



Zimbabwe: Learning and Skills

THE SITUATION:

- Zimbabwe ranks **155th / 189** countries in terms of human development
- Just **8.5%** attendance in upper secondary school; 4.7% out-of-school in primary
- Education spending is well below international thresholds
- Human capital is constantly eroded and AYP face high unemployment: **27%**, or **31%** young females who head households. Unemployment rates are even higher in rural areas, e.g., Matabeleland North at 52.1%
- AYP depend on informal employment, which deepens and maintains multi-generational poverty and a dependence on remittances and international aid
- **91%** of those employed in the informal sector have no skills
- **7.3%** of females are illiterate & only **5.6%** of girls are exposed to mass media
- During COVID-19, less than **7%** of rural children accessed education of any kind

UNICEF TAKING ACTION ON AYP VOICES

- Ensure every needy child is identified. Some parents/guardians hide their disabled children, others believe sending girls to school is a waste of money, "since they will be married one day".
- School drop-outs should be assisted to go back to school, especially to secondary school.
- Out-of-school girls should be assisted with life skills and capital to start their own businesses.
- Awareness-raising to avoid early marriages
- Awareness-raising to reduce discrimination towards those living with disabilities or albinism. Assistance with clothes, blankets, wheelchairs where needed, and much educational and psychosocial support – is critical

WHAT NEEDS TO BE INVESTED IN, ACCORDING TO AYP?

- Community centres teaching skills for the "4th Industrial Revolution era," (i.e., technologies emerging and extending the impact of digitization in new and unanticipated ways)
- Strong calls for digital platforms, affordable gadgets and data bundles, to allow more youth access with ease, including those in remote districts who can't access school
- Educational shifts and the expansion into entrepreneurial skills for youth
- Free education, textbooks, uniforms and stationery, and for girls, menstrual-hygiene management, to keep all AYP in school
- Support for income-generation projects plus talent development in sports, films, and music amidst high levels of unemployment, to help young people to stay away from drugs and other, related delinquencies

VOICES of AYP:

"These days people of our age think it is better to be out there making money than being in school. Girls are no longer ashamed of selling their bodies for money, boys turn to thieving and selling drugs"

"The Government must ensure all young people are safe, protected and not left out, regardless of gender, geographical location, race, tribe, religion or disability"

"At schools, sanitary pads are an issue. Girls curse their womanhood because of the shame it brings - the lack of adequate resources to keep themselves clean and safe makes girls not participate"

"Children with disabilities should be treated fairly & should have equal opportunities to acquire skills."