



# ONE VOICE YOUTH FOUNDATION

## VISION EXPANSION DOCUMENT

### 1. Introduction to Our Vision

At ONE VOICE Youth Foundation, our vision is bold, transformative, and rooted in the belief that Africa's greatest resource is its young people. We envision a **just, inclusive and united Africa**, a continent where every young person can rise beyond the limits of their circumstances and achieve their full potential. This vision extends to all youth, regardless of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or personal history. We believe every young person deserves dignity, opportunity, and a platform to participate meaningfully in shaping the future of their communities and their continent.

This vision is not simply a statement and it is a call to action. It guides our programs, influences our partnerships, and drives our organizational culture. Through empowerment, advocacy, and youth-driven development, we work to build a continent where equality and justice are not aspirations but everyday realities.



## 2. The Need for a Just and Inclusive Africa

Africa is home to one of the world's largest youth populations, yet many young people face tremendous barriers. These include limited access to education, unemployment, inequality, discrimination, and a lack of opportunities to participate in leadership and decision-making. Our vision recognizes these challenges and seeks to address them by creating systems and environments that promote fairness and inclusion.

A *just Africa* is one where institutions protect young people's rights, uphold fairness, and treat all individuals equally. An *inclusive Africa* ensures that no young person is excluded due to gender, nationality, socioeconomic status, disability, or any other circumstance. A *united Africa* means removing borders physical, mental, and systemic that divide young people and restrict collaboration.

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## 3. Empowering Youth Through Power, Protection, and Platforms

Our vision highlights three essential pillars: **Power, Protection, and Platform**. These pillars define the core areas of empowerment that every young person across Africa should have access to.

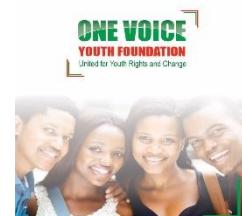
### 1. Power

Power represents the ability of young people to influence decisions, advocate for their rights, and take charge of their lives. We aim to foster leadership development, civic engagement, and economic empowerment so that youth are not just heard, but they are influential.



### 2. Protection

Protection means ensuring that young people are safe from exploitation, violence, discrimination, and injustice. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation advocates for policies, systems, and community structures that safeguard the rights and well-being of all young people.



### 3. Platform

A platform enables youth to express their ideas, share their talents, and contribute solutions. We create physical spaces,



digital, and political where young people can speak out, innovate, and lead meaningful change.

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#### **4. Our Philosophy and Values**

Our vision is grounded in a strong philosophical foundation that guides our approach to youth development. We believe in:

- **Equality:** Every young person deserves the same opportunities regardless of background.
- **Unity:** The strength of Africa lies in collaboration and solidarity.
- **Dignity:** All youth should live in environments where they are respected, valued, and treated fairly.
- **Participation:** Young people must be active contributors, not passive recipients.
- **Empowerment:** True change happens when youth are equipped with the tools and confidence to lead.

These values not only guide our work but shape the identity of our organization.

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#### **5. Youth as Drivers of Social and Economic Change**

Africa's future depends on its youth. With more than 60% of the population under the age of 25, young people have the potential to transform industries, governance, technology, and social systems. Our vision supports the idea that youth are not just beneficiaries of development, but they are architects of it.

We aim to nurture generations of young leaders who champion justice, diversity, and social cohesion. Through entrepreneurship programs, leadership training, advocacy initiatives, and community engagement, we equip youth with skills that foster innovation, self-reliance, and long-term growth.

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#### **6. Creating a Continent Where Rights Are Accessible**

Human rights are essential for the development of youth. However, many young people across Africa struggle to access their basic rights, whether it be education, healthcare, safety, or participation.

ONE VOICE Youth Foundation works toward a continent where:

- All children and youth attend safe and effective schools.
- Young people can freely express themselves.
- Girls and young women have equal opportunities.
- Migrant and marginalized youth are integrated and protected.
- Communities value diversity and inclusion.

Providing access to rights is not merely a legal obligation, but it is a moral commitment central to achieving our vision.

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## **7. Building Strong Communities Through Youth Engagement**

Communities thrive when youth are actively involved in development processes. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation envisions African communities where young people participate in local decision making, community projects, and leadership structures.

Our approach encourages youth to:

- Identify community problems.
- Design sustainable solutions.
- Mobilize peers and stakeholders.
- Lead projects that address social and economic challenges.

This community-driven leadership model strengthens unity and promotes local ownership of development.

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## **8. Advancing Gender Equality and Inclusivity**

Our vision recognizes gender equality as an essential component of justice and fairness. For Africa to progress, young women and girls must have equal access to education, leadership, economic opportunities, and protection.

We also champion inclusivity for:

- Persons with disabilities
- Refugee youth

- LGBTQ+ youth
- Rural and underprivileged youth
- Youth from minority groups

By promoting inclusivity, we build a continent where diversity is a source of strength.

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## **9. A United Africa Built on Cooperation and Solidarity**

A united Africa is one where young people from different countries can collaborate, learn from one another, and build a shared identity rooted in dignity and respect. Our vision supports cross-border partnerships, Pan-African youth movements, and regional initiatives that connect young leaders from various nations.

Unity fosters peace, economic stability, cultural exchange, and innovation. Through collaborative projects and youth networks, we strengthen the bonds that hold the continent together.

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## **10. The Future We Aim to Build**

The future we envision is one where every young African stands tall with pride, equipped with opportunity, empowered by knowledge, and protected by systems that uphold justice and equality. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation is committed to driving this change through strategic programs, partnerships, advocacy, and youth empowerment initiatives.

Our vision is not just about today—it is about shaping the Africa of tomorrow. An Africa where youth lead with courage, communities rise with unity, and justice forms the foundation of society. Together, through collective action and a shared commitment, we can build the Africa we dream of—**just, inclusive, united, and youth-driven**.

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## **11. The Struggles of African Youth - A Continental Reality**

Across the African continent, millions of young people continue to face systemic injustices, neglect, and violations of their basic human rights. Although Africa is rich in potential and its youth represent a powerful force for development.

Many governments and communities still fail to provide the support, protection, and recognition that young people deserve.

These challenges are deeply rooted in inequality, outdated social structures, political instability, cultural barriers, and economic hardship.

In many countries, youth struggle with unemployment, limited access to education, restricted civil freedoms, and insufficient representation in leadership structures. In some regions, cultural norms and political systems silence the voices of young people, preventing them from influencing policies that directly affect their lives. The continued marginalization of youth undermines Africa's development and destroys the dreams of millions.

For many young Africans, especially those from vulnerable groups, daily life is a fight for survival, dignity, and the right to be heard.

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## **12. Stories of Youth Abuse and Violation Across the Continent**

The injustices faced by African youth are not abstract — they are real, painful, and often shocking. Countless young people endure abuse in various forms, including:

### **1. Political Violence and Suppression**

In several African countries, youth activists are harassed, threatened, detained, or even killed for speaking out. Governments and security forces sometimes view outspoken youth as a threat rather than partners in development. This results in:

- Arbitrary arrests of student leaders
- Violent crackdowns on peaceful protests
- Intimidation and torture of youth advocating for reform

### **2. Gender-Based Violence**

Young girls and women face:

- Sexual assault
- Forced child marriages
- Domestic violence
- Exploitation at workplaces

Many survivors remain silent due to fear, stigma, and lack of safe reporting systems.

### **3. Economic Exploitation**

Millions of youths are trapped in low-wage jobs, unsafe working environments, or exploitative labour practices. Some engage in dangerous informal work because of limited opportunities.

### **4. Human Trafficking and Migration Abuse**

Many young Africans attempting to migrate for better opportunities face abuse from traffickers, smugglers, or border authorities. Some lose their lives in deserts, seas, or detention centres.

### **5. Abuse Based on Identity and Orientation**

This includes ethnic discrimination, xenophobia, and severe persecution of LGBTQ+ youth.

These abuses reveal gaps in governance, human rights protection, and youth inclusion across the continent.

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### **13. The Hidden Suffering of LGBTQ+ Youth in Africa**

While many African countries promote tolerance and unity, LGBTQ+ youth still face harrowing realities. In countries such as Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria, and others, laws and social attitudes make life extremely difficult and often dangerous for queer young people.

LGBTQ+ youth face:

- **Physical torture** by community members, families, or authorities
- **Corrective rape**, especially targeted at lesbians and transgender individuals
- **Forced conversion practices** disguised as religious or traditional rituals
- **Expulsion from homes**, leaving youth homeless and vulnerable
- **Blackmail and extortion**
- **Verbal and emotional abuse**
- **Police brutality and arbitrary arrests**

- Denial of healthcare due to stigma



Many Zimbabwean LGBTQ+ youth live in fear daily. Some are beaten, tortured, or detained simply for being who they are. Often, their stories stay hidden because they cannot report abuse without risking further persecution.

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#### **14. One Voice Youth Foundation - A Rescue for the Vulnerable**

In response to the suffering of marginalized youth, especially LGBTQ+ youth fleeing persecution, ONE VOICE Youth Foundation established a **safe-house shelter in South Africa**. This shelter provides refuge for young people escaping violence, torture, and discrimination.

##### **Our Shelter Provides:**

- **Emergency accommodation** for victims of violence and discrimination
- **Food, clothing, and medical support**
- **Trauma counselling** and mental health services
- **Legal assistance**, especially for asylum seekers and refugees
- **Reintegration programs**, including education and skills development

- A supportive community where youth feel seen, heard, and valued

Our shelter has become a lifeline for many Zimbabwean LGBTQ+ youth who flee torture, blackmail, or death threats. South Africa, although still facing challenges of its own, offers stronger legal protections and social support systems compared to their home countries.

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## **15. Real-Life Stories of Resilience and Survival**

### **Story 1: The Young Dancer from Harare**

A 19-year-old Zimbabwean dancer was attacked by neighbours who accused him of "bringing shame" to the community because of his sexual orientation. He was beaten, tied up, and left unconscious. After escaping, he crossed into South Africa and was housed at our shelter. Today, he is rebuilding his life, attending dance workshops, and receiving psychosocial support.

### **Story 2: The Girl Forced Into "Corrective" Abuse**

A young lesbian woman from Bulawayo was subjected to violent "corrective rape" by relatives who believed this would "fix" her. Traumatized and fearing for her life, she fled to South Africa. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation welcomed her into our care, helped her access therapy, and supported her asylum application.

### **Story 3: The Transgender Teen Rejected by Family**

A 17-year-old transgender youth was kicked out by family members who burned their clothes and personal items. The teen lived on the streets for weeks before finding support through activists who referred them to our shelter. With our help, they are now accessing healthcare and pursuing education.

These stories represent only a fraction of the suffering that LGBTQ+ youth endure across Africa.

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## **16. The Wider Impact of Youth Abuse**

When youth suffer, entire communities suffer. The impacts of abuse and marginalization include:

- Increased homelessness
- Rising suicide rates

- Broken families and stigma
- High school dropout rates
- Trauma and long-term mental health struggles
- Reduced economic participation
- Weakening of social cohesion

By protecting vulnerable youth, we protect the future of Africa. Youth who are safe, supported, and respected are more likely to contribute positively to society.

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## **17. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation's Response Strategy**

To fight injustices across Africa, our organization works through:



### **1. Protection and Shelters Services**

We provide emergency support and long-term reintegration assistance to abused youths.

Read more [here](#).



## **2. Advocacy and Awareness**

We challenge harmful cultural, political, and social systems that silence or endanger youth.

## **3. Leadership and Empowerment Programs**

We equip youth to become community leaders, human rights defenders, and innovators.

## **4. Mental Health and Trauma Healing**

We ensure youth receive counselling, therapy, and emotional support.

## **5. Cross-Border Collaboration**

We coordinate with partners in Zimbabwe and other African nations to rescue at-risk youth.

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## **18. Building an Africa Where Every Youth Matters**

The story of African youth is one of pain, but also resilience, hope, and unstoppable potential. ONE VOICE Youth Foundation is committed to transforming the lives of young people who have been silenced or abused.

Our vision remains firm: to build a **just, inclusive, united Africa** where every young person has the power and platform to thrive free from fear, discrimination, and violence.

We believe that with compassion, advocacy, and collective action, Africa can become a continent where every young life is valued and protected.

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## **19. Our Call to Action**

To achieve this vision, we call on:

- Governments to strengthen youth rights and protection.
- Communities to end stigma and discrimination.
- International partners to support refugee and LGBTQ+ youth.
- Young people to raise their voices and stand up for equality.

Together, we can rewrite the narrative of African youth, from one of suffering to one of empowerment.

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## **20. Conclusion - Hope for a New Dawn**

The journey toward justice and inclusion in Africa is long, but it is possible. Youth deserve safety, dignity, love, and opportunity. Through the work of ONE VOICE Youth Foundation and our partners, the future can be brighter and safer for millions of young people.

We stand as a home, a shield, and a voice for the voiceless.

The fight continues, but so does hope.

## **Contact us:**

Whether you have a question, feedback, suggestion, or would like to partner with us, our team is ready to assist. Feel free to reach out using the contact details below.

We'll get back to you as soon as possible.

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