Kuyenda
COLLECTIVE
- Moving Education Forward -

5th African Youth SDGs Summit

Lusaka, Zambia, 15-17 August 2023

The School Health Programme

Scaling Up Education and Health Impact for Children in Schools; A case study on how the Government of Zambia is implementing SDGs 3,4 and 5.

Organizers:

**Healthy Learners,
Ministry of Health Zambia,
Ministry of Education Zambia;
AAAZ- invited Kuyenda Collective**

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and Rachel Gondo**

Who is Kuyenda:

The Kuyenda Collective is an initiative funded through Education Out Loud (EOL) by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Kuyenda is made up of Rural Youth Collectives in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, national country partners FAWE Malawi (FAWEMA); CESC Mozambique, Policy Forum Tanzania, Teach for Zimbabwe (TFZ) and transnational partners Stimulus Africa- Zimbabwe, PSAM Rhodes University (South Africa) and Global Integrity (Washing DC USA).

Our aim is to amplify and legitimize our voices as rural youth and learners for quality information management and sustainable resourcing mechanisms for the progressive realisation of the right to education as articulated by SDG4 by advocating for the strengthening of education systems.

The Africa We Want in 2063 requires African countries to make significant progress in all the SDGs but we put forward that SDG 3 (Health and Well-being) 4 (Education) and 5 (Gender Equality) are critical catalysts to the continental agenda. Education is central to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development1. Within the comprehensive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, education is essentially articulated as a stand-alone goal (SDG4) with its 7 outcome targets and 3 means of implementation.

Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The underlying principles informing SDG 4 are:

1 Education is a fundamental human right that is also an enabler/catalyst in development

2 Education is a public good

3 Gender equality and equity and inextricably linked to education for all.

4 Education is also intrinsically linked to SDGs 3: Health and Well-being; 5: gender Equality; 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production and 13: Climate Change Mitigation.

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[1]Education is also intrinsically linked to SDGs 3: Health and Well-being; 5: gender Equality; 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and 13: Climate Change Mitigation.

Kuyenda in 2022 conducted a mapping and user experience research process to better understand the Learning crisis which identified key drivers of the learning crisis across Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe as:

1 Insufficient investment in rural development increases disparities in learning access & outcomes between rural and urban learners

2 Education sector financial and performance monitoring is lacking resulting in poor oversight of the implementation of education plans, budgets and systemic corrective action

3 Chronic underfunding and abuse/misuse of resources in the education sector resulting in poor teacher retention/ high attrition rates, inadequate learning materials and poor infrastructure

4 The absence of essential data on vulnerable/ marginalized learners and weak education information systems create gaps and misalignment between learning needs and learning policies

As Kuyenda we want to share ideas on how the SADC Region can scale up progress in SDGs 3. 4 and 5 through the implementation of the SADC RISDP by focusing on enhanced data generation, management and use in policy decisions.

Our sector of focus is Education however, it is intricately linked to the Health sector therefore our recommendations on enhanced information management can also be applied to this sector.

Talking points:

1 The Global SDG Monitoring Report 2019 highlighted that rural and poorest 20% of children have much less chance to complete primary education than rich urban peers.

2 Education Information Management Systems in SADC specifically are collecting very minimal data on sex, location and wealth status (Draft progress report SDG 4 SADC). Even if it is collected very little is used to inform planning and resource allocation in a timely manner.

What does this mean for a learner in rural areas:
If we do not have accurate data on how many children/learners, where they are and what level of poverty they are, there is a high possibility children in marginalised communities are not counted and therefore when planning for education, and/or for health is happening they are excluded. Poor information management has a knock-on effect on how much goes to education and health and also who then benefits, rural in particular girls will continue to be left behind.

The Youth recommend the following:

» National budgets in SADC member states should prioritise by increasing financial and human investments in harmonised data collection and management. This will allow for the coherent design of education, health and social assistance programmes jointly.

» We urge SADC member states to **comply with the SADC Education Information Management Systems Norms and Standards. EMIS is the best reliable measure of progress towards SDG 4.**

» To improve the representative nature of data/ evidence for policymaking, **we encourage a whole school approach to data collection such all users of the education systems are involved in data generation.** This requires sufficient financial, human and technological investment being deliberately allocated towards improved information management. **We recommend the establishment of online School Administration and Management systems to facilitate a move from manual to online data capture.**

» To **enhance data reliability,** data capturers at the district and provincial level require **training, equipment(computers/ laptops/tablets and backup energy sources** (electricity provision is erratic where we come from) so as to collect and compute data in a timely manner.

» At the national level we urge ministries in the social sectors to triangulate and harmonize data so that government resources are targeted to respond to those who are most in need, particularly learners in rural communities. **Centralized data use at the national level that is aligned to continental and international best practice**

» **Better collaboration, coordination and partnerships with non-state actors should be leveraged** to harness sufficient resources that ensure good information management and quality control in the social sectors.

» **Domestic resource mobilisation through the closing of illicit financial flows especially in our continent's natural resources is a way of increasing the resource purse** to strengthen information systems that inform equitable education and health outcomes.

» **Increase data coverage in EMIS on wealth quintile this will allow for SADC member states to measure access to vulnerable learners.** Involving rural learners in data collection is also a means to capture this missing element in data generation.

Quality Education Delivery in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe

Southern African countries are struggling to commit to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets as the final decade marks the implementation years. Africa is making slow progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals inclusive of SDG number 4 on Quality Education. The focus of this piece is to establish the standpoint of Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, all signatories to the SDGs, in attaining inclusive quality education. The goal of SDG number 4 is to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education which promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Thus, the countries' goals should align with the commitments and targets of SDG number 4 to improve learning outcomes, quality of service delivery, and education financing. The countries have adopted and formulated strong policies that advocate for inclusive and quality education, but they are informed by weak implementation strategies. Education policies seek to redress the learning crisis. The learning crisis reveals the digital access gap that influences education outcomes experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic - complex curricula, and gender disparities,

affecting access and inclusive education provision, and weak education financing systems at the national, grassroots, and family levels. Rural Youth Collectives (RYCs) are transnational advocates for better education systems installation with the aim of youth inclusion in education management information systems in their respective countries.

The underlying principles for SDG4 stem from education being a fundamental human right. SDG 4 encompasses the assurance of lifelong learning opportunities, from early childhood development to adult education. The Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) statistics are not accurate because they seem unable to disaggregate information on unequal access to education opportunities. Although African countries are adopting new and reforming old policies in line with SDG 4 there has been slow progress in attaining the target. Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania offer free primary education to achieve compulsory education for all. In Malawi and Mozambique, education at secondary and tertiary levels, at a fee affects the enrolment due to financial constraints.

The amended Zimbabwean Education Act [Chapter 25:04] of 2019 stipulates that "every child shall be entitled to compulsory basic state-funded education." Countries set unrealistic targets without funding for implementing the reforms. Tanzania is progressing in attaining equal learning opportunities, although the progress is slow. The Tanzanian flagship policy of the Fee-Free Basic Education Program (FBEP) provides free education and is expanding equitable access to primary education, but the quality of education is low. GPE (Global Partnership for Education) 2025 Results Framework (2023) notes that all four countries have weak EMIS and delivery of equity, efficiency, and finance for education is unattainable because there is missing data crucial in responsive planning and implementation for education inclusion, including in remote areas. Thus, African countries fail to meet the target of quality education delivery from ECD to adult education.

The countries are failing to meet the target of gender equality and inclusion in the educational sectors. The gender imbalances and other limitations being encountered by disadvantaged groups like rural youth and special needs individuals perpetuate their marginalization. There are ineffective learning systems for marginalized groups because of complex learning strategies and poorly implemented programs to support the learning environment and other socio-economic challenges. Rural learners are affected by the unequal distribution of resources and complex education curricula. The teacher competency levels in rural areas are low compared to urban areas and there is a high teacher-student ratio in all four countries. This affects the learning outcome in that the quality of education being received in rural schools is poor compared to the urban areas where learning resources are available. The access to digital learning and connectivity in rural areas is poor and there is no equipment and school laboratories that the schools can use to curb the digital gap. The complexities in implementing new (progressive) school curriculums in rural schools translate to poor learning outcomes as schools lack infrastructure and learning materials which also exacerbate inclusivity and gender imbalances. Hence, it can be noted that there has been slow progress in attaining the SDG4.

Gender gaps in education are because of cultural practices and hegemonic patriarchal tendencies of society that value boys and impede girls' rights to attain education. Cultural practices, like female genital mutilation (FGM), affect girls' access to education because they increase absenteeism and focus on preparing the girl for managing a home. This scenario encourages school dropouts in Malawian rural areas and some parts of Zimbabwe. Cultural practices coupled with some religious practices lead to girls and the youth dropping out of school. An emerging gap is that education advocacy and support disadvantage the boy child because the focus is on girls, thus boys are not completing lower-secondary level according to the GPE Report. The GPE 2025 Results Framework (2023) notes that none of the four countries have made much progress in implementing the gender-responsive planning and monitoring mechanism, and no data has been collated with regards to gender gaps in education. The countries are failing to deliver gender-sensitive programs to encourage youth to complete basic education.

The learning emphasis on special needs education provision should be on access and continuity. Special needs learners are greatly disadvantaged in accessing schools and learning facilities. There is no accurate data on special needs learners as

most children do not acquire an education. This magnifies the gap in inclusive education for all. There are a few schools that offer quality education to special needs learners. Moreover, rural schools do not accommodate special needs persons and teachers are not trained to equip them with relevant knowledge and skills development set. There is no model for teaching special needs learners and the availability of learning materials is limited, for instance, braille learning materials for the blind are largely unavailable. The learners cannot access education funding and special needs schools are few in the countries. Rural areas have no schools that enroll students living with disabilities. There is no accurate data on the children that require special needs support and in rural areas as these children do not access learning facilities. Inclusion in education is difficult to achieve because society is ableist, and special needs students do not equally access learning opportunities. There should be adaptive learning resources for students with special needs and they should be supported on digital learning platforms. Teacher training should commence and deliver quality education to the special needs learners. To foster inclusive education, customized learning materials should be available in sign language, braille, and necessary toolkits to help equip learners for sustainability. Therefore, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe should establish inclusive structures to cater to special needs students.

African countries are failing to commit to the target of ensuring vocational and technical skills for the workforce for sustainable development. There are high rates of unemployment for those youth that are educated. There is no data presented on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher learning institutions. The SADC Progress Report on SDGs states that there is inadequate access to TVET and higher learning institutions. The quality of education of TVET institutions and opportunities to access university education are low for marginalized and special needs groups. The report also notes that EMIS focuses on primary and secondary education sectors and there is no published data on the participation rates for TVET and Higher Education learners provided by the Ministry of Tertiary and Higher Education. Vocational training centers and higher education should be accessible and inclusive to all youth. This enhances employability and promotes education-centered research. Thus, the governments should improve the delivery of technical and vocational learning to promote universal youth literacy, and entrepreneurship encouraging sustainability and wealth creation. In conclusion, achieving inclusive quality education in Africa by 2030 is a very difficult goal due to the slow progress so far. To achieve a quality delivery education system in Africa, there is a need to successfully implement policies and reforms and practically meet the demands of the different areas. The successful implementation will enable Africa to contribute to the globalized knowledge economy for growth and sustainable development. Hence, increasing synergies and participation of all sectors of the economy is transformative in delivering quality and inclusive education delivery systems.

Pre-summit views of the youth on quality education

The Kuyenda Rural Youth Collectives (RYCs) share their view on attaining quality education in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. 2023 represents the halfway stage in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals by nations. Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe are signatories to the SDGs. Therefore, through transnational advocacy, the RYCs are amplifying their voices and concerns around implementing policies and programs that aim to ensure quality service delivery of education, health, water, and sanitation in schools and tertiary institutions. The perspectives are drawn from the limitations and possible outcomes for SDG 4 on quality education which entails ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Limitations to Accessing Inclusive and Quality Education

Complex and poorly structured curriculum.
- » There should be the introduction of English in the Mozambique and Malawi curriculum, to allow students to access international opportunities impacting their employability.
- » Practical and technical subjects should be introduced in schools for skills development and self-sustenance of schools through agriculture, carpentry, and welding, amongst others.

Shortage of trained teachers and inadequate school resources
- » The student-to-teacher ratio is high. There is a shortage of trained teachers, especially in remote schools.
- » Trained personnel should be deployed to the rural area schools to allow for the introduction of STEM subjects in schools and adequate infrastructure and facilities should be constructed.
- » Learning materials for special needs students should be available to allow for equal and inclusive education.

Digital Access Gap
- » Adopting digital education is central to capacity and connectivity. Rural schools cannot use digital technology to access education systems. There is poor internet connectivity due to lack of electricity and infrastructure.

Education Financing Gap
- » At the national level, the education financing gap translates to poor infrastructure and the inability of schools to be built to cater to the increasing enrollment.
- » The government should prioritize increasing funding for the education sector to address the funding constraints that have affected the sector. Increased funding enables the government to invest in infrastructure development, teacher training programs, and other initiatives to improve quality education.
- » At family levels, students drop out of school due to financial constraints. Families are unable to provide financial support for their children to complete their education. Through collaborative efforts, there should be educational loans, scholarships, and bursaries for remote communities.

Priorities in the last decade of action
- ■ Improve the digital delivery of education at grassroots levels. Pilot the rural electrification programs and establish centers to access digital technology.

- ■ Initiate programs and construct facilities for special needs students.

- ■ Adopt and initiate health-related services and programs within schools to cater to emergencies and support girls during monthly cycles.

The Kuyenda Rural Youth Champions Reflections on the Sustainable Development Goals Summit 2023

Emelda Mkandawire
Kuyenda RYC Champion, Malawi

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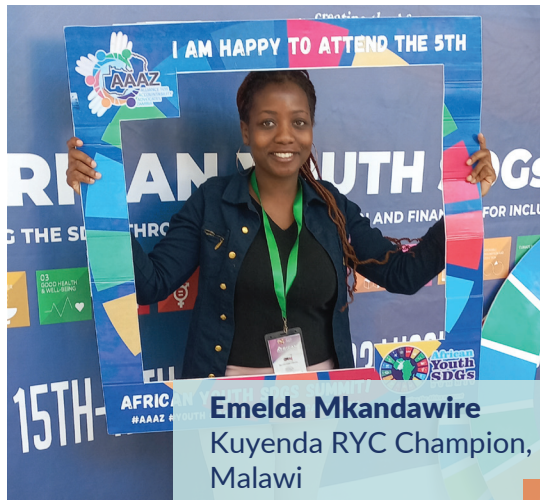
One thing I observed is that for development and change to come it needs unity and activeness from youths because if we do nothing, nobody will do it for us. A quick observation from the gaps in the SDGs is most governments need to be accountable to their citizens whenever it comes to development perspective. I understand it is not only about doing the work but being responsible and standing in a position where the government should be able to respond to the needs of its people for us to achieve this milestone.

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Fortunate Nyika
Kuyenda RYC Champion, Zimbabwe

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The summit provided a networking platform for young people to harness their creativity and actively shape the trajectory of progress toward achieving the SDGs. The Summit empowered young minds across the continent to incubate innovative ideas and initiatives that hold the potential to contribute significantly to the localization and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within their respective countries. An evident gap was the limited participation of youth in the panelist's section. The true potential of youth-led initiatives can be fully realized when all stakeholders are actively engaged. Ensuring the presence and participation of youth will enhance the effectiveness and impact of youth-driven development efforts as they speak their minds. As African youths, they carry a responsibility for the continent.

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Thokozani Fickson
Kuyenda RYC Champion, Malawi

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Education is a stand-alone SDG and a catalyst of other SDGs. Rural schools need immediate intervention by governments and other sectors to curb the increasing number of school dropouts due to gender equality-related disparities and socio-economic challenges. Young people have a role to play in transnational education advocacy. The weapon for their success is to hold duty-bearers accountable at local, national, and regional levels to attain education for all.

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The Kuyenda Rural Youth Champions Reflections on the Sustainable Development Goals Summit 2023

Andrew Pasipanodya
Kuyenda RYC Champion,
Zimbabwe

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Kuyenda Rural Youth Collectives amplified our voices and constantly reminded the panelists that education is the center of development, and it is crucial to address its limitations. The Summit was on SDGs, but minimum attention was given to quality education. In my view, there is a lack of transnational education advocacy initiatives because of less emphasis on the benefits of education to individuals and communities. As a basis of our contribution, SDGs 3, 4, and 5 are critical drivers to achieve sustainable development because of the collaborative efforts on access, equality, and inclusion.

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Silvester Julius
Kuyenda RYC Champion,
Mbeya Tanzania

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Tanzania is working toward attaining SDG 4: Quality education that ensures the availability of inclusive and quality education for all. The Tanzanian government has created an opportunity for collaboration and involvement of various stakeholders and civil society organizations to provide access to free education. However, the delivery of quality education is limited by the financial constraints of acquiring infrastructure and learning materials, especially for rural schools. There is a shortage of teachers which affects the learning outcomes as there is an increase in student admission due to the Free Education Policy. To improve the learning outcomes, the inclusion of the youth in the education sector allows for effective reforms that will bring sustainable development.

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Conclusion

The role of youth in achieving inclusive education outcomes is to reimagine and reinvent education systems. Youth innovation for education promotes socio-economic mobility and social cohesion because individuals break cycles of poverty and reach their full potential as they develop skill sets to access better living conditions. Collaboration with the youth is key to improving education delivery and reducing inequalities. Youth are key actors in the transformation of the education systems; hence they should contribute to policy reforms and invest in the education ecosystem to ensure development and sustainability.

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