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## Zimbabwe: Summary

### THE SITUATION:

UNICEF Zimbabwe consulted adolescents and young people (AYP) in March 2021, to involve them in the programme planning that would directly benefit them: Learning and Skills, Climate Change, Mental Health, Gender Equality, AYP in Humanitarian & Protracted Crises, and Engagement. Involving AYP, making them partners in the programmes planned for the next three years, encapsulates participation, which is central to all thematic areas that form the UNICEF global strategic plan.

- Proving that such engagement is right in principle and in practice, 6/10 of the population are under 25yrs. This could reap a 'demographic dividend'.
- Poverty, vulnerability and education are strongly linked: poor children have less access to education; double-orphan girls or teen mothers are the most excluded

- **7.3%** of females are illiterate & only **5.6%** of girls are exposed to mass media
- Police (ZRP) and local and district members of Government often refuse AYP travel to attend inclusive and representative opportunities, and information dissemination sessions
- For structural and contextual reasons, AYP feel they have no real voice and inadequate information to keep them as safe and protected as they need to be
- The face of climate change in Zimbabwe are the poorest, rural children
- Food, clothing, safe shelter – as well as recognition – are most requested from AYP

### UNICEF TAKING ACTION ON AYP VOICES

- Central to well-being for AYP is inclusion and participation: in their communities, with other youth, in GoZ policy decisions, in interventions and programmes earmarked to benefit them, in local and global online platforms, in news and information creation and dissemination, in the financial sector, in creating and maintaining safe and clean environments and contributing to fight climate change, and in school-curriculum adjustments to make them relevant to their needs.
- Police (ZRP) and GoZ need to be sensitized to produce permission letters for AYP to travel to inclusive conferences and meetings
- Ensure every needy child is identified. All out-of-school AYP's 'at-risk' can face prostitution, drugs, child marriage, and should be assisted with re-entry, especially to secondary school, coupled with not only stationery, uniforms, pads and bicycles, but life-skills and capital to start their own income-generation businesses
- Awareness-raising to reduce discrimination towards those living with disabilities or albinism is critical
- Programmes for mental health, and more sexual reproductive health (SRH) education are vital
- AYP want their parents, elders and Government to be

sensitized on listening to young people and respecting their rights

- AYP want to be heard, connected and taken seriously

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE INVESTED IN, ACCORDING TO AYP?

- Meaningful engagement from the business community: to mitigate industrial waste leading to climate change and knock-on effects including, but not only, nutritional and gender inequality effects; partnering for renewable energy and sustainable ways to recycle; for financial inclusion for both young men and women; for investments in starts-ups; for invitations and financial support to access meaningful meetings, trainings and scholarships
- Reforestation
- Targeting factories and companies that create the most waste, e.g., by imposing stiff penalties for polluting, given such emissions contribute to ozone-layer depletion
- AYP living with HIV – need continued funding support for caregivers and support-group meetings where they can support each other on issues that affect their welfare and mental well-being, to accommodate children living with a disability. Others felt other children with a disability really need special care, hence schools specialized for them.