



**A NEW VISION OF YOUTH QUOTA SYSTEM DESIGN,
FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR
YOUTH INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE IN ZIMBABWE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is no secret that the youth have been left out of decision making positions and bodies in Zimbabwe. Since 1980 we have seen a subtle but systemic sidelining of the youth in the corridors of power. Without access to decision making bodies and positions, the youth remain downtrodden and irrelevant in policymaking. Although there have been recent calls and strides towards the initiation of the 10% youth quota in parliament, this gesture is far from satisfactory as such a quota cannot represent 67.7% of the population. Hence, there is a glaring need for the initiation of fresh and witty quota system constructs for the youth across decision making bodies and institutions to ensure that the voices of the youth are heard.

INTRODUCTION

The youth are blocked from accessing decision making positions and bodies at all levels of society. The Constitution (Section 91) of the country does not allow anyone under the age of forty to run for president. This is a strange provision as in other countries persons can run for the office of president below the age of 40. In France, Emmanuel Macron became president at 39. In parliament, we have a gender quota based on proportional representation whereby 60 seats are reserved for women. The cabinet is difficult to get into as you have to be a running Member of Parliament or Senate to be elevated to the post of Minister. Only 5 places are available for ministerial selection for non – members of the house. Gender is a constitutional consideration in the selection of Ministers based on (Section 104) of the Constitution. We do not see any youth-centred proclivity in the selection of Deputy Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and directors in government. Not only do we not have a Youth Commission as a country, but the youth are not entitled to any reserved seats in existing commissions whilst women are entitled under the Constitution to half of all seats in all commissions. This concise youth analysis of the national governance structures clearly shows that the

youth are not considered to be an important entity in the governance of the country. Thus, they have no say in decisions affecting their welfare and wellbeing. The result of such neglect is that we will continue to see inexplicable youth blind policies and decisions being passed. Such decisions have a negative intergenerational effect of maintaining the bottom class stature of the youth in a country that they are the majority of.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the background of the introduction, we can see that the youth are barred systemically from entering positions of power and decision making. The recent 10% quota call by the government is a mere tip of the required amount of quota-based regulations that must be put in place to ensure that the youth finally get some form of decision making power. Such access to power is the only answer to the realization of youth inclusive governance in Zimbabwe. Hence, it is time to demand and come up with an imperative quota system requirement for the youth in Zimbabwe. In a bid to drive toward this revised policy direction, the following policy recommendations are proffered:

- There must be a legally binding quota for Ministerial positions for the youth. At least 30% of Ministerial positions must be occupied by the youth.
 - A 30 % quota for the youth in parliament must be enacted forthwith.
 - A Vice presidential position must be reserved for a person within the youth age bracket.
 - At least 50% of all Deputy Ministers must be youths.
 - A National Youth Commission must be enacted forthwith.
 - Youths must make up by law at least 30% of all existing commissions.
 - The Ministry of Youth, Arts, Sports and Recreation must be disbanded and replaced by a standalone Ministry of Youth with the deep mandate of ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of the largest demographic group in the country being the youth.
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CONCLUSION

Good management of intergenerational welfare can lead to sustainable development in a country. If the state and government of the day ensure that the young population is catered for, positive development effects will be felt in the future. Deliberately placing the youth in positions of power is a masterstroke development strategy, as such young people think strategically and would want to carve a better future for themselves and others who still have a long productive life ahead of them.

