

Investing in Zimbabwe's Youth: Generation Unlimited

TWO OUT OF THREE ZIMBABWEAN ARE UNDER 25.
ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH IN ZIMBABWE SEEK SKILLS,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EMPLOYABILITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

The situation

Zimbabwe is a Lower-Middle Income country with a gross national income per capita of \$USD1,400 (World Bank, 2021). According to Zimbabwe's census, the country has a young population with approximately 61 per cent being under the age of 25. Zimbabwe faces a serious problem of unemployment and underemployment, especially among its youth, who face an unemployment rate of 35 per cent.

Recent research has revealed the persistent barriers that female adolescents and youth continue to face in the transition from education to the workforce. Adolescent girls are under-represented in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) subjects and this impacts their potential for training in skills for the 21st century. In addition, female adolescents are vulnerable to child marriage

and adolescent pregnancies, which then results in interrupted schooling, social isolation and limited access to job and training opportunities. Unsurprisingly, the rates of female young people Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) are higher than their male counterparts.

The type of skills needed in the labour market are changing, outdated the skillsets adolescents and young people in Zimbabwe currently have. They are poorly exposed to skills development and innovation training, while technological changes are making many traditional jobs redundant. Equally, a large portion of job creation is driven by entrepreneurs and small businesses, while education systems are outdated and not adapted to entrepreneurship, creating a mismatch between the offer and the demand.



promoting girls-centered skills development (also known as Skills4Girls) supporting innovations by youth for youth promoting digital transformation supporting young people to engage in community interventions with high social impact.

UNICEF Response

UNICEF Zimbabwe is adopting a public-private-youth partnership model, bringing together public and private sectors, and including young people themselves under the 'Generation Unlimited' platform. Guided by the One-UN principle, UNICEF is partnering with ILO and UNDP, building on each other's comparative advantages to leverage partnerships, resources and capabilities for Zimbabwe's young people.

Young people are calling for job placement opportunities; equitable access to loans to start entrepreneurial businesses; promotion of the arts as employable skills; digital skills for girls and boys, support in sexual and reproductive health and rights, mental health and substance use, and in the fight against gender-based violence.

To address these gaps, UNICEF, in partnership with ILO and UNDP, shall carry out a series of interventions including: equip young people with 21st century skills most needed for entrepreneurship and employability

Target beneficiaries

50,000 adolescents and young people

1,050,500 learners' access to digital learning

TOTAL BUDGET \$1.1m

Support implementation of interventions that enable adolescents and youth to acquire/upgrade skills needed by the labour market, get access to remunerative decent job opportunities, and engage in entrepreneurial activities. **\$300k**

Implement gender targeted Skills4Girls programme through investment in STEM subjects. **\$250k**

Support innovations that address societal problems in most need of acceleration, including in the emerging areas of climate change, skills and employability **\$200k**

Further connect schools to internet, and adolescent and youth to information, opportunities, and choices through GIGA. **\$200k**

Support adolescents and youth with youth-led social impact and advocacy interventions to empower them as agents of social change both online and off-line in climate, mental health, child marriage, gender-based violence, violence against children, sexual reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. **\$150k**

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