



© UNICEF/UN0303168/Mukwazhi/JNI

Zimbabwe: Children and Adolescents in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises

THE SITUATION:

- For **2** years, Zimbabwe has witnessed protracted emergencies: drought, Cyclone Idai, cholera, and COVID-19
- COVID-19 saw an increase in drug abuse, teenage pregnancies and prostitution
- AYP called for protection services in homes
- Overarching, patriarchal ideologies identify parents/ caretakers as decision makers, with no engagement from youth
- The lack of access to internet, phones, computers and internet data meant most young people missed information and emergency updates

UNICEF TAKING ACTION ON AYP VOICES

AYP from different districts who participated in the consultation had different emergency experiences, therefore different views and shares:

- Awareness-raising campaigns: before the onset of a disaster; what needs to be done to prepare, followed by humanitarian notifications afterward. These to be sent on phones, so that AYP with phones can convey messages to their peers/others.
- Access to technology so that AYP can sensitise adults and communities about disasters.
- AYP representatives from affected communities selected and supported by the police with documentation and bus fares from donors, to attend meetings to have a say in decisions
- AYP training on community-based disaster-risk management
- Prevent schools from closing during humanitarian situations as a continuation of education is essential
- Permanent shelter is required as opposed to continued living in tents or temporal structures.
- Medical support; sanitary wear, contraception, education on SRH and HIV, PPE (masks and sanitisers), emergency contact lines, Hotline phones, ability to report abuse promptly and GBV education, suggestion boxes
- Support to pregnant adolescents/young mothers with parenting skills and re-entry into education during and post crises.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE INVESTED IN, ACCORDING TO AYP?

- Early warning systems - so people can prepare in advance of an impending disaster and news, information as they play out
- Respect and fulfilment of children's rights: safe and clean environments; provision of wheelchairs; clothes, food and shelter assistance
- Education: provision of learning facilities when school buildings are destroyed
- Environmental Management Agency (EMA) should do more to ensure people do not settle or are relocated/ removed from wetlands, areas close to forests, dams, mountains, national parks and other hazardous locations
- Transport should be ready to be mobilised in time to evacuate people
- For youth to play a prominent role, there is need for continued advocacy, targeting adults and decision-makers, to allow youth in, with simultaneous capacity building and empowerment of youth. All trainings should cover Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).
- For youth over 18, humanitarian and DRR work are opportunities for employment

VOICES of AYP:

"There should be more training of adults - including parents - so that they understand that children also have rights, including the right to be heard and to participate in decision making"

"Pads! Pads! Pads! Please. Pads are more important than condoms."

"AYP living in humanitarian tents need permanent, safe shelters"