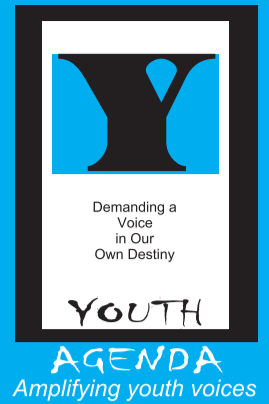


The New Age Voices

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'Young People Initiative' launched

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and World Education Inc-Children First on Thursday launched a three-pronged "Young People" outreach initiative at the Harare Sports Club in the Capital. It was facilitated by Youth Advocates Zimbabwe (YAZ).

The launch provided a national platform for youths to communicate their needs, concerns and opinions to stakeholders, legislators and policy makers. The program also sought to offer them life skills guidance and advice.

Present at the Launch was US Ambassador Charles Ray, USAID Mission Director Karen Freeman, guest of honor who is the chairman of heads of denominations and president of the Evangelical fellowship of Zimbabwe Dr Goodwill Shana and secretary general of the Catholic Bishops conference Father Davison Lukio and YAZ director Tatenda Songore among others.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Ray said that older people had a lot to share with their youth counterparts but urged the young people to learn from their mistakes and also encouraged them to be innovative and 'think outside the box'.

"Those who are older have a lot to share with the young people but our mistakes should not be your mistakes. You can only be successful by standing on the shoulders of great people hence we can work together and create a better life for you," said Ray.



U.S. Ambassador Charles Ray delivers a speech at the launch of the Young Peoples Initiative launch

Karen Freeman said that the US was proud to be associated with the initiative and promised support. "The American people are proud to support this innovative youth initiative that seeks to empower youth and help them solve the important issues that face them by working together.

"We think the youth initiative is an important tool that can help foster important debates and discussions on the best way forward," Freeman said.

Dr Shana said that young people are looking for answers but they have failed to

find them in politics and economics as well hence they need to turn to the church for the right answers.

"The church is the light of the nation and it provides young people with a moment of hope and opportunity. Young people are not leaders of tomorrow but of today and they provide hope for tomorrow. This partnership will assist the church but also give inspiration and hope to the youth and will take them out of the dungeons of poverty. We want to give youth hoes so that they can build the future," said Dr Shana.

He said that the initiative must consider vocational training and that the older generation must leave an inheritance for their children. "A righteous man leaves an inheritance for his children," Dr Shana said.

The Young People Initiative will be run by USAID partner World Education Inc-Children First and a local communications agency, Ripple Communications. The project involves local NGOs, youth organisations, relevant government ministries, media organisations and others engaged in the lives of young people.

It will address issues such as HIV/AIDS, puberty, sexual and reproductive health, relationships, entrepreneurship, youth leadership and education.

The project has 3 components: the 'Young People' radio program, a Call-in Centre and newspaper editorials. The 30 minute radio program will be broadcast on Power FM every Tuesday evening between 7 and 7:30PM for 3 months, discussing topical issues with special guests. Selected youths, journalists and representatives of Children First will coordinate the media engagement activities including the radio programs and newspaper columns.

Youth from this group will be trained to answer immediate questions and provide information and resources at the call in centre, which is also accessible via SMS to a hotline number (0777469107), also broadcast on the radio show.

MDC, Zanu PF youths meet over violence



Tongai Kasukuwere of Zanu PF (extreme right) and Mashoko Matonhodze (extreme left) of MDC-T follow proceedings at the meeting where young people slammed the violence which has gripped some parts of the country.

YOUTHS from across the political divide last week slammed the recent upsurge in violence that has turned some suburbs in Harare into cauldrons.

Speaking at a meeting that was organized by Youth Alliance for Democracy (YAD) in Harare, youth leaders from the three main political parties castigated what they termed a deliberate ploy by politicians to continue

polarizing the youths.

The meeting was held under the theme, "mitigating electoral conflict and violence: towards a non violent solution oriented approach to violence".

For the past month, Mbare and Epworth high density suburbs have been turned into war zones by marauding

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News In Brief

Gwisai, co accused still in custody.

International Socialist Organisation general coordinator Munyaradzi Gwisai and 45 others who were arrested on allegations of plotting an Egyptian Style uprising are still in custody after Magistrate Munamoto Mutevedzi refused to grant them bail and referred them to the High Court.

The 46 were arrested last week and claim that they were tortured after being charged with treason for trying to topple a 'constitutionally' elected government.

Their lawyer Alec Muchadehama made an application for refusal of further remand citing lack of evidence to show reasonable suspicion that Gwisai and his co-accused committed treason as alleged.

Muchadehama said the arrest was unlawful and it was a dragnet form of arrest akin to abduction. Their bail application is expected to be heard today (Monday) at the High court.

Libya continues to burn

Thousands of civilians continue to perish in the troubled North African Country of Libya with protesters fighting tooth and nail with the dictatorial regime of Muammar Gaddafi. The ruthless leader who has remained in power since 1969 is facing his greatest ever threat to his grip on the oil rich nation with thousands of protesters demanding that he leave office.

Gaddafi, who has ruled Libya with an Iron fist is said to have siphoned wealth that is over US\$70 billion and citizens in the Arab country have demanded that he steps down for ruining the country but he remains defiant despite already having lost some towns to protesters.