

Youth engagement with the Local government authorities (LGAs) - Taking the space now!



District youth public forums are a platform for young people and local authorities leaders to meet and deliberate on the local agenda from a youth perspective. The District Youth Public forum is organized alongside the LGA Planning cycle calendar. This gives young people the opportunities to influence LGA decisions from the village, ward and to the municipal level. This public forums are taking place in 8 districts in Tanzania in the context of youth-adult partnership

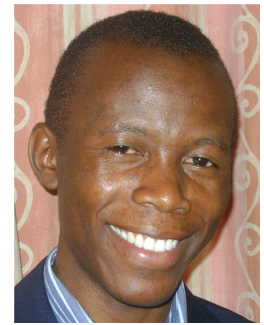
Objectives

Tanzania is taking the decentralization by devolution approach in its development process. This process takes powers and authority to the people within the local government structures. For a long time the ordinary citizens/people including youth have not been fully participating in the entire decision making process within the local government structures and leaving it to the LGA personnel and practitioners.

TYC is now mobilizing youth to engage with the LGAs in order to not only participate in the decision making processes but also to influence the decisions made. We believe we (youth) are the present and the future of our localities and therefore we should take a lead in role in the decision making processes that are shaping our daily lives and future.

Humphrey Polepole

Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC) / Trade Union Congress of Tanzania Youth Wing



Young people

Every improvement in life starts with participation and involvement in the decisions made to ones life. If the LGAs will be making decisions based on assumptions, then that will be denying the rights of many people including youth to propose an alternative to the their way of life but also best option that can be taken to improve the welfare of the people. In the Tanzanian context, being part of the process of making decisions at the local and national levels gives youth the powers to decide on their best proposals that will change their lives.

It is from the planning cycle that all the priorities are made and where the financing takes place. If youth participate and positively influence then we would see, employment opportunities increasing to majority of young people, we would see more youth acquiring land for livelihood purposes such as collateral e.t.c. The local decision making process shapes the national development agenda. African youth will only take the space if and only if they integrate with the existing structures and change from within, popular participation and influence and alternative to democracy!

Additional information

Youth for a very long time have been trying to change from outside structures, this has proven minimal success. The approach should be change from within is possible, when we take the space, argue, justify and influence. Time has come that African youth need to grab the decision making foras and present their development perspectives and agenda.

With dialogue, change is possible—"freedom is never given by the oppressor but until demanded by the oppressed". This demand is what African youth should translate into actions, participating, involving oneself and not waiting to be involved. We have been shouting enough, its time to act by showcasing examples of hope, change and determination.

