Youth Justice
Power Spaces:
3I Workshop Report
Zimbabwe
......the respondents were very complying and (we) had to invite one youth to our online training sessions, although he could not continue with the training because he was arrested for drug abuse...

...Young people have always wanted to be employed and become doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers, but these dreams and aspirations have been shattered...

Lloyd Wamai
Programmes Executive
Africa Alliance of YMCAs
Statehouse Crescent, off State House Road
Nairobi
lloyd@africaymca.org
They said that they need jobs, education that pays, systematic judiciary that rehabilitates offenders not incarcerating only. Jobs, counselling, stronger legal ramifications, sporting programs were the most ways selected that discourages young people from committing crimes.

The stakeholders noted that the community is slowly accepting crime as a day-to-day way of life. They all noted that unemployment has pushed young people into crimes. They stated that substance abuse, robbery and cyber-crimes are some of the crimes being committed by young people. Social media, desire to have a better life and peer pressure are some of the noted pull factors of crime. They believed that young people can change despite them being in conflict with the law, and this can be done through correctional service, rehabilitation, counselling and provision for income generating projects since most young people are financially incapacitated and they cannot borrow from the bank since they do not have collateral security. Stakeholders interviewed believed that if the community, NGOs, Zimbabwe Republic Police and the Zimbabwe Prison and Correctional Service, Ministry of Youth, Social welfare, churches and the government at large should work together to ensure that they curtail crime rates. They also noted the poor conditions of the correctional service which has a negative impact in that there is more of retributive justice over restorative justice and this has mentally affected young people.

The most common crimes are petty theft, house breaking and fraud. These are occasioned by the unavailability of jobs or other means of income. The respondents blamed rampant drug abuse for an increase in burglaries and petty theft by saying that the addictions lead some youth to become homeless, lacking family support. The use of technology has a negative impact in that there is more of cyber-crimes. These are caused by the lack of proper Identification documents. The respondents believed that these are some of the root causes of crime. After committing crime, one goes through the courts, is convicted and sent to prison or may serve another penalty. After serving their sentences, and because there are no proper reform and rehabilitation services, the cycle is repeated and the youth only become more prone to crime.

The lack of proper Identification documents (ID) for youth presents a unique challenge as the youth are not able to access job opportunities.

The community struggles with accepting former detainees back. The associated stigma and rejection encourages a number of the former detainees to re-offend.

Spiritualization of theft: Some respondents stated that there was an evil spirit that leads some, if not all youth to steal. There is even speculation that the youth possessed by the spirits can sense who has money or valuables and then target them.

Respondents Some opt for school dropping as they now believe that even those with degrees are roaming the streets so there is no need to go to school. When in school you can see that the child is not concentrating and is high, when you ask why putting life to waste.

Conversations with youth

Respondents from Bulawayo, Gweru, Harare, Kadoma and Research

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, all the research work that was done was limited to those within the coordinators’ area of residence. To facilitate better outcomes, it is recommended that the process is expanded to include a more scientific process. The outcomes described below are descriptive of a rapid assessment of Bulawayo, Gweru, Kadoma and Harare.

Stakeholders interviewed included three pastors, two police officers, a school teacher, one youth programs officer who works under the Ministry of Youth in Zimbabwe, two lawyers and two social workers.

From the rapid assessment, most young people are engaging in illegal activities due to economic challenges. Most of the young people do not want to be in conflict with the law but they end up in such position due to the lifestyles they have adopted. Respondents all reported having initially had ambitions which along the line disappeared. They reported that idle lifestyles provided opportunity and reason to commit crimes. Seven out of eight respondents were struggling with drug and substance abuse and have been at one point in the recent past been in police detention because of use of illegal drugs.

Respondents stated that lack of education, money and peer pressure are the causes of crime. They agreed that the government and the judiciary or local authorities are doing little to nothing in preventing youth crimes since they are not addressing the root issues that are causing crimes. They also stated that most young people come out of jail worse than they were before.

One significant challenge according to the respondents is that Zimbabwe’s correctional system does not adequately enable the rehabilitation of youth in conflict with the law. After committing crime, one goes through the courts, is convicted and sent to prison or may serve another penalty. After serving their sentences, and because there are no

with neighbours and friends, partying, “Vuzu” parties.

• The youth interviewed were above 18 years and below 30 years. Most of their life routines have been revolving amongst trading as a survival strategy. 6 out of 10 youths were involved in drug abuse and their main reason was to “relieve” life pressures. In their everyday lives they get in conflict with the law and they have been normalising bribing the law enforcers.

Relationships

Most respondents reported being in relationships having met in churches, colleges and neighbourhood with their partners.

The young men liked their partners because they cared about people, independent, beautiful, gives encouragement and focus in life. Young women liked their partners because they were responsible, supportive with assignments, have scope and considerate.

relationships between the community and the youth have been antagonistic mainly because the youths are viewed as a lost generation.

Life Aspirations

- Aspirations mentioned were Chemical Engineering, building chess academy and orphanage, large-scale farming, electrician, social work, psychologist, Information Technology, DJ and master of ceremony.
- Mothers or mother figures are the sources of support.
- Participants defined success: being able to support family financial and emotional, being able to achieve what one wants at an expected time.
- Most of the participants started activities either with family, friends, and church or within the community. They learn these activities from colleagues, different trainings by NGOs.
- Interfering in their happiness caused rebelliousness, and this was to their mother, friends or anyone who goes too far.
- Majority of the respondents dream of a “good” lifestyle where they could afford to buy a house, car and have money to spend on luxurious life. Some of the careers that the respondents aspire
Education
- A number of respondents reported to have dropped out of school because of financial constraints and lack of identity documents.
- Majority of respondents reported to have had health education lessons either through their guidance and counselling lessons or through school clubs run by non-governmental organisations.

Crime
- Approximately 90% of respondents reported to have either committed a crime or witnessed one. From 10 participants interviewed in one location, for example, one reported to have spent two weeks in prison and paid fine, one served community service that lasted for five months. One had to bribe a police officer for his release, another got arrested whilst at work as the company he worked for did not provide identity documents (he was guarding a mine and was mistaken for an illegal gold panning). One participant knew a young person who served community service that lasted for five years after being accused of stealing copper cables.
- The respondents stated that the more common crimes ranged from theft, assault, public drinking, physical abuse, political violence, drug selling, violation of COVID-19 restrictions and Domestic Violence.
- Major reasons that cause youth to commit crimes were lack of education, lack of money, no parental guidance, dropping out of school and peer pressure.
- Most of the respondents disagreed that young people cause most, or all the disturbances and the crimes committed in their society.

About the Bulawayo Community
- Bulawayo is known for subsistence/communal farming. The community is engaged in different farming activities that include vegetables, cereals, livestock & poultry.
- It is rich in culture and arts, although the community experiences a lot of crime, drug, substance, alcohol abuse, unemployment, teenage pregnancies, and child marriages.
- Takes pride in high literacy rate, clean environment, nearby nurture reserves, proximity to most active borders in the country. Popularly known as City of Kings and Queens.
- Bulawayo hosts activities such as the yearly International Trade Fair, Intwasa festivals arts awards, different provincial commemorations, and other family activities.

Context to understanding Youth Justice, crime, and delinquency.
- Concerned with the rising number of young people who find themselves in conflict with the law, particularly the criminal law regime, which is punitive.
- Young people access services from government offices, clinics, secondary/high schools, tertiary institutions, council offices, youth centres, community halls, banks. These services include affordable vocational training on different courses, SRH services, social Safety nets (loans, legal representation). Constituency Development Fund, to assist young people in undertaking their entrepreneurial programs. Political influences, mistrust, and lack of transparency are the drawbacks of all these.
- Centralization of activities also make most young people easily lose interest.

Most pressing needs of the community that cause young people to get into a life of crime
- Unemployment, lack of income
- High school dropout also due proximity to South Africa and Botswana as they look for work.
- Mushrooming of outlets selling alcohol expose youths to drug and substance abuse at an early age.

The most significant impact of crime
- Most crimes lead to incarceration, which may adversely affect one’s mental or even physical wellbeing. For young and first-time offenders, incarceration may be a traumatic experience that damages the person permanently, although the criminal Justice System of Zimbabwe keeps room for rehabilitation.

Most groups affected by crime issues
- It largely affects young people. This has increased unemployment, drug, alcohol and substance abuse, Gender-based violence, lack of education, peer pressure, and matters of national interest like economic depression.
- The elderly people as they live with their grandchildren whose parents mostly work in South Africa and Botswana and cannot control them once they get addicted to drugs.

What are the local beliefs and attitudes towards youth and crime?
- This is one area where in the community has not paid warranted attention. Some adults are accomplices in assisting the youth to commit the crimes, some by encouraging criminal behaviour, some by supplying the drugs to the youth who end up committing crimes.
- The youths claim their rights but do not take the responsibilities that come with rights.

Trends of youth and crime in the last 10 Years
- Increasing because of the influence of technology easy accessibility of drugs, and negligent parenting.
- Drugs, theft, murder, rape have increased at an alarming rate.

Which organizations or institutions can be strongest partners in addressing matters to do with youth and crime?

About Kadoma
- The Kadoma branch administered a total of 10 youth questionnaires to young people (8 males and 2 females) and 3 stakeholders’ questionnaires to try assessing the situation with regard to youth in conflict with the law and those at risk of offending have taken steps towards active citizenship.

Stakeholders
- The stakeholders were mainly civil servants working in different ministries i.e ministry of home affairs, ministry of social services and Judiciary. At some point they work with the youths directly and indirectly. For example, a prison officer under the Ministry of Justice highlighted on the importance of initiatives to try address to the needs of youth in prison and ex-prisoners. The social service department expressed that the welfare of people regardless of their affiliation need to have a decent standard way of life especially the disadvantages.
- The third stakeholder the police expressed that law enforcement was their role in the community and this include campaigns and awareness raising.

What is this community known for?
- Kadoma is a city of gold. Most of its activities in the community are gold mining related, agriculture and of recent due to the unstable economy buying and selling has dominated. The city is also known for producing sports persons. The people who live in Kadoma are of mixed race with the most mining areas dominated by people who have Zambian and Malawian decent. The Kadoma community takes pride in gold mining, agriculture (cotton known as white gold, maize etc) and a home of sports stars and musicians.

Public holiday celebrations as the main regular events and gatherings that happen in the community and during weekend youth and some businesspeople host the “Pasa Pasa”, an outdoor dancing and singing competition or entertainment. Sporting activities are also common and are mainly referred to money game but due to Covid 19 restriction these have been affected. They also highlighted religious gathering as regular events in the community.

Kadoma stakeholders highlighted that their topmost concern is the continuous rise of youth involvement
An intriguing revelation was also that the elderly have been in the centre of crime. This is because the youth have been blaming the government on the poor economic conditions and the youth claim to be the ones who are directly affected. There is also a lack of information and opportunities for young people.

**Access to government services**

The stakeholders highlighted that the youth could access government services from mainly government offices. For example, the police station, public hospitals, recreational centres like local authority stadiums, tennis courts as well as public swimming pools. However, due to unfriendly environment and lack of resources they services have not been youth friendly.

**Types of services**

Youth accessible services include recreational services, counselling, as well as health services like testing and screening of HIV at every public hospital or clinics. From the responses of the stakeholders, the quality of services provided is low mainly because of the people delivering the service.

**Level of crime**

The stakeholders highlighted that they are very much concerned about the level of crime in the area they work in. All the stakeholders confirmed that there has been a significant increase in drug abuse, assaults, illegal mining, sexual abuse and violent cases. The poor performing economy and high unemployment in the country have also contributed to the rise of crime rate in the country. The bad economic conditions and limited access to resources, lack of recreational facilities, and lack of opportunities have all contributed to the rising numbers of youth engaging in crime.

The most significant impact of crime according to the interviewed stakeholders is drug abuse. The stakeholders highlighted that drug abuse amongst the youths has caused the youth to venture into crime so that they can access drugs. 67% of stakeholders interviewed indicated that the elderly have been the most affected by crime in Kadoma, mainly because the youth who have been in the centre of crime target the elderly. An intriguing revelation was also that the elderly have been having challenges in transacting due to the multicurrency system introduced recently in Zimbabwe.

All the stakeholders were in agreement and were positive that there is a good chance for a person who has taken part in violent crime to change. As an avenue for change, the stakeholders suggested that the youth should be involved in projects and development programmes.

The stakeholders in Kadoma suggested that ex-offenders should not be returned to the communities they committed crime in but rather should be relocated to other communities. In contrast, the social service department and the prisons service both believe that they need to integrate ex-prisoners into the community and conscientize the community. They also propagate for processes to make sure the young people are empowered and capacitated. Generally, respondents agreed that reformed ex-offenders should venture into entrepreneurship which will correspond with the harsh economic conditions of the country.

**General Opinion on Youth**

Due to drug abuse amongst the youth, the youth have been viewed as a lost generation. Which has created a negative stigma on the youth by the community. Also the community believe that the youth does not have any future plans, thus being viewed as careless and wasteful.

**What kinds of things do organizations need to do to improve the situation of youth and crime in this community?**

The youth should be engaged with organisations that address their plight. The organisations should also be involved in fighting for the rights of the youth as well as providing them with legal representation. This has been suggested because of a number of youth who have been in prisons simply because they had lacked legal representation.

The community should also include the youths in every development programme and projects. Their involvement will enhance sustainability amongst the youth which will guarantee a fruitful future for the youths.

**About Gweru**

The assessment reached out to 10 youth including those who are in conflict with the law and 10 stakeholders who included the police, lawyers, prison services, social justice advocates and ward councilors.

The effect of Covid-19 has been significant, with a lot of negative outcomes being reported. One of the main effects has been high crime rates, increase in illegal activities, increase in gender based violence, as well as there being an increase in child marriages and teen pregnancies.

During the assessment, the crimes taken note of were related to drugs, assaults, illegal gold panning and mining, and an emergence of illegal alcohol sales.

**What Gweru Youth Fear**

Youth in the community fear failure, failure to protect themselves and their families, their dreams have been shattered because of economics of the country and pandemics, they lack employment, lack of education due to lack of resources to fund for their education. Young people have always wanted to be employed and become doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers, but these dreams and aspirations have been shattered.

However, youth are trying to do other things that are important to them which include, selling of second hand clothes ("mabhero"), small scale businesses selling groceries and vegetables, piece jobs in farms or peoples yards, and others. These are equally important to them because the resultant incomes (no matter how small) give them some income to look after themselves and their families.

**Stories and Observations**

- Aspirations of young people are not being met
- Most young families survive from hand to mouth
- As a result of Covid-19 most young people have diverted into the mining and agriculture sectors
- Alcohol and drug abuse in the community
- Emerging of sex parties in some parts of town
- There is need to engage various stakeholders

**Income earning opportunities for young people.**

- A prison official and responden from the police mentioned that the relationship between the youth and almost every government office has been antagonistic. This is because the youth have been blaming the government on the poor economic conditions and the youth claim to be the ones who are directly affected. There is also a lack of information and opportunities for young people.

- **Access to government services**

  - The stakeholders highlighted that the youth could access government services from mainly government offices. For example, the police station, public hospitals, recreational centres like local authority stadiums, tennis courts as well as public swimming pools. However, due to unfriendly environment and lack of resources they services have not been youth friendly.

- **Types of services**

  - Youth accessible services include recreational services, counselling, as well as health services like testing and screening of HIV at every public hospital or clinics. From the responses of the stakeholders, the quality of services provided is low mainly because of the people delivering the service.

- **Level of crime**

  - The stakeholders highlighted that they are very much concerned about the level of crime in the area they work in. All the stakeholders confirmed that there has been a significant increase in drug abuse, assaults, illegal mining, sexual abuse and violent cases. The poor performing economy and high unemployment in the country have also contributed to the rise of crime rate in the country. The bad economic conditions and limited access to resources, lack of recreational facilities, and lack of opportunities have all contributed to the rising numbers of youth engaging in crime.

  - The most significant impact of crime according to the interviewed stakeholders is drug abuse. The stakeholders highlighted that drug abuse amongst the youths has caused the youth to venture into crime so that they can access drugs. 67% of stakeholders interviewed indicated that the elderly have been the most affected by crime in Kadoma, mainly because the youth who have been in the centre of crime target the elderly. An intriguing revelation was also that the elderly have been having challenges in transacting due to the multicurrency system introduced recently in Zimbabwe.

  - All the stakeholders were in agreement and were positive that there is a good chance for a person who has taken part in violent crime to change. As an avenue for change, the stakeholders suggested that the youth should be involved in projects and development programmes.

- **What kinds of things do organizations need to do to improve the situation of youth and crime in this community?**

  - The youth should be engaged with organisations that address their plight. The organisations should also be involved in fighting for the rights of the youth as well as providing them with legal representation. This has been suggested because of a number of youth who have been in prisons simply because they had lacked legal representation.

  - The community should also include the youths in every development programme and projects. Their involvement will enhance sustainability amongst the youth which will guarantee a fruitful future for the youths.

- **About Gweru**

  - The assessment reached out to 10 youth including those who are in conflict with the law and 10 stakeholders who included the police, lawyers, prison services, social justice advocates and ward councilors.

  - The effect of Covid-19 has been significant, with a lot of negative outcomes being reported. One of the main effects has been high crime rates, increase in illegal activities, increase in gender based violence, as well as there being an increase in child marriages and teen pregnancies.

  - During the assessment, the crimes taken note of were related to drugs, assaults, illegal gold panning and mining, and an emergence of illegal alcohol sales.

- **What Gweru Youth Fear**

  - Youth in the community fear failure, failure to protect themselves and their families, their dreams have been shattered because of economics of the country and pandemics, they lack employment, lack of education due to lack of resources to fund for their education. Young people have always wanted to be employed and become doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers, but these dreams and aspirations have been shattered.

  - However, youth are trying to do other things that are important to them which include, selling of second hand clothes ("mabhero"), small scale businesses selling groceries and vegetables, piece jobs in farms or peoples yards, and others. These are equally important to them because the resultant incomes (no matter how small) give them some income to look after themselves and their families.

- **Stories and Observations**

  - Aspirations of young people are not being met
  - Most young families survive from hand to mouth
  - As a result of Covid-19 most young people have diverted into the mining and agriculture sectors
  - Alcohol and drug abuse in the community
  - Emerging of sex parties in some parts of town
  - There is need to engage various stakeholders

- **Income earning opportunities for young people.**

  - A prison official and responden from the police mentioned that the relationship between the youth and almost every government office has been antagonistic. This is because the youth have been blaming the government on the poor economic conditions and the youth claim to be the ones who are directly affected. There is also a lack of information and opportunities for young people.
Pains

Lack of capital
Lack of employment
Broken homes
Lack of experience
Drugs and substance abuse
Being idle is affecting their future
Fear of failure
Lack of collateral
Lack of resources to fund education forced one to sell drugs
Failure to protect
Shattered dreams lead to drugs and then to crime with no rehab process
High crime rate
High alcohol abuse, lack of employment;
The system prevents their success
Lack of identity documents, leading to frustrated opportunities, and consequently engaging in Crime
No access to opportunities
Shattered dreams, loss of opportunities due to unemployment economics of the country
High cases of GBV

Gains

Chemical engineering, electrician, etc that are very mainstream
Engineers, doctors
Having mobile libraries
Need to access money - key to a good life
Business people
The youth want to influence the community
Dreams: To venture into large scale farming, building a chess academy, acquire identity documents to access opportunities

Jobs to be Done

They had to diversify to crime when they did not achieve (e.g. one wanted to be an electrician)
Someone got into the business of selling second-hand clothes but lockdown stopped them and forced them to illegal mining
Small scale Businesses, in which most young people earn their income affected by Covid-19 and the lockdown measures. Surge of resort to illegal activities like illegal mining, selling liquor and drugs, illegal money changing
Chemical Engineering, electrician, social work, psychology, DJ, Master of ceremony, information and technology

Reality

There is a lot of peer pressure that pushes them into undesirable places
Currently obtaining economic situation makes it difficult to achieve their goals
Child headed families with no adult supervisions
How to achieve the goals: financial support, mentorship, need to acquire relevant experience/knowledge, support on start-ups, assistance in acquiring identity documents
The future is gloomy and it is impossible to have a positive future...they don’t think there is any way out
Most young families survive from hand to mouth
It is hard to engage youth in research without paying them
Illegal money changing and illegal gold panning the mining activities are done in the areas of Glasgow, pachway, chakari-Kadoma
Lots of sex parties - popular in Bulawayo
Security guard without an ID guarding a gold mine was arrested wrongfully but the employer did not apologise
Gold mining is a major issue
Their aspirations are often not met
Most young people got into the essential services sector (mining, agriculture) as a result of covid 1d
Crimes: assault, domestic violence, violating COVID-19 restrictions, theft that included imprisonment, physical violence, public drinking
Youth get into drugs due to relationships
Some interviewees were arrested during interviews during a police raid
Many youth lead double lives - go to church but still participate in alcohol drinking
Most crimes are related to drugs, assault and illegal mining
types of crime: Assault, domestic violence, theft, stealing copper wires
Lack of employment, absence of occupations, leading to Vuzu parties (sex parties), Engaging in crime, like possession of electricity wires, appliances, illegal gold panning, in worst case scenarios, murder.
strong and effective correctional centres
advocacy engagement meetings with the law enforcement agents, judiciary, and correctional service. create; strong linkages especially in the rehabilitation and life after imprisonment
Pains: high immoral behaviour amongst young people which include illegal money changing, illegal gold panning, vuzu partying
Illegal gold mining and issues like child labour, rape, sexual abuse, GBV, and mostly drug and alcohol abuse
How Might we empower Irvin (youth in Zimbabwe) to better access opportunities for better livelihood and greater resilience?
**Stakeholder Analysis**

In Harare, most dancehall artists allegedly take drugs. Through music, they influence the taking of drugs.

- **Friends**
  - They are judgemental and make him feel judged.
  - Pastors tend to spiritualize the problem.

- **Siblings**
  - Suppliers of drugs are sometimes linked with the police.
  - Influential community leaders and law enforcement agents are closely linked to the drug dealers.

- **Police**
  - They seem to understand the police's wants.

- **Local drug kingpins**
  - In Chegutu, there's a boxing and karate club run by the municipality.

- **Recreational leaders**
  - There is normally collaboration of effort among CSOs during stakeholders meeting.

- **Church leaders**
  - The ministry people do not relate and they want to relate to established people.

- **Ministry of Youth**
  - The ministry of youth.

- **Teachers/Schools**
  - Kadoma training institute is unfriendly for the youth in conflict.

- **Cross border traders**
  - Most kids start drugs in schools so ministry started guidance and counselling in schools as a power space of sorts. The YMCA has used the space. Access is limited.
Ideas for Prototyping

1. Task each gang with their own activities to develop their own activities at THE SHADE. The YMCA will come in as the facilitators.
2. Using wifi to pull youth to the clubs - giving one hour free access to the Wifi as a way to bring in youth.
3. Leagues for indoor games with competitions with discussions before the games so as to encourage come-back.
4. Giving YMCA branded merchandise for the winners.
5. Those that come become members of the YMCA.

Questions:
- feasible? given the cost of connection
- how are you going to address the drug sellers
- awareness campaigns
- police to arrest the drug dealers
- training on how to craft a proper business proposal
- sustainability: the youth be able to own up in returning the fund?

The grant mentality needs to be addressed.