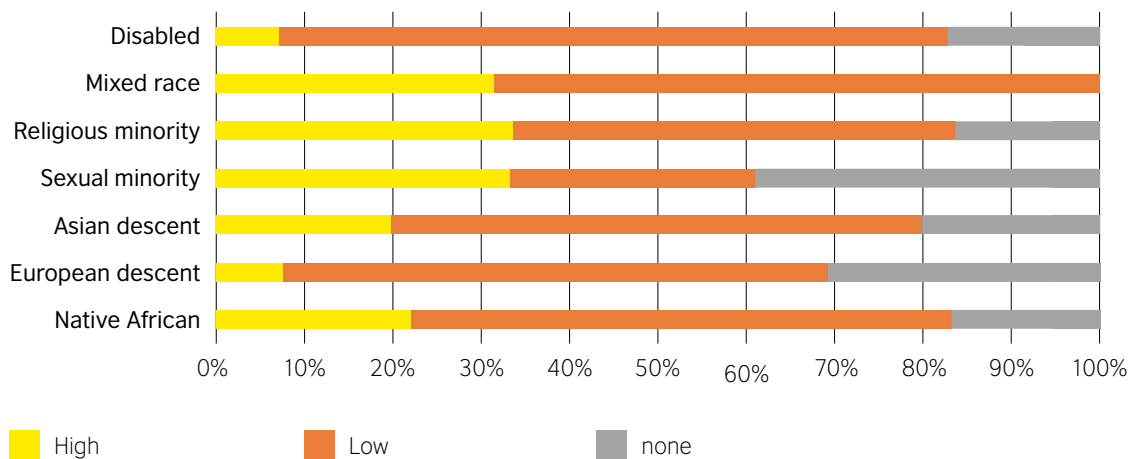
However, when asked about the importance of voting, there were diverse responses from different provinces, as noted in Figure 35. The majority of youths from predominantly urban areas, such as Harare, Bulawayo and Midlands (Gweru), did not see the usefulness of elections. Moreover, a significant percentage (75 per cent) of young people from provinces such as Matabeleland South also did not see the value in voting. The common factor in all areas is that they are traditional strongholds of the opposition political parties in Zimbabwe.

Going deeper into youth participation in politics revealed a similar sentiment among youths across the country. Group discussions highlighted that youths tend to be actively involved in political party programmes compared with national electoral processes. They noted that in most cases the youth get used and dumped by these political parties. The following sentiments were captured during some of the group discussions:

'Politics affects the youth a lot because even if there are projects, one's participation is determined by their political affiliation and when the political environment is not safe it affects the youth.
(FGD participant, Midlands, 2019)

As youths we are told to vote each and every time there is an election in Zimbabwe but I don't really see the use of voting because the outcome is always the same. We try to act and be patriotic to the country but it's always the same: we are the ones that suffer while other people gain.'
FGD participant,
Mashonaland Central, 2019

The pattern emerging from the sentiments above is that you have to be connected to a certain political party to benefit in life. Role models are emerging as those linked to the ruling party and willing to serve the ruling party. For many youths in the FGDs, these political role models have no bearing on their lives as they have never made their lives better.

Figure 35: Responses to the question 'Do you think voting is important?'
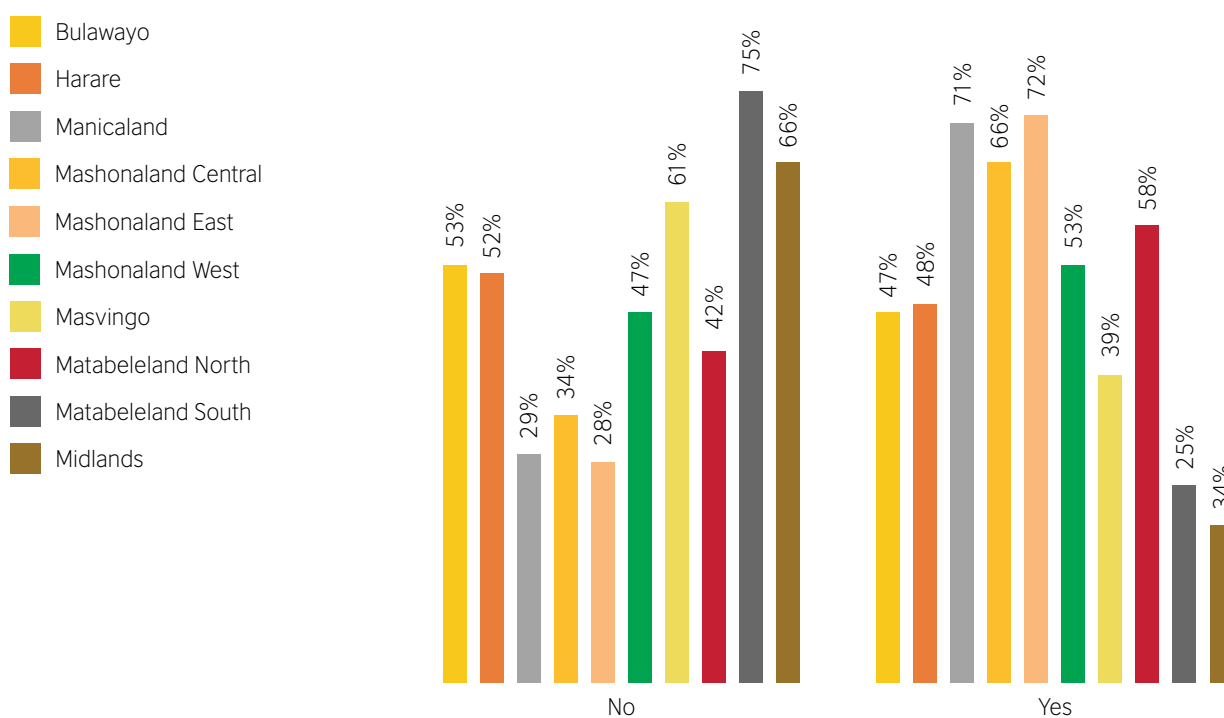
Empowerment

Richards-Schuster et al. (2018) explained youth empowerment as a process that examines young people's agency, action and engagement in efforts to improve their situations. According to them, empowerment functions on three core levels, focusing on strengthening individuals' personal, interpersonal and political power.

The development of youth personal power has largely occurred through interventions from various stakeholders such as civil society organisations, the government (through numerous arms), international non-governmental organisations and traditional leadership institutions. Many of the initiatives are enshrined in the national youth policy of 2000.

To fully appreciate youths' perceptions of and attitudes towards empowerment and the challenges they face, it was critical to ascertain if the youth were aware of the youth policy and its provisions.

Empowerment policy awareness

A large number of youths across the country expressed ignorance of the overall youth policy and the related programmes, with around 80 per cent of survey respondents indicating that they were not aware of the youth empowerment policy and its provisions. The trend is the same across all age groups and indicates a need for conscious efforts to communicate youth empowerment policies and programmes to the intended beneficiaries.

There was no significant difference in policy awareness between young Zimbabweans in the rural and urban areas. However, the situation is slightly different if considered from an education dimension, with those in possession of higher-quality education having higher levels of policy awareness than those without (see Figure 37).

Probing deeper into the rationale for the limited knowledge of policies designed for them, the youth explained that most had lost faith in the government and tended not to believe in government championed initiatives.

'This government is too corrupt and has continued to perpetrate marginalisation of many.'
FGD participant, Chiredzi, 2019

*'We are no longer interested in participating because we are tired of the lies.'*
FGD participant, Beitbridge, 2019

Young Zimbabweans also explained through FGDs and KIIs that unemployment had a direct and negative bearing on the overall empowerment narrative.

'The current economy in Zimbabwe frankly speaking is devastating. I don't want to lie because it is bad for us as youths. We cannot do what we want. For instance, we have got so many projects and stuff like that, but we cannot do them because we cannot afford it.'
KI, Bindura, 2019

Figure 36: Responses to the question 'Are you aware of youth policies?
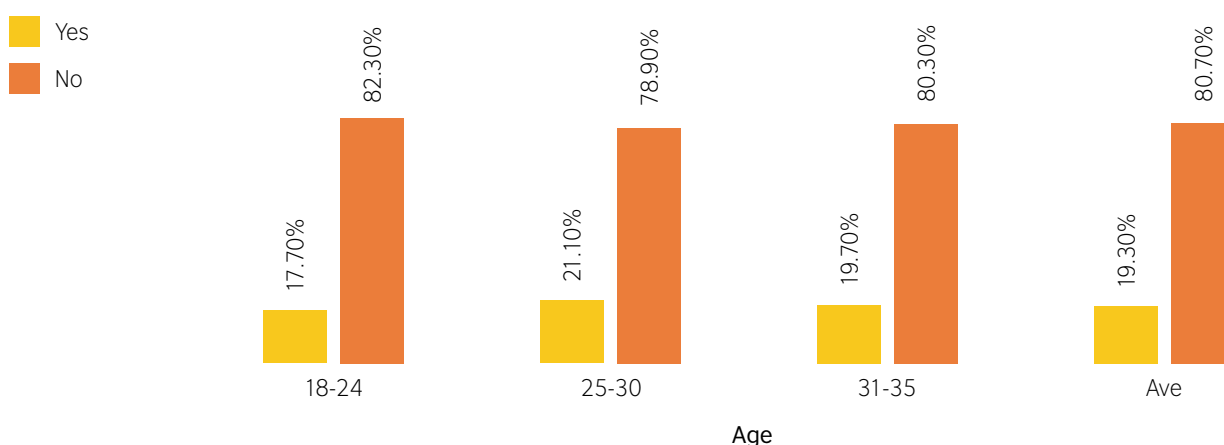
Perceptions of the government of the day

When asked about their perceptions of government support, we have seen that youths are unaware of empowerment initiatives; in fact, the majority of the youth (90 per cent) felt that the government was not much help. Moreover, when asked about the confidence they had in their government, it was low for the majority across all provinces (see Figure 38). Similar sentiments were also professed in all FGDs conducted across the country. Young people in FGDs particularly asked for government support in the form of jobs, loans, skills and capital, among other things (see Figure 39).

Young people in the FGDs also felt that it was the duty of the government in all its structures, from local to national, to increase youth involvement in policy-making. Many of them said that they yearn to be valued as important people whose decisions also matter in their communities.

What does this tell us?

This chapter highlights that while the state has notable control over the public sphere and access to economic resources, including jobs and livelihood opportunities, as well as the power to close spaces for youths they perceive to be anti-government, youth in general use various social navigation skills to access economic opportunities (McGregor, 2013). This explains why many are engaged in community activities; they see this as a way of making themselves visible to the political actors who quite often decide who gets what.

While the majority of youth do not think their communities are helping them that much, the survey also illustrates that over half (62.4 per cent) feel they belong to their communities. This can mean that the youth are ready to serve their country if only conditions can be made conducive for them to do so. It is important to note that the majority of the youth today have grown up within challenging political and economic conditions: stark economic decline; stifled industries; cash shortages; increasing inflation;

and an erosion of social service provision (Oosterom, 2018). In this regard, they have shown a lot of resilience.

While youths are generally willing to engage in economic activities that would make their lives better, there is disillusionment with regard to politics. In the Next Generation survey, more than 60 per cent of youth were not willing to engage in politics and they did not believe that their vote can change things for the better in Zimbabwe. This attitude and perception can be traced back to 2000 when the government lost the referendum on the draft constitution and blamed the National Constitutional Assembly, the opposition, the students and the youth in general (Sithole, 2001). This culminated in the clamping down of youth activities, with the government officials and ZANU-PF labelling youths as 'born-frees' (born after independence), a term used mostly derogatively to express that the younger generation could not 'appreciate the privilege of being born-free' (Oosterom, 2018). Student protests were therefore portrayed as a betrayal of both the ruling party and the liberation war (Hodgkinson, 2013).

Figure 37: Responses to the question 'are you aware of the youth empowerment policy other than youth provisions?' according to education level
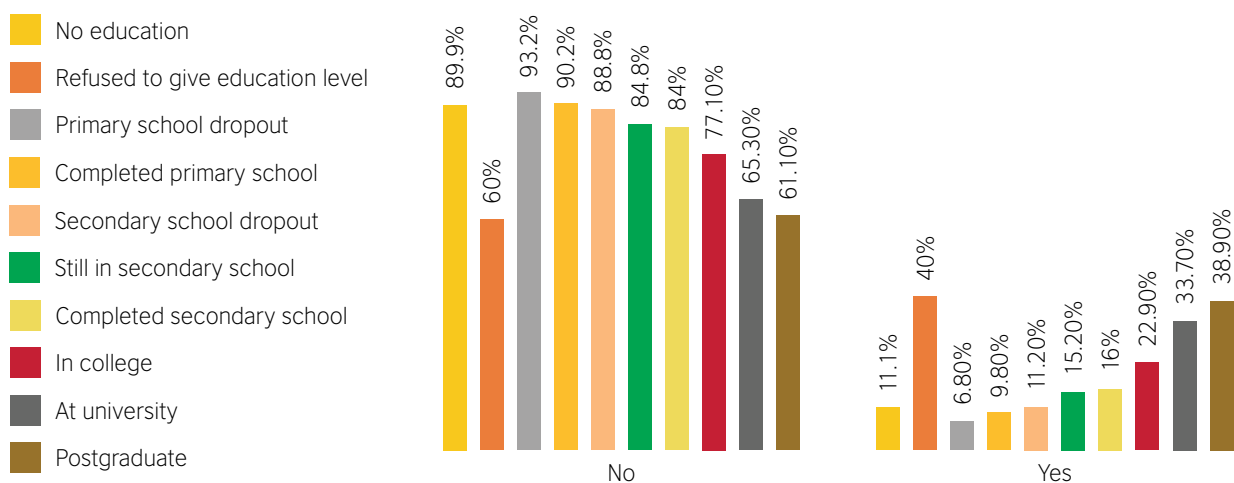
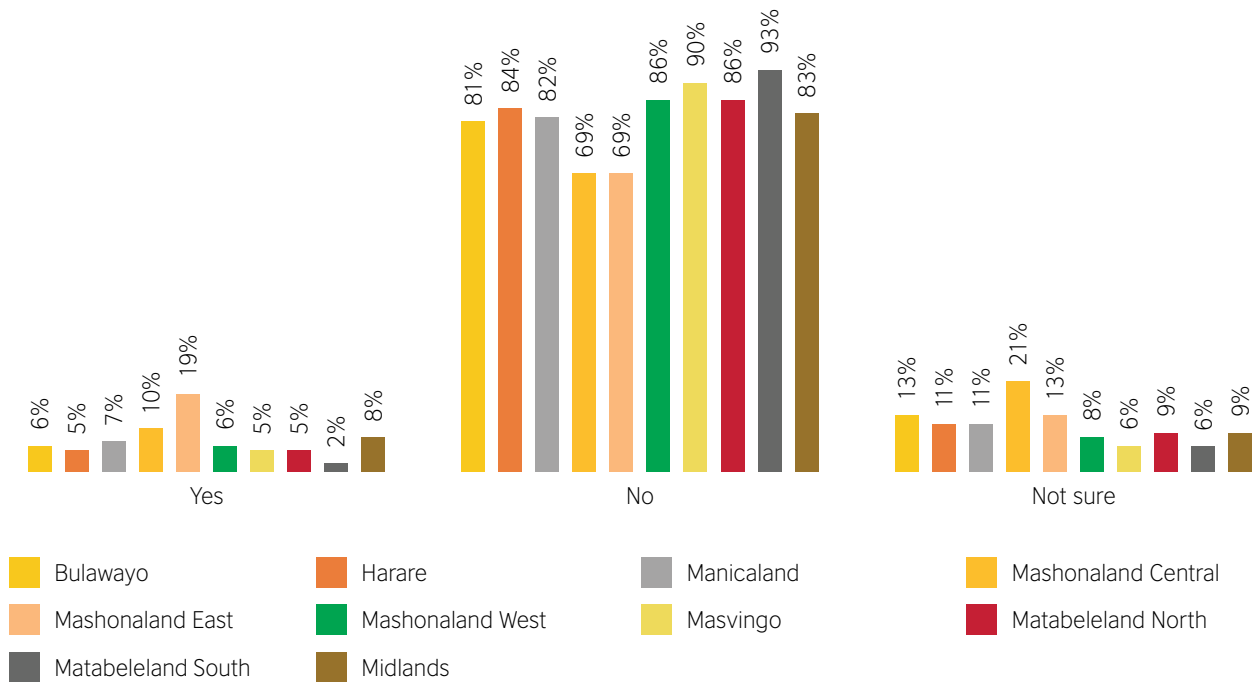Figure 38: Responses to the question 'Do you have confidence in the government?'

■ Bulawayo	■ Harare	■ Manicaland	■ Mashonaland Central
■ Mashonaland East	■ Mashonaland West	■ Masvingo	■ Matabeleland North
■ Matabeleland South	■ Midlands		

Figure 39: Support the government should provide

CHAPTER 6:
THE FUTURE —
ASPIRATIONS AND CHALLENGES

Since the early 1990s, Zimbabwe has been on a political and economic roller-coaster that has seen young people struggling to find their footing economically (VOA, 2017). According to Boateng and Lowe (2018), the primary determinant of aspirations among young people is the context and environment in which they grow up, which is largely influenced by peers, the immediate social circles and families. It is this environment that will determine what an individual will deem as achievable and acceptable. In Zimbabwe, youth aspirations have been nearly eroded and extinguished by the prevailing political order (Nhapi and Mathende, 2019). However, in November 2017, when the army cornered Robert Mugabe into resignation, urban youths formed the majority of those who flocked the streets with some hope of a better future (VOA, 2017). Two years later, the hopes of the nation and young people, in particular, have remained mainly as dreams (Kariza, 2019). Yet Zimbabwean youth have continued to demonstrate a strong sense of independence and innovation, despite feeling let down by the government

that has failed to create an enabling environment (Musarurwa, 2016). Despite the prolonged socio-economic and political crisis, young people still strongly believe in values such as self-determination, risk-taking and a strong work ethic.
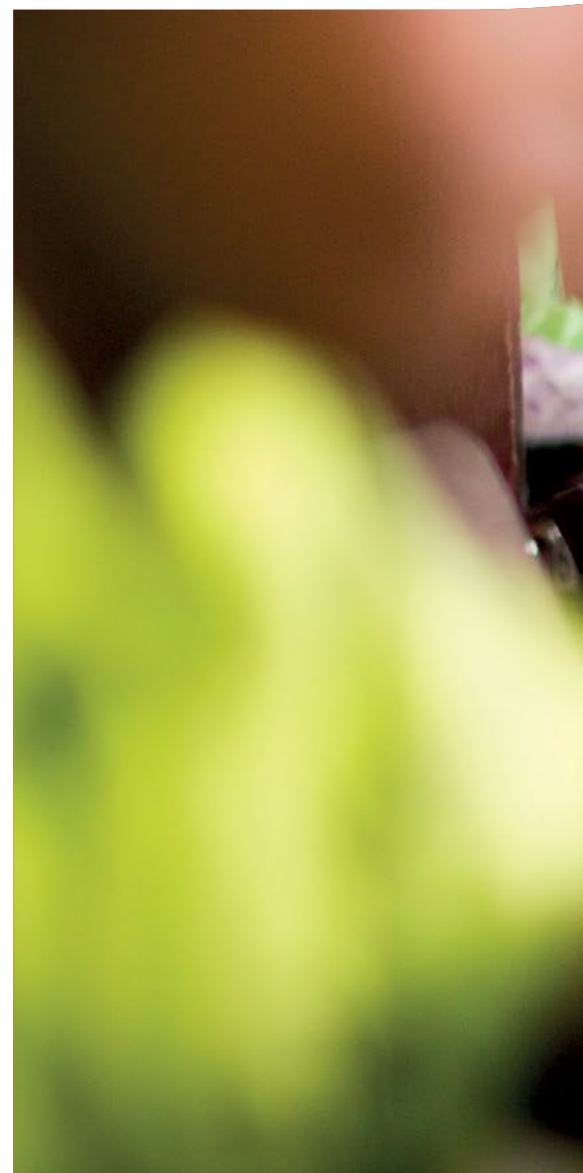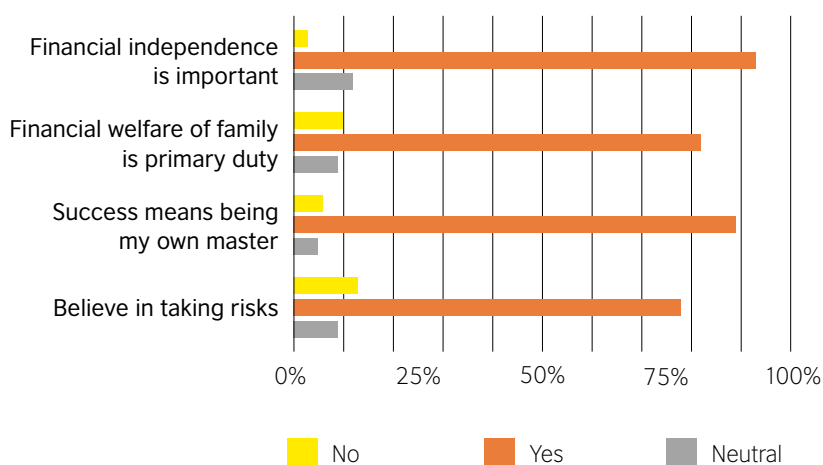
Attitudes of young Zimbabweans towards the future

In the Next Generation survey, young people across the country were asked about their general attitudes in life and the meanings they attach to both the process leading to success and success itself. Figure 40 shows the attitudes and values that young people hold dear.

Ninety-three per cent of young people who participated in the study were of the view that financial independence is important and had an understanding of what success means. Self-determination was also judged to be important, with 89 per cent of respondents associating success with being your own master. Eighty-two per cent of young people believed that their family's financial wellbeing is their responsibility.

According to Chimhanda (2016), 'their [young people's] hope is to create self-employment opportunities that will lead to a constant revenue flow, allowing sustainability in line with household and family expectations'. Of the youth interviewed, 78 per cent believed that taking risks was a very crucial attitude that one must have to be successful in Zimbabwe. This suggests that young people are aware of the volatility in the socio-economic space and are ready to adapt and take the necessary measures to achieve success.

Figure 40: Responses to the question 'Which of the below would you define as the meaning of success?'

Legend: No (yellow), Yes (orange), Neutral (grey)

Categories: Financial independence is important; Financial welfare of family is primary duty; Success means being my own master; Believe in taking risks. Axis: 0% to 100%.

On the flip side, young people also have fears, which are presented in Table 4. The greatest fear for the majority of the study participants was failing to achieve their dreams.

The results show that 38 per cent were uncertain that their present circumstances would lead them to achieve their dreams, and 44 per cent thought this would be the greatest concern in the future. The second highest concern relates to financial insecurity, both now and in the future. This is also closely linked to failure to achieve dreams, as one of the notable markers of achieving dreams for most of the young people was financial freedom. However, some young people were optimistic that things were going to get better in the country (see Box 1).

From FGDs and key informant interviews, it emerged that the youth have some hope that they will be given space to be planners and drivers of all issues aimed at developing and benefitting them in the country. As such, the common sentiment across a majority of the provinces was 'nothing about us without us'.

Pillars of hope for young Zimbabweans

When looking at sources of hope, issues such as religion, arts and culture, and role models emerged alongside the need for better politics and the opportunity of migration. Some young people had their hopes in the arts and culture as an element that shaped their perspective of the future. According to Eveleigh (2013), 'despite the economic context, contracted democratic space and diminished resources experienced in the decades prior, between 2011 and 2013 at least, there has been general stabilization and even growth in the arts sector'.

Moreover, there are some young people who also believe in hard work and hope that they will win one day. Migration also emerged as another source of hope: young people hoped for an opportunity to leave Zimbabwe and make a living in other countries of the world. (This is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.) Some think that the solution to their problems is the removal of the current government, who they see as the cause of all their problems.

'Our first dream is for the government to be removed. The government is the one that is hated by the people. It has locked down the economy. When they are removed, it would mean we will have good relations with countries that are actually able to help us. It would revive our economy and industries. We would like things to go back to normal.'

FGD participant,
Harare, 2019.

Table 4: Present and future fears

	Death	Ethnic divisions	Failure to achieve dreams	Financial insecurity	Global conflict	Ill health and disease	Local conflict	Old age
Present	9%	2%	38%	26%	1%	13%	10%	2%
Future	11%	2%	44%	19%	3%	11%	8%	3%

Box 1: Young professional

Pictured, a young professional in Masvingo who believes that the there is hope for a better future but the responsibility to see it materialise lies with young people. He believes youths should unite and press towards a common goal for them to realise a better future.

'We may not have it the way we want it, but definitely ten per cent of something is always better than 100 per cent of nothing. We must unite as youth or we shall perish together.'

The role of faith

Furthermore, religion or, more specifically, Christian faith emerged as a critical source of hope. Two youths participating in pictorial representation from Harare and Bulawayo identified God as their greatest or second-greatest source of hope. When they were asked to take photos of their most prized possession, both included a photo of the bible (see Boxes 2 and 3).

From qualitative data, it also emerged that a majority of the participants generally derived their hope from the Christian faith. Although this was the overall trend, there also emerged an interesting conflict of interest between Christianity and being a youth in present-day Zimbabwe. The respondent from Harare (Box 7.3) describes how she is a Christian and values her spirituality and derives some hope from God for her life, while at the same time, some aspects of her life seem to be in contradiction with the dictates of her faith.

Looking to the future

The current socio-economic and political situation does not inspire much hope. Table 5 shows average youth satisfaction scores across a number of variables in relation to future scenarios. When respondents were asked to rank these on a scale between 1 and 5 (1 = not optimistic; 5 = very optimistic), most of their responses were below an average of 2.5, suggesting a general lack of optimism across the board. The only variables that had an average of just above 2.5 were access to technology (2.583) and equality between ethnic groups (2.561).

When this data was analysed by province, the same trends emerged. Interestingly, 18.5 per cent of youths in Matabeleland North and 20.2 per cent in Masvingo indicated that, after living conditions, they were also happy about access to technology. This is an unusual dynamic, especially for Matabeleland North because this is a region that has long been viewed as marginalised technologically and in other key infrastructural developments (Maphosa et al., 2014). There is a general view that the Matabeleland and Midlands regions are neglected and marginalised in development processes (Eppel, 2008).

Box 2: My most treasured possession (Bulawayo)

'My most treasured possession is my bible. It gives me hope in a hopeless society.

It also gives me strength when I am weary.'
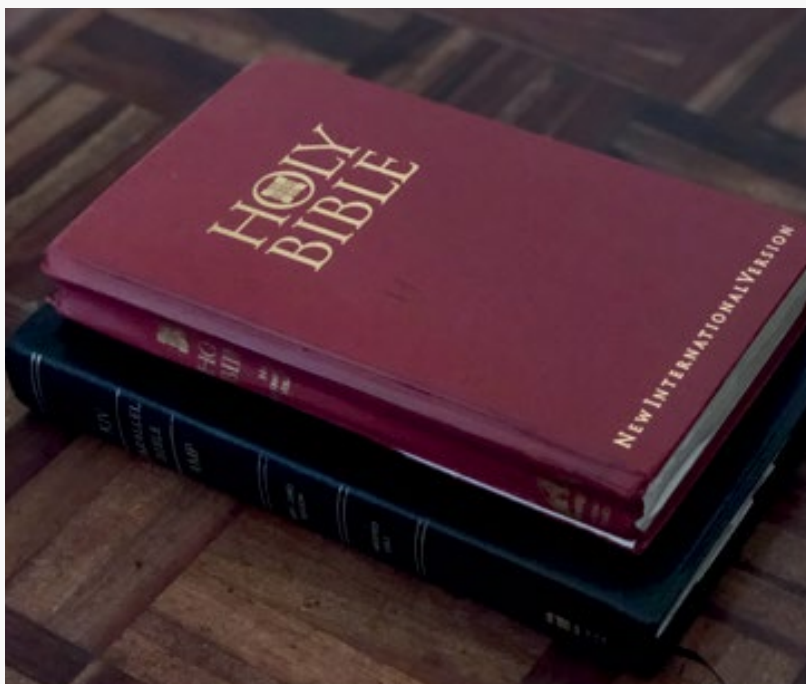
Box 3: My most treasured possession (Harare)

'The Bible is attached to my reverence for God, the moments spent in prayer and in fellowship with others at church. I am a Christian Roman Catholic. I believe in the existence of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit to transform my life for the better through faith and the second coming of Christ so that we can be reunited with God the Father in Heaven. I am, however, not too confident about my relationship with God as my lifestyle choices, code of conduct and thoughts do not always mirror what the Lord expects of me. I am anxious about the second coming of the Lord and hope that I will be part of the few that will be transcended through the Rapture. I, however, do not pray all the time, read the Bible regularly or participate in the celebration of mass every Sunday. However, I believe and see the hand of God working in my life every single day. Therefore, the Bible, my spirituality and the time I spend at church are a significant part of my life. There is also a lot of religious guilt associated with my life; for example, I sometimes wonder if God approves of me being a feminist or my advocacy for the rights of LGBTQI+ people as an ally myself, among many other things.'

Furthermore, the average scores in Table 5 suggest that young people are still concerned about the perpetuation of adverse socio-economic, political and cultural conditions in the country, despite the recent change of leadership. They are not optimistic that challenges such as unemployment, corruption and conflict will be dealt with in a satisfactory manner. These findings contradict the general outlook the youth have about the future of the country – i.e. they believe that, in five years, things will change, as noted further on in this chapter. The poor scores for the specific aspects of the socio-economic and political space reinforce the sense of scepticism regarding the change. When asked about the recent past (five to ten years), the majority of young people were unhappy about corruption (28.5 per cent), living conditions (22.8 per cent) and lack of employment (22.3 per cent).

This scepticism and pessimism pose a real threat to Zimbabwe as 71 per cent of the total survey respondents indicated that, given a chance, they would move out of Zimbabwe. The country has already suffered high levels of brain drain (Ncube and Gomez, 2011; Gwaradzimba and Shumba, 2010) and is likely to suffer more due to the unfavourable economic conditions that its citizens are faced with. According to van Vuuren (2016), this has also been exacerbated by Zimbabwe's high literacy levels, making its human capital a sought-after commodity in the African continent and beyond. These two factors have exacerbated the rate at which the country has lost its qualified personnel to other countries of the world.

Furthermore, there are other reasons young people want to leave. For example, LGBQTI respondents also indicated that they would rather leave Zimbabwe and find refuge in other countries that embrace and recognise sexual minorities and their rights (see Box 4). This demonstrates the limited levels of tolerance in the Zimbabwean society, especially for minorities, be they sexual, religious or political. As is the case of LGBQTI experiences, this intolerance has silenced some people or pushed them out of the country.

Although there was notable scepticism among youths in general about the future, not all respondents were negative. Some expressed patriotism and a very optimistic attitude towards the future of Zimbabwe. Others indicated that they would leave Zimbabwe when an opportunity presented itself but would return when they wanted to start a family. Those who expressed a desire to stay included some highly educated youth who did not care where they worked as long as they were successful, whether in Zimbabwe or out of Zimbabwe.

Table 5: Perspectives on Zimbabwean conditions

Variables	Average scores
Living conditions	1.748
Employment	1.845
Access to higher education and skills	2.371
Corruption	1.816
Crime	1.953
Violence	1.968
Inequality gap (rich and poor)	1.983
Access to technology and innovation	2.583
Health and life expectancy	2.26
Positive role for women	2.399
Positive role of youth	2.097
Equality between ethnic groups	2.561

'Maybe because I was born here, but I believe I will spend the rest of my life in Zimbabwe. We should appreciate what we have and it's also a lot safer here than in other countries.'

FGD participant, university students, Harare, 2019

'I would go, but when I want to have children I would love to come back because I want my children to grow up around family and gain the morals of this country.'

FGD participant, university students, Masvingo, 2019

Despite their pessimism about core issues in the future, when asked about the prospects of the country in the next five years, many indicated that they had hope that Zimbabwe would be better. This was noted across all age groups (see Figure 41).

Nearly half of Zimbabwean youth are optimistic that the country's economic fortunes will change for the better in the coming five years. The younger age group (18 to 24) were the most optimistic, with 55 per cent predicting that things will change for the better. Believing in a better future is a cause for optimism, as it shows hope for the subjects and the possibility of them being part of the change. However, a considerable number of young people are still pessimistic about the prospects of the country, with an average of 31 per cent across age groups predicting that things will change for the worse.

Past and current moments of glory and disappointments

Despite the fact that the majority of the youths across the country expressed disappointment about the current state of affairs, a significant number indicated that in the past five to ten years, they had experienced some good times. The same trends were noted across all ten provinces, with no notable differences by geolocation. Fifty-five per cent of survey respondents indicated that they were happy about the living conditions in the country in the past five to ten years. This takes us back to 2009, when the country was under the Government of National Unity (GNU) and adopted the multi-currency system that brought a lot of stability and positive change into the lives of many Zimbabweans. According to Kanyenze et al. (2017: 4):

the immediate priority of the GNU was 'the restoration of economic stability and growth', as well as nation-building and national healing. Clearly, the fundamental task of the new inclusive government was to resuscitate and rehabilitate the economy. The GNU committed itself to lead the process of developing and implementing an economic recovery strategy and plan.
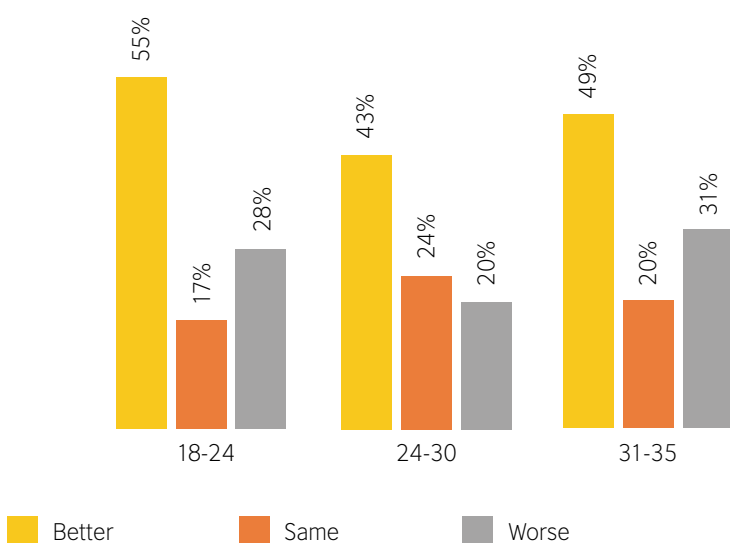
As a result, the period of the GNU and the multi-currency regime saw a rebound of the country's economy, with GDP growth averaging ten per cent between 2009 and 2012 (ibid). For the youth of Zimbabwe, during this period of ease, their living conditions improved significantly.

'Things were much better during the GNU and also up to around 2015. During that time, if you did not like your job – if you found it to be too hard or laborious, you would just leave, but now no matter how difficult it gets you don't leave because there is nothing else for you if you leave. Because there were many opportunities, now whatever you do you just hold on.'
FGD, participant, Harare, 2019

However, only living conditions in the past were seen as indicators of happiness, as we see in Figure 42, and we should avoid any temptation to romanticise the past too much. For example, dollarisation of the economy made Zimbabwe an import-based society and this had adverse implications for industry in general and employment in particular.

Figure 41: Young Zimbabweans' perspectives of Zimbabwe in the next five years

18-24: Better 55%, Same 17%, Worse 28%
24-30: Better 43%, Same 24%, Worse 20%
31-35: Better 49%, Same 20%, Worse 31%

■ Better   ■ Same   ■ Worse

Intergenerational fairness

Children inherit different economic and financial outcomes from their parents in the form of either material assets or inheritance (Onuzo et al., 2013). For some families, these could be an investment in the form of education and health, while for others it could be cultural practices and social norms (D'Addio, 2007). The value and sustainability of these are largely determined by the characteristics of the household as well as the external environment. Depending on the factors, there could be instances of transgenerational transmission of either positive or negative elements. Participants were asked to compare their situation to that of their parents' generation, and Figure 43 presents findings that are disaggregated by population groups.

Overall, young people in Zimbabwe feel that the previous generation did not do enough to prepare conditions that enable them to achieve their dreams with ease. Among the native African youth who make up the majority in the country (ZIMSTATS, 2017), 71.2 per cent reported that they were worse off compared to the generation of their parents However, 61.5 per cent of young people of European descent felt that their

parents left them a good deal in both tangible and intangible items. This can be largely attributed to the fact that this group had made significant investments over time as they have had access to capital dating back to colonial times (Muzondidya, 2007).

As such, in most instances, youth of European descent are at an advantage compared to native African youth in that their parents have made meaningful investments that cushion them. This reality could be traced back to the colonial legacy of inequalities between black people and white people, where white people had the advantage of access to productive capital while black people were sources of cheap labour (Austin, 2010).

'The whites and Indian children are not like us, they are better because their parents already have established businesses and when they finish school they are assimilated into the family enterprise and the grind begins for them. But for us, it's like starting from scratch. There is very little that one can stand on save the education we have been given. We start from uncharted planes.'

KI, politician, Harare, 2019

'One thing I respect about Indians in Zimbabwe is that those guys work hard. They are very entrepreneurial and would push their ventures wholeheartedly. They are also united, they support each other, they employ each other. They are so pro-family.'

KI, entrepreneur, Masvingo, 2019

The majority of young people in the following population groups also reported that their situation was better: Asian descent (50 per cent), religious minorities (52.7 per cent) and people of mixed race (52.6 per cent). This is because, from general observation, most of their parents are entrepreneurial and leave an economic legacy for their children to inherit and start from a vantage point. Parents of native African youths, on the other hand, are perceived to invest more in human capital development by sending their children to school and hoping that education will get them good jobs and decent lives.

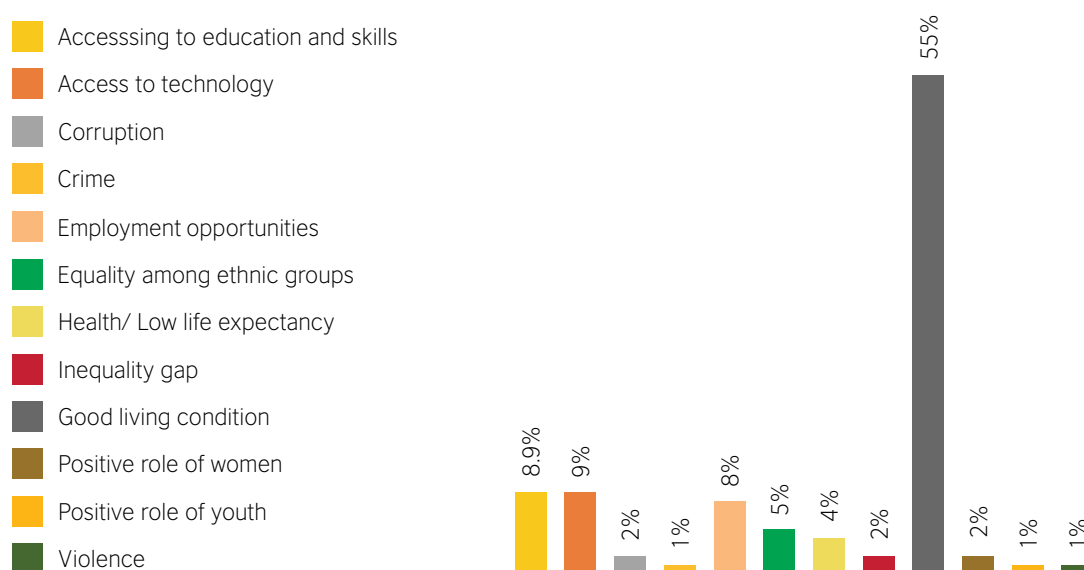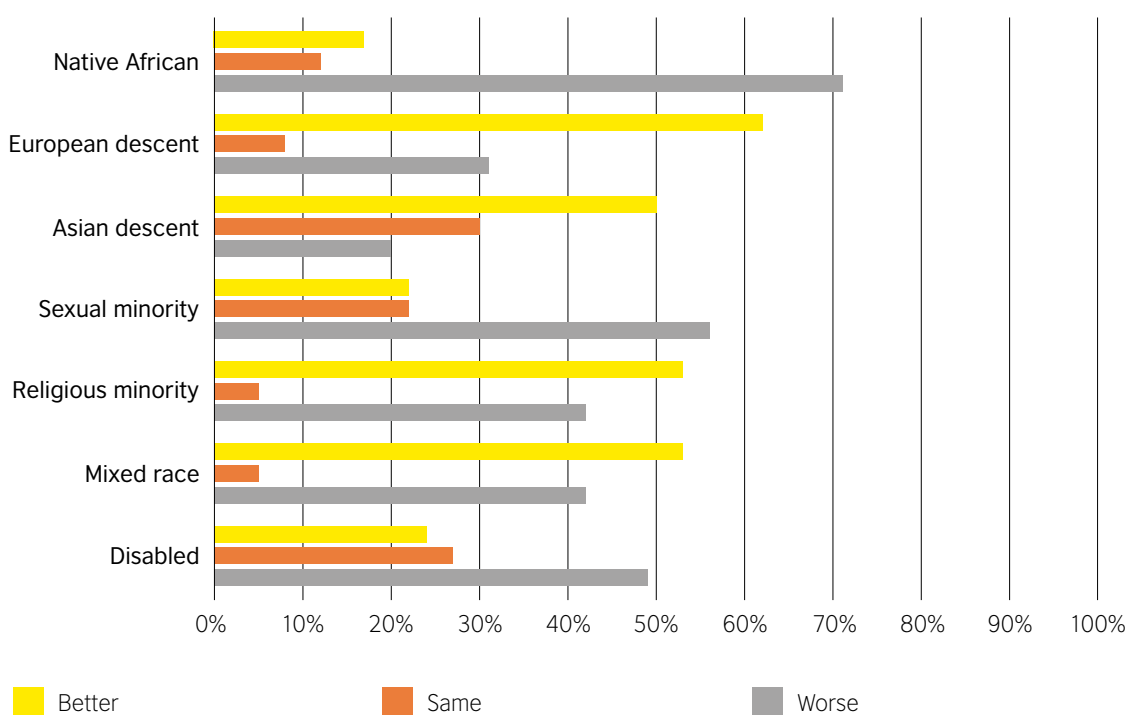Figure 42: Things young Zimbabweans were happy about in the past five to ten years

Legend:
- Accesssing to education and skills
- Access to technology
- Corruption
- Crime
- Employment opportunities
- Equality among ethnic groups
- Health/ Low life expectancy
- Inequality gap
- Good living condition
- Positive role of women
- Positive role of youth
- Violence

Bar values: 8.9%, 9%, 2%, 1%, 8%, 5%, 4%, 2%, 55%, 2%, 1%, 1%

Figure 43: Young Zimbabweans' perspectives on intergenerational fairness

Native African
European descent
Asian descent
Sexual minority
Religious minority
Mixed race
Disabled

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Legend: Better Same Worse

General challenges among youth in Zimbabwe

The greatest challenge faced by the youths in Zimbabwe is the lack of employment opportunities, as previously alluded to. On average, across the different age groups, 59 per cent of the youths flagged a lack of employment opportunities as the major challenge they are faced within life (Figure 44). Inevitably, this translates to financial difficulties (14.8 per cent) and overall life hardships (6.9 per cent). It is therefore clear that, among youths, the high unemployment rate is the bedrock of most challenges they are faced with in life. Furthermore, qualitative data indicated that due to the high levels of unemployment and economic hardship, many youths end up resorting to risky behaviours related to drug abuse, prostitution, corruption, child marriage, theft or robbery, among other ills. Some experiences are discussed below.

'You see us here, we are not doing anything, and I am high and things are going well for me right now. If I was busy I would only smoke marijuana at night, but now that I am not busy, it is keeping me busy. But when I smoke, I get arrested. They should just leave me alone so that I smoke my marijuana and forget my problems.'

FGD, participant, Harare, 2019

'You cannot blame them really, they do not have much of an option here, there has got to be food on the table. So if they cannot get a job, then they will resort to other means.'

FGD participant, Young mother, Chiredzi, 2019

The same trends were observed when the data was summarised by age, gender and level of education. The patterns show that the youths in Zimbabwe are largely challenged by lack of employment opportunities regardless of their educational achievements. Even those with the highest levels of education report lack of employment opportunities as their major challenge in life. Among those with a postgraduate level of education (see Figure 45), 55.6 per cent indicated a lack of employment as their major challenge, while 59.1 per cent of those at university flagged this challenge

Some of these challenges were noted even in qualitative data, with most youths expressing a number of challenges that affect their lives in present-day Zimbabwe, as shown in the quotes below.

'Our survival strategies are hand to mouth, there is no real living being made. We are just barely getting by. But hand to mouth is still a benefit because there are some that are not even getting the little that we are complaining about. Our currency is not very strong. I was in Johannesburg not many days ago and right now I'm broke because the money here doesn't last long.'

FGD participant, Harare, 2019

'Formally, there is limited space for me to get a job, so I should have this entrepreneurial mindset, but now the difference is there is no line of demarcation to say which one is criminal, which one is legal. As long as I am making money …'

FGD participant, young professionals, Harare, 2019

'Youths are doing anything and everything I suppose, no one is concentrating … people had dreams when they were growing up, but when they reached the stage where they were supposed to implement those dreams, they found so many hurdles. Be it the economy, be it lack of opportunities, industry shrinking, the economy shrinking, money is not available – so now whatever you hear at that moment you do.'

KI, entrepreneur, Harare, 2019.

At the end of the day, because of the desire for financial independence, as elaborated in the first section, some youths in Zimbabwe do not really care about how clean their deals are as long as they are making money. Some do not mind engaging in risky sexual behaviour (Musizvingoza, 2016), selling drugs or selling suspicious merchandise. The volatility of the economic situation in Zimbabwe has negatively affected their ability to plan for the future and led many of them to be opportunistic.

'We long for those days where you could almost gauge what you would be maybe two years after college because it was easy to plan. There were building societies then and one could plan that after I'm done with college, I will get my job, get a mortgage and buy a house … Now I can't even plan: there are no building societies out there giving us money, I have no formal employment, I cannot really see where I'm going, it is merely gambling.'

FGD participant, young professional, Harare, 2019)

Figure 44: Youth challenges by age

Legend:
- Bad peer influence
- Child marriage
- Corruption
- Drug abuse
- Early pregnancy
- Ethnic discrimination
- Financial difficulties
- Limited access to education
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Overall life hardships
- Theft/Robbery
- Conflict/ Violence

Figure 45: Youth challenges in accordance with education level

Legend:
- No education
- Refused to give education level
- Primary school drop out
- Completed primary school
- Secondary school drop out
- Still in secondary school
- Completed secondary school
- In college
- At university
- Post graduate

Perceived solutions

Given the many challenges identified by young people as barriers to their desired success, participants were asked to suggest possible solutions that they would implement if they had the opportunity. Figure 46 presents suggested solutions by young people of different ages throughout the country. This also serves as a reflection of young people's voices on issues that affect them directly.

Figure 46 shows that the majority of young people strongly believe that the solution to the challenges they are facing can be found in the macroeconomic policy space. Among young people aged between 31 and 35 years, 33.2 per cent suggest that opening lines of credit for the youth must be a priority. The second most notable solution suggested by the youth is education that is suitable for the market, with 27.4 per cent of youth aged between 18 and 24 years making this suggestion.

Another notable solution is the need for the revival of industries. Among 24- to 30-year-olds, 18.7 per cent suggested this solution.

The above findings were also corroborated by qualitative data gathered across the country. Young people indicated entrepreneurial support and youth empowerment programmes as solutions that would help boost their livelihood strategies in the wake of high unemployment rates. Some also indicated the need for active involvement in youth policy and programme formulation processes to ensure the end result speaks directly to their needs.

'We need support to start up our own things. It is clear that we will not get employment anytime soon, but at least if we can get support to start our own businesses, that will help us a lot.'
FGD participant, unemployed youth, Chiredzi, 2019

'What is important is capacity building in whatever the youths do and also the alignment of policies that will give priority to what the young people are doing. There is a need for assistance from the government in terms of aligning policies to help the youths. Young people are economically active, but they drain their energy on bad things, negative things, so if only that age group would be directed in a positive way, they could [go] far.
KI, entrepreneur, Masvingo, 2019

Nothing for us without us. We need to be involved in these policymaking processes so that we can own the end result and also benefit from it as it will speak directly to our needs.'
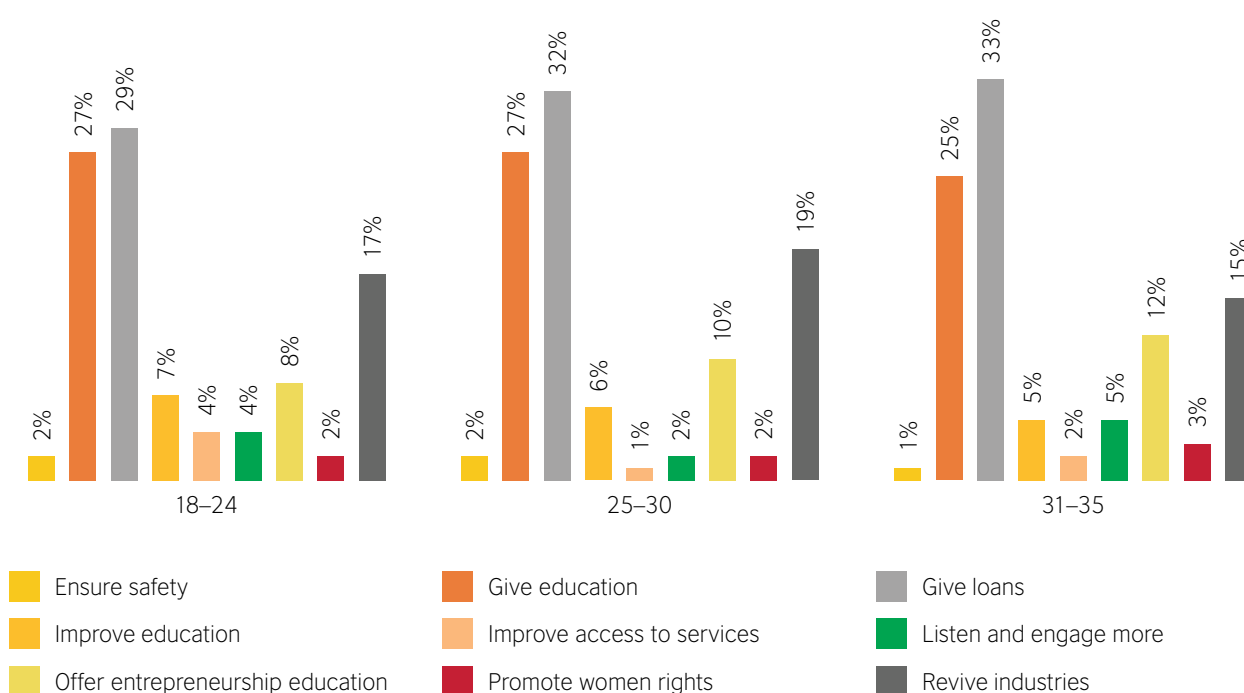KI, Masvingo, 2019

What does this does tell us?

As highlighted in this report, and throughout this chapter in particular, while there is concern, disappointment and frustration at the state of economic affairs, employment opportunities and political conditions, there is an optimism among youth in Zimbabwe concerning the future.

Notably, a significant number of young people are willing to leave Zimbabwe for other countries considered to be greener pastures.

Being a former British colony, it is no surprise that the majority of young people in Zimbabwe favour movement to Commonwealth countries with vibrant economies where they are likely to secure gainful employment and solve the problems of financial future insecurity fears. Emigration is among a number of other factors that may see the country losing this generation of young people. The other factors include drug taking and abuse as well as other health-harming activities and criminality, among others. Losing this generation of young people poses a risk to the country in that it will be a loss of trained human capital as well as the resources invested in their development.

Therefore, there is a serious need for role models, be they in arts and culture or faith leaders, as well as those who can support diversity and inclusion among young people. Furthermore, there is a need for space for young Zimbabweans to be able to speak freely, have a critical debate and contribute to ongoing processes of nation-building.

Figure 46: Young Zimbabweans' ranking of solutions to the challenges faced by young people

Legend:
- Ensure safety
- Improve education
- Offer entrepreneurship education
- Give education
- Improve access to services
- Promote women rights
- Give loans
- Listen and engage more
- Revive industries

CHAPTER 7:
CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has shown that young Zimbabweans face a number of challenges such as unemployment, economic hardship, future uncertainty, limited national and community support, abuse by those with and in power, lack of a clear voice in issues of governance, infrastructural deficiencies (especially in rural areas) and limited capacity to organise themselves to express their agency.

All the youth that took part in this study had lived all their lives under one president, Robert Mugabe. Throughout the latter period of their experience of his reign, there was a narrative that the economic woes of the country were a result of his poor leadership, and therefore his departure was the solution to the problems faced by the country (Nyambi, 2018; Meredith, 2018). As a result, his forced resignation inspired confidence among many who genuinely felt he was the problem (Asuelime, 2018). Many of the young people in this study were optimistic about the country's prospects in the next five years. As the post-Mugabe Zimbabwe has not delivered immediate solutions to the prolonged economic crisis, some youth retain mixed feelings about the prospects of the country, with many still looking beyond Zimbabwe in search of better opportunities. While the 'new dispensation' promises an economic turnaround, young people remain concerned about specific problems that are yet to be addressed such as unemployment, corruption and conflict.

Education and employment

Young Zimbabweans were satisfied with education provision in the country, though they felt that quality was an issue, particularly in rural areas. Access was also seen as an issue that affected young women.

- Young people explained that education quality was skewed in favour of the urban areas and wanted this addressed through improved education infrastructure in rural schools.

- Young women also argued that their chances of obtaining tertiary education were limited by socio-cultural issues related to patriarchy and pregnancy. They called for a review of the influences of patriarchy and more initiatives that target early pregnancy and child marriage, which affect young girls who would otherwise be in school.

- Young Zimbabweans also told us that education did not guarantee a good working life as very few successful people they knew were well educated. However, they explained that education gave them a chance to be employed outside Zimbabwe. They therefore called for an education system that was more in sync with the prevailing conditions.

- Young people felt that more can be done to increase employment opportunities in Zimbabwe, especially given the limited formal employment opportunities. Young people felt the drought of formal employment opportunities had intensified with the new dispensation and that earning a livelihood had become much more difficult.

- The informal sector and entrepreneurship have become the major source of livelihoods for young Zimbabweans.

- As entrepreneurship is one of the only viable routes to employment, young people felt that much more needs to be done to support young people on this journey, in terms of both financial support (i.e. loans) and more transparency and clear-cut procedures around how to obtain a loan and the terms of repayment.

- Young people also called for an end to political patronage in state authorities' support for entrepreneurship.

- In the presence of a weak formal economy, the informal sector has become a viable option for young people. In this regard, young people advocated the removal of laws that made informal economic activities difficult and also called for support through the provision of basic infrastructure (toilets, stalls, etc.) at major points of informal economic activities.

- Young people told us that they felt a lot was going wrong in the national economy and that this had gotten worse since the ushering in of the new dispensation. Some explained that they were worried about their future financial security and the ability to earn a living. In this light, they advocated less political meddling in the national economy and requested more opportunities for entrepreneurship from state authorities.

Navigating the world through digital connections

Since the coming in of the new dispensation led by Emmerson Mnangagwa, youth in Zimbabwe have embraced and increased the uptake of information technology and use the internet to access information and social media networks. Despite reasonable country-wide access to the internet, there are concerns regarding youths' preparedness for the fourth industrial revolution. There is a danger that if many young people remain unconnected, they might be left behind. The findings of this study also suggest an overdependence on social media for news and current affairs.

- Young people in Zimbabwe desire reliable internet connectivity; however, challenges such as the high cost of data and limited networks exclude them from consistent access. There is also a disparity of access between young people in urban centres and young people in rural areas.

- Being connected to the internet is very important for young Zimbabweans for several reasons, namely searching for information that leads them to better economic opportunities, i.e. migration opportunities, scholarships and jobs.

- An internet connection is also important for keeping in touch with current trends as most of the Zimbabwean political debate since the ouster of Robert Mugabe is happening online. Young people are more comfortable debating politics online because it gives them some freedom of expression by allowing them to hide their identity and experience limited regulation from the government.

- Since the new Mnangagwa government came in, it has been sending a message of international re-engagement and negative coverage of the West in state-controlled media has been kept to a minimum. However, Zimbabwe has remained in the global media spotlight and young people are sceptical of local media despite the change in government.

- Young people in Zimbabwe consume content from local media, but they prefer international media because it offers better-quality content. Entertainment from the DStv channels is mostly preferred. In addition, given the politically polarised local media, where content is always biased to a given political formation, young people trust international media as it is perceived as being impartial.

- Zimbabwean youth's global outlook is influenced by exposure to media from foreign countries such as the UK and the USA. So too does the economic stability of foreign countries have a bearing on the trust placed on their governments. Countries' economic stability also shapes the attitudes that young Zimbabweans form about them and contributes to their desire to migrate.

Participation

In politics

While youths are generally willing to engage in economic activities that would make their lives better, there is disillusionment with regard to politics. Even with the new dispensation ushered in by President Emmerson Mnangagwa, the majority of Zimbabwean youth still do not see any significant difference between the new and the old system. The survey revealed that more than 60 per cent of them were not willing to engage in politics and they do not believe that their vote can change things for the better in Zimbabwe.

Urban youths, in particular, do not see the usefulness of elections even in the new dispensation. The hugely disputed 2018 elections eroded the little trust they had in the new political system, and this has been compounded by severe economic hardship that has seen many youths failing to secure employment.

Young people feel that they are always used by politicians who deny them a voice to air their views. The majority have a negative perception of Zimbabwean politics as they view it as a source of their troubles.

They note that the political landscape has become toxic in that you have to be connected to a certain political party to benefit in life. Role models are emerging as those linked to the ruling party and willing to serve the ruling party. For many youths, these political role models have no bearing on their lives as they have never made their lives better.

Zimbabwean youth also note massive corruption, especially among government leaders. This has eroded the little trust that they had in politicians. Young people are calling for policies to be properly enforced and corrupt officials to be punished because they feel these officials are responsible for their suffering.

One factor linked to political participation is youth empowerment. The study revealed that the majority of youth in Zimbabwe are ignorant of the overall youth policy and related programmes designed to empower them. This is exacerbated by the fact that a lot of youth do not trust their government and so tend to ignore government programmes – even those meant to help them. It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority (over 90 per cent) feel that the government is not of much help to them. Confidence levels are very low.

In the community

While the majority of young people feel they belong to their local communities, their participation in community activities is very low. Economic challenges seem to have forced many to focus only on themselves and their immediate families.

This suggests that:

- young people do not have time to spare for activities that do not bring them some form of income to survive the next day
- any effort to encourage young people to participate in community projects faces resistance if it is not accompanied by financial rewards.

To become active in their communities young people called for:

- inclusion in decision making when it comes to real issues that affect their development. They feel they have been excluded in issues such as community planning activities, engagement in community security service and being listened to and valued
- economic support from their immediate communities and the government at large. Youth also felt that improving employment opportunities, access to financial resources and provision of skills will improve their commitment to their communities.

The future – aspirations and challenges

Generally, there is optimism among youths in Zimbabwe concerning the future. However, young people have concerns over core challenges such as the perpetuation of adverse socio-economic and political conditions in the country despite the recent change of leadership.

They are calling for:

- the government to create employment opportunities by improving the economy so that young people can realise their goals
- more support to start their own businesses since employment opportunities are scarce
- the government to become politically impartial when creating opportunities for the youth; the majority of young people feel that the government currently favours those who support the ruling party and hence only offers opportunities to them
- the government to deal with corruption and conflict, which have not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner in the country, as well as lack of support to move forward.

Socio-economic challenges in Zimbabwe have resulted in a significant number of people willing to leave Zimbabwe for other countries considered to be greener pastures. However, young people informed us that if the government improves the economy and creates opportunities for them to make a living, they would not leave their country.

The conclusions above allowed us to draw a number of potential risks and areas of hope associated with the challenges and opportunities identified. These are discussed below.

Risks

Four themes stand out as the primary future risks associated with the challenges young people identified.

First and foremost is the **negative state of the economy**. The weakening economy has largely been accompanied by an increased output of people with education, owing to post-Independence policies that included a focus on providing education to the wider population. However, the increased supply of educated people has not been matched by an increase in demand for labour; over time, the rift between demand and supply has been widening. This has been the source of high unemployment levels, low incomes, failure to realise dreams and an overall lack of financial independence among young Zimbabweans. The low incomes and high unemployment also cause problems for local and national authorities that are dependent on public finances via taxation, the result being service provision failure and infrastructure decay. The lack of formal employment opportunities has also led to a ballooning informal sector that is difficult to regulate and tax. This sector also renders the workforce vulnerable to exploitation, trade in socially undesirable goods and services, high transaction costs and irregular incomes, and a lack of support from union structures. Yet those who cannot

even join this informal sector are also at risk, particularly to substance abuse, as noted briefly in this report. Other research such as Chireka (2019), which explores the growing abuse of BronCleer cough mixture among Zimbabwean youth, discusses this in more detail.

The second risk factor is the **political system**. This was shown to have permeated all spheres of Zimbabwean life, almost crowding out the existence of other things such as national identity and citizenship. We argue that the identity 'I am Zimbabwean' should be held in higher regard than the identity 'I belong to X political party'. Yet evidence suggests that young Zimbabweans feel their political support determines the level of support they receive in return. In addition, politicised decision making has made young Zimbabweans aware of corruption and consequently sceptical of, or uninterested in, politics. The dominance of political identity over national identity promotes national division, rather than national unity, thereby hindering co-operation for universally desired goals such as economic growth, food security and better public health.

Third, young people have **become disillusioned with democracy** and may soon decide not to vote at all. This is likely to lead to intellectually weak political leaders, who get to a political office not because of merit but rather because of affiliation to a particular political party, and who may be tainted by favour, corruption or conflict. The emergence of such leaders could further weaken the democratic fabric of Zimbabwe. Directly related to youth, our qualitative data suggested that only the ones who toe a given political line become beneficiaries of government youth programmes. While youth from the ruling party have better chances of benefiting, access to opportunities is also determined through factional lines within political parties (Beresford, 2015). In Zimbabwe, as is the case in

many countries, young people are often used as political tools and only those who follow certain politicians or political parties are included in youth programmes. There is therefore a need for better channels to communicate government youth policies to improve awareness. This is a role that can be taken up by the civil society to minimise the unnecessary exclusion of any youth.

Fourth, there is **limited youth participation** in community and country. It could be argued that this pattern has been reinforced by the above and the nature of politics in post-colonial Zimbabwe, where young people were kept at arm's length with regards to leadership positions. Their role was often limited to political intimidation, where they were used as youth militia to consolidate the liberation war generation's hold on power. This research suggests that young people are reluctant to participate in community and country politics and leadership, perhaps because they have witnessed the failures of the past. There is a need for young people to provide leadership and create initiatives that will shape their future. In addition, young people must be encouraged through initiatives that foster active citizenship and a sense of belonging to the community and country.

Aspects of hope

Alongside these risks, we also found hope that could lead to a better future for young Zimbabweans. This study found that the **skills base and the positive outlook** of the youth in the future were critical points that signified hope for a better society. Young Zimbabweans were shown to be skilled and well connected to the global world through multiple mediums. Such a level of skill makes rapid economic recovery easier as less time has to be spent on training a competent workforce. Also, the skills base allows for the development of an entrepreneurial class that has, to this point, been created by the absence of alternatives. The study also showed that, despite the disgruntlement about the socio-economic landscape of the country, young Zimbabweans had faith that their country would rise from the ashes and become a better place.

According to the 2015 Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey, half of the country's total population comprises people below the age of 18 years (ZIMSTATS, 2015). This suggests that Zimbabwe has the opportunity to realise a **demographic dividend** as its share of working-age people is greater than that of its non-working-age population. If managed well, this youth population could be a source of labour that has the potential to drive economic growth. In Zimbabwe, good literacy has set a fair foundation,

but there is a need to develop entrepreneurial skills and create an enabling environment for young people to exercise agency in economic self-advancement.

This research suggests that Zimbabwean youth have a **high level of resilience**, and they remain resolute and value being masters of their destiny and providing for their families. If the economic situation does improve, this resilience suggests that the youth of Zimbabwe have a bright future.

Recommendations

The final section of this report reflects on the central factors enabling young people to overcome challenges posed by their socio-economic and political environment. We recommend how to use lessons from this research to refine interventions that allow young Zimbabweans a chance to dream in dignity.

The Youth Task Force was asked to reflect on the key topics and themes coming out of this piece of research, in addition to their own experience and knowledge of working with, supporting and themselves being young people in Zimbabwe. The following recommendations include interventions in education to support better access and quality, to support young people to be better prepared for employment, and to support young people to develop the skills needed for the economy. The Youth Task Force also suggests recommendations to support greater political participation, a stronger respect for human rights, and ways in which the media can engage more productively with youth.

	Statement	Recommendations
Education and employment	Access to high-quality pre-school and school education must be improved, particularly in rural areas, and both boys and girls should be equally prepared for work, further education and a changing world.	Improve access to education for rural communities, for example by providing better infrastructure to connect communities with education institutions. Encourage and ensure a co-ordinated approach to, and affirmative action for, improving women and girls' access to education and services. The relationship between the education The relationship between the education department, relevant public bodies and industries needs to be improved to ensure that the development and quality of education is relevant to the needs of the economy. Partnerships between higher education institutions and companies should be nurtured to support the transition between education and employment and access to jobs. Flexibility within the curriculum is needed to allow education to develop alongside a changing world.
	Youth in Zimbabwe need to be prepared for the fourth industrial revolution and must not be left behind or feel the negative effects of not living in a technologically advanced environment.	Include and prioritise digital skills and education in schools and universities. Invest in, set up and develop technological infrastructure by learning from other countries in the region.
	Young people in Zimbabwe feel a lack of belonging and support at a national level. To develop an increased sense of belonging and inclusion within Zimbabwean politics and society, civic education should be prioritised and strengthened in schools and universities.	Basic civic education should be strengthened in schools to encourage awareness of youth policies, to make young people aware of the opportunities available for them in Zimbabwean politics and society, and to encourage a sense of belonging and support at a national level. An education curriculum that supports the inclusion and development of women and girls in roles outside of marriage and the household is needed to address the dropout rate of young women and girls from education. For young people outside of education, the government should develop a civic education that can be implemented by civil society organisations.
Accountability, human rights, inclusion and equality	Young people in Zimbabwe and the task force call for more accountability and transparency from all government bodies and parastatals to tackle corruption.	Accountability mechanisms within government departments and the economy should be set up to open up job opportunities and inclusion to all citizens of Zimbabwe – rather than just those aligned to particular political parties – encourage accountability and tackle corruption.
	Human rights issues in Zimbabwe have not been addressed and improved at the rate and urgency that young people and the task force feel is necessary.	Speed up the process of aligning laws and the delivery and implementation of manifestos related to improving human rights. Ensure that the inclusion of human rights in the African Union Commission's Agenda 2030 is developed further and included in Agenda 2063.

	Statement	Recommendations
	Access to social, political and economic life in Zimbabwe needs to be equal for all young Zimbabweans, regardless of their location in the country or political, religious, ethnic, sexual or gender identities.	Group-specific interventions must be included and acknowledged in any government policy, as well as action to ensure the assistance being offered is relevant and will be effective at improving the lives of all young people. Support the inclusion of young disabled people in public spaces, employment and education by improving the accessibility of public and private buildings. There should be increased advocacy for the implementation of the White Paper on Special Needs Education to ensure equal and sustained access to education for young disabled people. Conversations about the LGBTQI+ community must continue within government and society with a language-sensitive and inclusive programme developed to support the needs of the community in consultation with young LGBTQI+ people and civil society organisations.
The media and engaging with young people in Zimbabwe	Young people in Zimbabwe prefer international media due to their perception that local media is not impartial. They also feel poorly represented in and by national and local media. Using the media and creative means to communicate with, engage and include young people will increase a sense of belonging, inclusion and awareness of policies, news and opportunities for young people.	The media sector should be reformed to be impartial. It should not be used for party politics and propaganda, and laws should be opened up to allow new actors to be involved and included in the media sector. Traditional forms of media such as ZBC should continue to be used but should tailor content and topics that are engaging and interesting to young people. A creative and inclusive communications strategy should be developed and implemented to engage young people in Zimbabwe. It should be developed in an inclusive and consultative manner to empower all young people in Zimbabwe and must be relevant to their different contexts and needs (urban/rural, for example). The media sector needs to be more creative in its engagement with young people in Zimbabwe. Ideas include using the internet and social media platforms to increase awareness and engagement, as well as video content and other creative outputs (plays, exhibitions, etc.) to share and communicate news. Media channels and outlets should be inclusive of young people and their perspectives by developing their skills and abilities in news and content production through training, up-skilling and workshops.
Youth policy, legislation and engaging with young people in Zimbabwe	There is a strong sense of disengagement felt by young people and the youth task force in politics and policymaking. There is a lack of a legislative framework to ensure the consultation of young people and implementation of youth policies. Additionally, some laws and legislation hinder the work of youth organisations and youth participation in politics.	The government should develop engagement mechanisms to engage with, listen to and consult young people in Zimbabwe to 1. familiarise themselves with and understand the concerns and aspirations of young people and 2. develop solutions to challenges, specific to and inclusive of rural and urban communities, gender and sexual identities, and ethnicity. A bottom-up approach is encouraged. Apply a feminist lens to and mainstream gender equality into policymaking and implementation. The government should develop non-political intergenerational dialogue channels to ensure that young people and older generations are in communication with one another to overcome challenges. Removing laws that hinder youth participation, such as the minimum age limit of 40 years for the presidency, as well as those that restrict youth civil society organisations and other regulations that limit the freedom of speech, assembly or association, is encouraged to support the inclusion of the diverse voices of young people in Zimbabwe.

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> APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Given the complex and sensitive nature of the subjects under study, the study made use of a mixed-methods approach. An array of qualitative methods was used in this research, while a survey and references to secondary data dominated the quantitative components of the study. Data was collected from Zimbabwean youth in accordance with the guided categories of:

- age group (18–24/25–30/31–35)
- gender (male/female/other/prefer not to say)
- nationality (dual/singular) and education (none/primary school/secondary school/tertiary)
- location (rural/urban [by city], peri-urban)
- wealth and household income
- religion, ethnicity and disability
- distinct socio-economic group (e.g. political affiliation).

Study design

To achieve the stated objectives the study followed a three-phase method over a period of six months.

Phase 1 of the project involved the review of relevant literature and the analysis of applicable documents from various stakeholders.

Phase 2 comprised the collection of data from multiple stakeholders. During this phase, qualified and experienced enumerators and research assistants were sought to assist in the data collection process. The research assistants and enumerators were trained to familiarise themselves with the tools and the vision of the consultancy team. The tools were piloted as a means of testing their applicability and efficiency in extracting relevant information required for the study. Secondly, the sampling process was verified within this phase to ensure it was free from unrequired bias and sensitive to mandatory bias regarding the categories highlighted in the first paragraph of this section.

Phase 3 involved the synthesis of the final reports to be presented to the British Council and its partners. It included the cleaning, analysis and packaging of data into various comprehensive perspectives, claims and benchmarks. To ensure quality at this stage, data was entered by two separate individuals and their results compared to highlight variance and errors. The final synthesised data set was re-checked using a rudimentary test such as frequency scores and variable ambiguity. This final report was written in drafts that were reviewed separately by members of the consultancy team to ascertain its candour and relation to the data set. After the necessary adjustments were made a final draft was developed further and sent to the British Council for final reviews.

Project sampling

This Next Generation research was carried out in all of Zimbabwe's eight provinces (Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo and Midlands) and two metropolitans (Bulawayo and Harare). In each province, the consultancy team randomly selected one rural ward and the most urban ward as areas of study. The metropolitans were divided into three areas (city centre, high density and low density) from which a single ward was randomly selected, making a total of three wards in each metropolitan area. This gave a total of 22 wards for the study.

The sampling process considered youth within the age group of 18- to 35-year-olds. This group was divided into three classes: early beginners (18- to 24-year-olds), prime youth (25- to 30-year-olds) and young adults/older youth (31- to 35-year-olds). Furthermore, a deliberate effort was made to select individuals in accordance with gender (male/female/other/prefer not to say), nationality (dual/singular), education (none/primary school/secondary school/tertiary), location (rural/urban [by city], peri-urban), wealth, household income, religion, ethnicity, disability and distinct socio-economic group (e.g. political affiliation).

Quantitative data was used to build a situational picture of the study districts, particularly regarding the socio-economics, specific indicators and demographics. This component is used in conjunction with qualitative data in order to give a detailed description of the situation. The quantitative methods used are described below.

Survey sample sizes

The survey sample size **n** and margin of error **E** were based on a normal distribution summarised in Equation 1:

$$n = \left\lceil \frac{\frac{Z}{2} \cdot}{E} \right\rceil^2$$

Where σ is the standard deviation, the **Z** value is the point of the positive vertical boundary for the area of in the right tail of the standard normal distribution. In this regard, the study used a nationally representative sample (95 per cent confidence rate or higher and a margin of error of three per cent[4]) of young people aged 18 to 35 who are Zimbabwean nationals currently residing in Zimbabwe. With the current youth population at 3,572,987 (ZIMSTATS, 2012), using the above equation, the minimum survey sample size was 1,067 youths aged 18 to 35 in all the 22 study wards.

As previously stated, the survey purposively sampled:

- sexual minorities (SM)
- religious minorities (RM)
- youths of European origin (E)
- youths of Asian origin (As)
- disabled youths (D).

Tables 1, 2 and 3 give more detail regarding the distribution of the study sample by provinces and wards.

4 . The Raosoft sample size calculator computes the critical value for the normal distribution.

Table 1: Sample distribution in eight provinces

Province	% of population	Sample size	Rural Female					Male				
Mat North	6%	64	16					16				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Mat South	5%	53	14					13				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Midlands	13%	139	35					35				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Masvingo	11%	117	30					29				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Manicaland	14%	150	38					37				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Mash East	10%	107	27					27				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Mash West	11%	117	30					29				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2
Mash Central	9%	96	24					24				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 0	As: 0	D: 2

Province	% of population	Sample size	Urban Female					Male				
Mat North	6%	64	16					16				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 2	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Mat South	5%	53	13					13				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Midlands	13%	139	35					34				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Masvingo	11%	117	29					29				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Manicaland	14%	150	38					37				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Mash East	10%	107	27					26				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Mash West	11%	117	29					29				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2
Mash Central	9%	96	24					24				
Purposive component			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 2

Table 2: Sample distribution in two metropolitan provinces

	% of population	Sample size	City centre									
			Female					Male				
Bulawayo	5%	53	9					9				
			ScM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1
Harare	16%	171	29					28				
			SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2	SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2
	% of population	Sample size	Low density									
			Female					Male				
Bulawayo	5%	53	9					8				
			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1
Harare	16%	171	29					28				
			SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2	SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2
	% of population	Sample size	Low density									
			Female					Male				
Bulawayo	5%	53	9					8				
			SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1	SM: 1	RM: 1	E: 1	As: 1	D: 1
Harare	16%	171	29					28				
			SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2	SM: 2	RM: 2	E: 2	AS: 2	D: 2

The gender distribution was guided by the results of the 2012 census which found a sex ratio of 95 males to every 100 females

Table 3: Selected study wards

Province	Urban centre	Rural ward	City centre	High-density ward	Low-density ward
Bulawayo Metro			Bulawayo CBD	WARD 17: Pumula North, Hyde Park villages, Hyde Park	WARD 3: Suburbs, Hume Park, Killarney, Waterlea, Orange Grove, Queens Park East, Romney Park, Sunnyside, Paddonhurst, Kumalo, Glengarry, Parklands, Northlea, Woodville, Mahatshula
Harare Metro			Harare CBD	WARD 37: Kuwadzana	WARD 9: Greendalet, part of Borrowdale, Greystone Park, Chisipite, Mukandabhutsu
Matabeleland North	Hwange CBD	Siachilaba			
Matabeleland South	Gwanda CBD	Beitbridge			
Manicaland	Mutare CBD	Mapungwana			
Mashonaland Central	Bindura CBD	Dotito			
Mashonaland East	Marondera CBD	Maramba			
Mashonaland West	Chinhoyi CBD	Ngezi D			
Masvingo	Masvingo CBD	Mkwasine			
Midlands	Gweru CBD	Gumunyu I			

Table 4: Qualitative data sources

Data collection method	Data source			
Pictorial representation	Harare	Bulawayo		
	5	5		
Audio diaries	Study wards	Target populations		
	22	11		
Focus group discussion	FGDs/wards	Total		
	1	22		
Key informant interview	Religious leader (youth)	Political party representative (youth)	Entrepreneur (youth)	Young parent
	2	10	10	10

The study also used secondary data in the form of previous Next Generation research outputs, previous publications on youth issues in Zimbabwe and official statistics related to youth in Zimbabwe.

Qualitative data

Regarding qualitative data, the collection methods were sensitive to the age differentials, situations and social positions of potential study respondents. As such, the study sought to unpack how young people in Zimbabwe understood and engaged with broader society (including their attitudes towards gender, ethnicity and religion, and their involvement in decision making at community and national levels); their opinions on and suggestions for improvement in employment, youth, and education policies and opportunities; their aspirations and fears for the future; their strategies for achieving their goals; and their views on politics, government and the direction that Zimbabwe is heading in, as well as views on the wider world. As such, the following methods were best suited for the various previously identified groups.

Photographic expression and interview

The method was used for youths between the ages of 18 and 24 in the metropolitan provinces. In this regard, 20 respondents (ten in Harare and ten in Bulawayo) from the metropolitan wards were asked to photograph particular items of interest and then explain why the photograph is a good depiction of the subject of interest. Photographic expression respondents were stratified according to age, sex and geographical location.

Personalised audio diaries

These were used to extract deep individual data from the youth. Sargeant et al. (2011) explored the use of an audio diary as a means to record the experiences of young people living with chronic diseases. The authors found that the diary revealed the 'ordinariness' of their experience. The method provided immediacy and intimacy, conversation and reflection as well as a flexible method of recording experiences. In this case, the method was used to extract information on sensitive and emotional cases in the study areas. In this regard, 33 individuals were given voice recorders over a duration of three days to record individual perspectives on particular subjects of interest. Of the 33, 11 were from purposively targeted populations (SM: two individuals, RM: two individuals, E: two individuals, As: two individuals and D: three individuals) while one youth was selected in each ward to make up the remaining 22 diaries. In addition, the 22 ward diary respondents were stratified according to age, sex and geographical location.

FGDs

These discussions were held with all the youth groups and icebreakers were used. Young people in the FGDs were reassured that there were no wrong answers, and the facilitators were trained to balance power between researcher and participant using the following guidelines suggested by Coad (2007):

- Adopt the role of naïve curiosity – open, honest and understanding but not patronising.
- Avoid being judgmental but accept participants' views as different from adults.
- Allow participants to present views.
- Be creative and flexible to reduce boredom.

The facilitator ensured that all participants were free to make their contribution while guarding against negative group dynamic hazards such as gender barriers, age barriers and the dominant member syndrome. One FGD was conducted in each study ward, giving a total of 22 FGDs nationwide. The FGD participants will be purposively sampled and stratified in accordance with gender, the study age groups and the previously explained biases. Artists, sportspeople and members of the Youth Task Force also had a special FGD conducted for them.

KIIs

These were organised with relevant key informants. In some cases, these interviews were done after exposure to one or more of the qualitative methods of data collection already discussed. Key informants included, among others, youth representatives in politics (one per province), youthful religious leaders (one per metropolitan province), young parents (one per province) and successful entrepreneurs (one per province).

Table 4 summarises the qualitative data respondents earmarked for this study.

Data analysis

The frequencies of the responses from the survey, correlations and descriptive statistics were used to show common positions and intervention behaviours of youth in Zimbabwe. Qualitative data from the FGDs and KIIs was analysed in accordance with the major themes that emerged from the study. Content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data collected through FGDs and KIIs. Content analysis is a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises the messages that the data is sending. For this study – as is common among majority inductive approaches to analysing qualitative data – the following steps were followed. Raw field notes stimulate the researcher to remember things in the field so as to be able to fill in gaps that were used to come up with intelligible and usable write-ups. Recordings were transcribed into text before they were subjected to the same processing as handwritten notes. Themes or domains which were 'umbrella' constructs were identified by the evaluators before, after and during data collection. The following techniques were used in the identification of the themes: word analyses (word repetitions, key words in context and indigenous terms) whereby key words from the field notes that occur more frequently than others were counted. The quality of a coding scheme influences the quality of the eventual data analysis, so high-quality schemes were ensured. The process also involved the connection of data to show how one concept may influence another, corroboration/legitimisation, by evaluating alternative explanations, disconfirming evidence and searching for negative cases. Comparisons and contrasts were used for qualitative analysis. In this method, answers were compared between different members of different groups in focus groups. The team identified reasons for the differences. As a method of qualitative data analysis, the team also searched for missing information – i.e. what was deliberately left out by respondents – as silence has meaning. Upon discovering missing information, the team leaders revisited the field to find that information as it could affect findings.

The qualitative data was used for triangulation (validation of survey results) and to build a more nuanced picture of reality. The qualitative and quantitative data collected was analysed with the assistance of relevant computer software such as NVIVO and SPSS, while Microsoft Excel derived necessary visual presentations of data.

Ethical considerations

The project team followed ethical guidelines prescribed by the British Sociological Association Statement of Ethical Practice 2017 and the Department for International Development's Ethics Principles for Research and Evaluation when carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities throughout the lifetime of this project. The study ensured that the well-being, dignity, rights and safety of young people and other participants involved in data collection, analysis and dissemination were respected and protected. Specifically, the study and particularly the data collection processes observed the general ethics of data collection from the public, including anonymity, free will, integrity and honesty. Relevant authorities were notified of the study and the necessary permission obtained. Survey respondents were asked to read related consent forms and give consent to participate in the interview process before they began. Questionnaires were kept safe at all times and the data used only for the purposes of the stated objective. Permission from the relevant authorities was also sought to use pictorial and any other references in future stages of the study.

> APPENDIX 2:
LIST OF FIGURES

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> APPENDIX 3:
LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADDC	Ali Douglas Development Consultancy
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
A	Asians
CBD	Central Business District
CSO	Civil society Organisation
D	Disabled
DFID	Department for International Development
DStv	Digital Satellite Television
E	European
Fe	Field Extracts
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Program
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHCH	Good Human Capital Hypothesis
GNU	Government of National Unity
HIV	Human Immune Virus
ICDS	Inter Censal Demography Survey
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBQTI	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Queers, Transgender Intersex
MDC-A	Movement for Democratic Change - Alliance
NEPF	National Employment Policy Framework
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
RM	Religious Minority
SM	Sexual Minority
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on Rights of the Child
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
WZ	World Vision Zimbabwe
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZimAsset	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency
ZLII	Zimbabwe Legal Information Institute