



## Press Statement #LeaveNoYouthBehind2018

The youths cater for two thirds of the population of Zimbabwe and over the past years there was limited youth participation during elections; for instance in the 2008 there was 22 % participation in the harmonised elections. Focusing on the upcoming 2018 elections we as the **#LEAVE NO YOUTH BEHIND 2018** we reiterate the need for youth participation both as voters and as candidates. Youth participation is a key tenant in the Zimbabwe Constitution Section 20 (b) which stipulates that youth should; ‘have opportunities to associate and to be represented and participate in political, social economic and other spheres of life”, hence this campaign seeks to fulfil what is enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe by allowing young people to be at the forefront of national processes.

Gathered as Provincial Coordinators from all 10 provinces of Zimbabwe, together with the students’ movements and the National umbrella board of youth; to further what has been set and agreed at the Launch of this campaign on 26 November 2016 at Jameson Hotel in Harare; with 120 stakeholders endorsing the campaign. We gather again at Cresta oasis in Harare, from provinces to further solidify the four pillars of our campaign; that is **Go Mobilize! Go Educate! Go Register! Go Vote!**

**The #LeaveNoYouthBehind2018 Campaign** is a practical philosophy to make sure all young people in Rural Areas, Peri-urban, Urban areas and farms have enough information, are registered as voters, influence each other to participate in electoral processes and some of them participate within their political parties or as independent candidates during 2018 harmonized election. The campaign will also conduct voter education, targeting young people in Zimbabwe. This campaign will also assist the young people with information on benefits of peaceful environment to their development and the development of the country. The campaign primarily targets the following key three groups of youth.

- **First time voters – those born between 1995 and 2000;**

- **Youth Apathy – those of voting age but not registered and participating in electoral processes; and**
- **Youth candidates – those registering as candidates for election.**

We vastly understand that any country's social and political terrain is defined and determined by the youth mores; in the case of Zimbabwe where youths make 67% of the population. This is not just because of who they are, but it is a fact that youths constitute 47% of the voting population in our country. Naturally, it means that their views must be appreciated as they are the critical substratum of any nation. In the past, the youths' energy has been diverted towards negative contribution to the electoral process and they have become infamous and synonymous with the violence that has characterized previous elections in Zimbabwe and raven most of them to the peripheries of the electoral process.

**In recognition of the above, as youth we agreed to, guided by the National Constitution of Zimbabwe which is the Supreme law:**

- **Increase youth participation in all voting processes through Mobilisation, Education and encourage youth to Register and Vote for their preferred candidate;**
- **To Mobilize and influence to register 2 million youth in Zimbabwe to participate in the 2018 elections;**
- **Facilitating youth voter education and information dissemination in all provinces of Zimbabwe before 2018 elections; Educating youths to see the importance of voter registration and for them to be able to know that the future is in their hands; including young women and youth with various forms of disability.**
- **To mainstream Peace messages in the campaign and to contribute to non-violent environment before and after 2018 elections. Encourage all Political Parties to sign a Peace Pledge in recognition of a non-violent society before and after election.**
- **To translate Information to be disseminated to various local languages found in Zimbabwe and cater for people with various forms of disability e.g. having them in Braille and sign language.**
- **To be apolitical and inclusion of all political parties, youth movements and formations in the campaign and work with Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) in all our electoral processes.**

We believe that a country with its youthful population accorded the chance to participate will not fail in its effective development plans.

### **Thank You**

#### **(National Coordinating Committee (NCC))**

1. Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT Mat South) - Matabeleland South
2. Hwange Human Right Youth Forum- - Matabeleland North
3. Youth for Innovation Trust (YIT)- - Bulawayo
4. Yield Trust - Bulawayo
5. Mutasa Youth Forum - Manicaland
6. Great Indaba Zimbabwe (GIZIM)- - Midlands
7. Community Advocacy Development (CADT)- -Mashonaland West
8. Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT) - Mashonaland West
9. Zimbabwe Renewal Generation Trust (ZRGY) - Mashonaland East
10. Sheep Gate International - Mashonaland East
11. RAFT – -Masvingo
12. AFDETO- - Mashonaland Central
13. Youth for Peace & Development (Y4PD)- -Harare
14. For Youth by Youth- - Harare
15. Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) - Convener Students (National)
16. National Association of Youth Organizations (NAYO Africa) - Campaign Coordinator
17. NANGO – (Youth Sector) - Campaign Advisor

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