

POLICY BRIEF BY ZIMBABWEAN YOUTH ON THE NATIONALLY
DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCs) ENHANCEMENT PROCESS



**Submitted to the Government of Zimbabwe
Ministry of Environment, Climate Tourism and Hospitality Industry**

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SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT,
CLIMATE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY



African
Youth Initiative on
Climate Change
Zimbabwe

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based on a decision of the German Bundestag

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Acknowledgements

Special acknowledgements goes to supporting Government Ministries and Departments who assisted with the consultations these include the Ministry of Energy and Power Development, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water & Rural Resettlement, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Environmental Management Agency (EMA), Zimbabwe Youth Council (ZYC). Special mention to the following organisations Act Alliance, Zimbabwe Sunshine Group (ZSG), Action 24, Zimbabwe Youth Biodiversity Network (ZYBN), Young Volunteers for the Environment (YVE), Advocates4Earth, Environmental Rights Advocacy Trust (ERAT), Green Hut Initiative, Emmaus International Trust, Nurture Imvelo Trust, Sibanye Animal Welfare and Conservancy Trust, Humane Africa Trust, Renewable Energy Sustainable Development Trust (RESO), Action Aid Youth Network Bulawayo, Lupane Youth for Development, Zimbabwe Institute of Religious Research and Ecological Conservation (ZIRRCO) Trust, Social Economic Action and transformation for Humanity, Green institute, Youth Initiatives on Community Development- Mutoko, Environmental Buddies Zimbabwe, Disaster and Environmental Management Trust, Socially Active Youth Trust (SAY), EcoNetwork, Youth in Sustainable Utilisation of Natural Resources, Community Initiative Against Marginalisation, Simukaupenye Integrated Youth Academy Trust (SIYA), Smile Action International (Zimbabwe), Moyo Wekubereka, EduClimate, Zim Maggot Producers Pvt, Green Governance Trust Zimbabwe (GGTZ), Youth Alive Zimbabwe, Girl Empowerment Trust, Green Shango Trust, Centre for Development of Women and Children, Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD), The National Association of Non-Governmental Organization (NANGO), Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT), Nkosazana Media Consultants, Save Our Environment Trust (SOET), Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ), Zimbabwe Natural Resources Dialogue Forum, Stereo 025 Radio, Olearns Waste Management Services, Rural Enterprise Trust of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Youth Relief and Development (ZIMYORD).

1. Introduction

The need for ambitious targets in Zimbabwe's revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) has been one of the major topics spoken by the youth in the climate change space. An inclusive process that brings together government at all levels with youth organizations, movements, and networks, as well as with other citizens, private sector, key stakeholders and partners is a key success factor in the current NDCs revision process. In particular, young people's needs and aspirations should be captured in the revised NDCs and their role as positive agents of change should be better recognized, promoted and supported. A study by the Brookings Institute in 2019 found that national climate strategies are forgetting about girls, children, and youth. The study posits that "more than half of [current] NDCs failed to mention children, youth, or future generations. Of the 42 per cent that referenced children, the majority positioned children as a vulnerable group. Only seven NDCs actually positioned children as stakeholders to be included in climate decision making and action." The same can be said about Zimbabwe's 2015 NDCs that lacked a broader youth consultative approach which is very critical.

It is clear that for Zimbabwe, a country already in the frontline of witnessing climate change impacts evident in the form of cyclones, droughts, floods and climate-induced insecurity, and migration - youth engagement in the NDC revision process is non-negotiable if ever a robust policy document that will give birth to an inclusive and a truly sustainable development pathway is to be developed. Inclusivity of the youth in the NDC revision process also has the potential to amplify opportunities that youths can harness. This policy brief is supported by the [UNDP Climate Promise](#) initiative that is supporting Zimbabwe's current NDCs revision process. It highlights the importance of taking a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to strengthen and implement the NDCs. Key strategies identified towards NDC implementation by youths during the revision process include green jobs in the energy sector as a result of tapping into renewable energy technologies; developing innovations in the Waste sector; manufacturing environmental friendly machines in the Industrial Processes and Products Use (IPPU) sector and venturing into sustainable livelihoods that simultaneously protects nature whilst contributing to the Agriculture, Forest and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector revitalization.

2. Background

This policy brief was developed as a result of broad consultations from representations of youth organisations from all the ten provinces of Zimbabwe. The first session held in Bulawayo had youth representatives from Bulawayo, Matebeleland North and Matebeleland South Provinces fully represented whilst the second session held in Mutare had representatives from the Manicaland Province. The third Session was held in Bindura with participants from Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West Provinces while the final session that was held in Harare involved participants from Harare, Mashonaland East, Midlands and Masvingo Provinces. All in all, a total of more than two hundred youth representatives were consulted whose footprint is in both urban and rural areas. The objective of these consultations were to discuss the NDCs revision process with youth representatives; capture youth interventions and contributions on enhancing National Determined Contributions for Zimbabwe; facilitate youth involvement in the process, minimize the information gap, enhance their understanding; instill a sense of ownership in the entire NDCs process up to implementation and to develop and exploit synergy among youth, youth-led organisations, local government institutions and the Climate Change Management Department.

3. Sector Specific Recommendations to the Revised NDCs

This policy brief follows the structure that the revised NDCs of Zimbabwe is envisaged to cover based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sectors namely Energy; Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU); Waste and Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU). A brief status outlook of the sector is provided, this is followed by the identification of potential entry points that youths can exploit; key actions to be included in the revised NDCs and lastly commitments youths undertook towards implementing the NDCs are proffered.

3.1 Energy Sector

The energy sector is currently the biggest emitter of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in Zimbabwe. GHG emissions from the energy sector in Zimbabwe largely emanate from combustion of carbon-based fuels as well as fugitive emissions during coal mining and handling processes. Carbon dioxide constitutes 95 percent of energy sector emissions with methane and nitrous oxide making up the remaining 5 percent. Stationary combustion is usually responsible for about 70 percent of the GHGs from the energy sector. The sector's emissions are expected to increase to 26.5 MtCO₂e in 2030 and 37.5 MtCO₂e in 2050 due to increasing demand for power from the transport sector and other productive human needs (Low Emissions Development Strategy, 2020). Emerging renewable energy technology is a possible solution to the crisis and also a pathway to enhance Zimbabwe's climate change agenda.

Key gaps identified in the Energy Sector

The following gaps were identified to be in the Energy sector:

- Inadequate availability of reliable, robust climate data and statistical data;
- Isolated climate change mitigation and adaptation measures;
- Insufficient ethanol production;
- Exorbitant license fees for Independent Power Producers;
- Energy inefficient and antiquated machinery and technology;
- Low uptake of solar energy and other renewable energy alternatives in the country; and,
- Continued focus on fossil fuel energy industry expansion without complementing efforts to adopt cleaner technologies.

Key actions needed to be included in revised NDCs

- Reduction in use of coal in energy generation and promotion of renewable energy technologies;
- A well-articulated plan of action directing the transition from use of fossil fuels to renewable energy technologies;
- Prohibition to open air biomass and waste burning as an additional climate change mitigation measure;
- More aggressive/ambitious commitments on exploration and exploitation of abundant renewable energy sources such as solar, hydro, wind, geothermal and biomass;
- Increased percentage of renewable energy in the country's energy mix;
- Representation of youths in clean and renewable energy sector steering committees;
- Government should strengthen legislation and incentivize use of renewable energy technologies;
- Increased ethanol production in the next 5 years through full implementation of the National Biofuels Policy; and
- Government to reduce license fees for Independent Power Producers.

Youths Commitment in advancing climate action in the Energy Sector

- Youths will advocate for wider use of renewable energy technologies in the country;
- Youths will be trained to become inventory experts who work with the government in the compilation of emissions data from the energy sector;
- Youths will be coordinated and will create partnerships amongst themselves targeting to plant more than ten thousand trees annually in every district so as to increase carbon sinks;
- Youths will take advantage of social media platforms, theatre groups and art to disseminate information pertaining to energy efficiency and cleaner production and advocate for adoption of renewable energy technologies; and,
- Youths are committed to commencing projects and awareness campaigns targeting all stakeholders in the energy sector aimed towards the reduction of renewable energy initiatives license fees.

3.2 Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU)

The Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector contributes approximately 40% to National GHG emissions making it the second highest emitter (Zimbabwe's Initial NDCs, 2015). Emissions emanate from nitrogenous fertilizer use, soil disturbances (ploughing), large livestock production (enteric fermentation), deforestation, veld fires and land use change. Emissions from this sector can be greatly reduced at lower costs as compared to other sectors through the use of nature-based solutions, indigenous knowledge on forest conservation, agro-ecology principles and resilient sustainable agriculture. Sustainable land use and sustainable agricultural practices all have the potential for not only reducing emissions but increasing the capacity of carbon sinks.

Key gaps identified in the AFOLU Sector

The following gaps were identified in the AFOLU sector:

- Limited knowledge by farmers including youths on sustainable agricultural practices;
- Poor farming techniques such as tilling of land, poor fertilizer management and use of hazardous pesticides;
- Massive deforestation and poor land management caused by land clearing for farming, tobacco curing, mining, construction and firewood;
- Poor wetlands management;
- Ignorance and limited knowledge on veld fire management; and
- Limited construction of green buildings.

Key actions needed to be included in revised NDCs

Agricultural Waste

- Action towards the attainment of *Zero Waste* on farms by the year 2030. Unlike other types of industries most of the waste generated in the agriculture sector has an alternative use that is also able to generate income for the farmer; and,
- The revised NDCs to identify components such as Biogas Digesters, Hay Baling and Composting as mechanisms that can reduce emissions from agricultural waste.

Deforestation

- Reduction in deforestation activities whilst scaling up activities that promote afforestation and reforestation;
- Promotion of native or indigenous afforestation activities as opposed to exotic ones;
- Setting aside designated forest spaces which support the preservation of environmental values whilst protecting communities from excessive development pressure;
- Encouraging Non-Forest Timber production as it improves household income generation whilst simultaneously protecting carbon sinks; and
- Provision of incentives to organisations and individuals practicing sustainable agriculture such as Agroforestry, Agro-ecology and other climate smart agriculture initiatives that protect trees, soil and biodiversity.

Wetland Utilization

Wetlands are areas of rich biodiversity, they provide various services and livelihoods for survival and also act as carbon sinks. There is need to:

- Promote sustainable wetland use and encourage activities that do not prohibit wetlands from carrying out their multiple functions such as purifying water, storing carbon and providing food amongst many other functions;
- Promulgate and enforce legislation so as to protect wetlands against their further degradation; and
- Prohibit development on wetlands.

Veld Fires

The fire season in Zimbabwe leaves a lot of destruction to property, human lives and the environment. A significant amount of carbon emissions is released into the atmosphere as the veldt is burnt therefore there is need for:

- Awareness campaigns on mechanisms to prevent veldt fires;
- Establishment of fire-guards that can protect forests and habitats from veldt fires;
- Upscaling of forest activities which ultimately benefit communities;
- Reduction in areas affected by veldt fires by 20% every year; and
- The Environmental Management Agency (EMA) and Forest Commission to continue providing accurate data, satellite images and fire management plans.

Construction

Construction falls under the Other Land Uses sub sector within the AFOLU sector. Construction activities do not only include the actual construction but also cater for the entire production chain of construction materials. There is need for the revised NDCs to:

- Include provisions for the use of environmentally friendly construction materials and also encourage green buildings and sustainable cities where tree planting is part of urban planning; and
- Recommend climate change consideration to be embedded within the Environmental Impact Assessments undertaken before any construction commences.

Youths Commitment in advancing climate action in the AFOLU Sector

- Young people have shown interest in learning and acquiring knowledge on REDD+ initiatives in Zimbabwe and to replicate the same initiatives in different areas;
- A number of youths are currently being trained to become national experts in the AFOLU sector, this will be beneficial as young people will be able to spearhead emission reduction initiatives in the sector;
- Youths are eager to acquire knowledge on organic fertilizers and maggots' production since they play a huge part in reducing nitrogen emissions yet improving soil and food quality;
- Youths working in conjunction with Government Departments, Private Sector, NGO and CSOs will foster relationships that can be utilized for the betterment of the environment in terms of investments in the agricultural value chain and forest management;
- Youths will spearhead innovation and research in the AFOLU sector and start small enterprises which do not require much capital such as tree nursery establishment;
- Youths will also occupy positions in Environmental subcommittees and act on issues which include establishing fire-fighting clubs and community environmental clubs;
- Youths will advocate for policies that do not contradict with the objectives of protecting the environment and its biodiversity; and,
- Youths will attend public consultations in parliament and submit their policy briefs and interventions in the AFOLU sector.

3.3 Waste

The waste sector contributes about 6% to the country's emissions mainly emanating from the over burden of consumerism, coupled with an increase in population. According to the Environment Management Agency (EMA) only 10% of the waste generated in the country is recycled yet it's a \$400-billion-dollar business. Waste Management through recycling activities has the highest potential for reducing emissions and there are vast opportunities that can be spearheaded by youths, some opportunities include creation of value chains, decent jobs, healthy environment, generate tax revenues and savings on imports (National Development Strategy, 2020).

Key gaps identified in the Waste Sector

The following gaps were identified in the Waste Sector:

- Lack of knowledge about waste separation at source. Our communities are still unaware of the benefits of waste separation at source and those who do, are not practicing it due to inconsistencies with waste collection services by mandated waste management authorities;
- Lack of adequate waste transfer centers. There are few transfer stations in the country and most are privately-owned. These transfer stations are not fully equipped to deal with the volumes of waste generated in their locations and mostly specialise on one waste stream e.g. Plastics;
- Absence of engineered landfills in most towns and cities. Only a couple of Local Authorities have managed to construct only single cells of engineered landfills;
- Lack of policies to support and incentivize recycling initiatives. The recycling industry is subject to many taxes just like any other industry. It raises the cost of operations for recycling businesses, translating to recycled products being higher prices on the market than virgin material products;
- Lack of skills, knowledge and infrastructure to manage electronic waste; and,
- Limited number of experts in the waste sector to assist with Measurement, Reporting and verification of emissions from the waste sector.

Key actions needed to be included in the NDCs

Different types of waste require tailor made management practices for healthy lives and a healthy planet.

Waste effluent

- Upgrade of the waste water infrastructure system to one that can accommodate large volumes that tally with the growing population; and,
- There is a need to consider the provision of environmentally friendly chemicals for waste treatment.

Solid Waste

- There is a need to engage the academia to provide updated research on solid waste management and innovations;
- There is also a need to establish and promote youth community waste enterprises initiatives; and,
- There is a need to strengthen partnerships with the private sector, corporates and NGOs to introduce waste recovery facilities for sorting and recycling waste in communities before waste goes to landfills.

Food Waste

- Teaching communities and corporations like hotels, schools and hospitals to make organic compost from food waste which can be sold for income generation;
- Encourage the establishment of community gardens, so they can benefit from the use of organic manure; and,
- Establishment of Biogas digesters to use bio waste for the generation of energy which can be adapted and installed according to facility needs.

Electronic Waste

- There is a need for scaling up electronic waste advocacy and establishment of centers that recycle electronic waste in Zimbabwe; and,
- There is a need for a proactive approach to following up on suppliers of electronic products that end up in Zimbabwe.

Hazardous waste

- Establishment of standard incinerators for combustion of medicinal waste (syringes, face masks and gloves) and also standard sanitary landfills which are properly lined to prevent leakage into the environment; and,
- Development of at least 1 standard incinerator for each hospital by 2030.

Youths Commitments in advancing climate action in the Waste Sector

- Youths wish to play their part and support the country's vision of a circular economy therefore the country should reduce illegal dumpsites by 55% by 2025;
- Youths, with the assistance from responsible authorities, will lead the drive of educating 67% of the youth population by 2025 on proper waste management and recycling initiatives using different media platforms as a way of reaching out to everyone;
- Youths will engage all players and establish at least 61 waste transfer centers cascading from district level by 2027 (National Development Strategy, 2020);
- Youths will also be interested in reviewing action plans, strategies and policies in order to identify gaps and offer solutions;
- Youth will initiate community waste recycling centers for sustainable income generation and get assistance in submitting bankable proposals to upscale their work; and,
- Youths will advocate for waste to energy initiatives by different stakeholders and individuals.

3.4 Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU)

GHG emissions in the Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU) sector are produced mainly as by-products from chemical reactions in various industrial activities and processes. The GHGs resulting from the chemical processes include carbon dioxide, Methane and Nitrous Oxide. Cement plays a critical role in the construction industry in Zimbabwe when it's being manufactured, carbon dioxide is released during the production of clinker in Portland cement manufacture. Fertilizer production and glass production also contributes to certain emissions in this sector (Zimbabwe National Inventory Report,2016)

Key gaps identified in the IPPU Sector

The following gaps were identified in the IPPU Sector

- High energy consumption due to lack of knowledge, on how and benefits of saving energy;
- Excessive production of fertilizers used for agriculture;
- Limited research by institutions that focus on the IPPU sector focusing on how the sector can reduce GHGs;
- Unattractive or insufficient incentives for companies to undertake mitigation initiatives;
- Presence of underutilized lithium deposits in a world that is going green; and
- Limited emission testing stations and emissions auditors.

Key needed to be included in the NDCs

- Raise awareness on the significance of environmental and climate action within the industrial sector;
- Introduction of GHG mitigation technologies in all manufacturing sectors;
- Research Institutions and industries should be encouraged to be innovative in sustainable machinery production;
- Introduce incentives for companies with a low GHG emission profile and are investing in green initiatives; and,
- Train and capacitate the industrial sector on the ability to quantify emissions from the sector and scenarios.

Youths Commitments in advancing climate action in the AFOLU Sector

- Upscale youth research on the use of fly ash in cement production;
- Youths will embark on training to be industrial data collection and analysis experts;
- Youths will promote policy advocacy, monitoring and evaluation of existing legislation and implementation (such as Polluter Pays Principle); and,
- Youths will be trained and capacitated on how to quantify GHGs in the industrial sector.

4. Cross Cutting: People With Disabilities (PWDs)

In all consultation's youth participants highlighted the need to include and engage people with disabilities in the NDCs Enhancement process. Climate change information should be diverse and consider people with disabilities as an important stakeholder group. The following recommendations are suggested:

- Have a focal person for people with disabilities on Climate Change related issues including Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR);
- Empower people with disabilities to become national experts in different sectors; and,
- Establish a working group on disability and Climate Change.

Accessibility of Climate Change Information

It was observed that climate change information is not equally distributed in all provinces in the country. The following recommendations were suggested:

- Translate climate change information materials into other local languages
- Make use of existing community information centers and districts environmental parastatals to share and distribute the climate-related information.

5. Conclusion

Enhancement of Zimbabwe's Nationally Determined Contributions presents a lot of opportunities that the youth of Zimbabwe can exploit in various sectors of the economy. The move towards a green economy is seen as a great opportunity that youths can gain more knowledge, be innovative and be better coordinated. The youth will also play an important role in monitoring the contents of the revised NDCs such that the commitments undertaken in the revised NDCs are attained with the youths also playing an implementing role through the development of a National Youth NDC Tracker. This will contribute to a reliable and effective measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) system from a youth perspective.

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