



# ZAMBIA

## National Refugee Youth Consultation

### Summary Report

19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016



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# Global Refugee Youth Consultations

## Background

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) were launched in July 2015 at the UNHCR-NGO Consultations in Geneva. A joint initiative of UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission, supported by the Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE)<sup>1</sup>, the GRYC are supported by a Coordinator, Project Officer and Advisory Committee (consisting of national and international NGOs, youth representatives and an independent youth expert).

Refugee youth are often left out of activities and programmes organised by the UN, NGOs and other organisations. Youth have skills, capabilities, aspirations and needs that often go unrecognised and are not understood. There is a need to reach out and hear from them about the challenges they face, their visions and what support they need to shape positive futures. The consultations are providing opportunities for refugee youth to discuss issues that affect them with host country youth and representatives from the United Nations, international NGOs, national NGOs and other organizations working with youth in the country. The process aims to place youth at the centre of decision making processes that affect them and to recognize their potential. The target group for this project are young refugees that fit the United Nations definition of 'Youth' which is all boys and girls, young women and young men between the ages of 15-24 years.

The consultations took place between November 2015 and June 2016. They included national level consultations in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa. The 'National Consultations' are led by national NGOs from each country with UNHCR and an international NGO partner. Similar consultations were also held with refugee youth in North America, Australasia and Europe. Opportunities to participate in smaller consultations and online are also being provided through a designated toolkit and a Facebook platform. The process culminated in a global consultation in Geneva in June 2016 and participation by young people in the 2016 annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations, the overarching theme of which is Youth.

## Objectives and design

Underpinning the design of the national consultations are the four core objectives of the GRYC:

1. To create structured spaces for young refugees to have a voice and engage in participatory dialogue with other youth and relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional and global levels
2. To improve access for young refugees to local, national, regional and global youth alliances and networks
3. To foster and support participation, leadership and empowerment opportunities for young refugees
4. To consolidate and channel the learning from the consultations into the development of guidelines and policy recommendations on youth-inclusive programming, to improve the humanitarian sector's understanding of, and work with, young refugees.

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<sup>1</sup> The Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE Group) includes representatives from more than 15 humanitarian organizations that are committed to achieving better outcomes for young people in humanitarian situations.

A participatory approach was used throughout. The session plans were developed by the GRYC Coordinator, in consultation with UNHCR and WRC. They were designed through a collaborative and iterative process, including:

- An extensive review of literature and other materials relating to consultations with youth, displaced populations and participatory research methods, in order to learn from previous experience and to adapt relevant pre-existing models.<sup>2</sup>
- The active input of a group of young refugees and asylum seekers during a two-day residential workshop in Malta, in October 2015, organised in partnership with UNHCR Malta and a Maltese NGO, Organisation for Friendship and Diversity (OFD). The group consisted of males and females representing the full age range of the global consultations (15-24 year olds), and five countries - Libya, Somalia, Mali, Eritrea and Palestine.
- Input into the development of the session plans and the content of the national consultations was also sought from members of the GRYC Advisory Committee - in person with the Regional Leads representing Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America during a two-day meeting in Geneva, and by email and skype with the full GRYC Advisory Committee.<sup>3</sup>
- A full pilot national consultation in Uganda that provided an opportunity to learn from the participants and adapt the approach and session plans accordingly.

## Zambia National Consultation

### Additional contextual information

On the day before the consultation began, riots and looting targeting Rwandan nationals broke out in Lusaka, as a result of rumours concerning the suspected involvement of a Rwandan in a series of ritual killings in the city.<sup>4</sup> While some countries deal with similar tensions and outbreaks of violence on a regular basis, Zambia hosts thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries, and according to UNHCR partner organisations and the media, relations between the communities are usually peaceful. A BBC Correspondent in Lusaka highlighted that *“The riots have shocked many Zambians who say they cannot recall such hostility towards foreigners in the country”*. The situation affected the travel plans of the participants meaning that they arrived at the venue much later than expected as a decision was taken by the in-country team to delay travelling until it was deemed safe. This also highlights why it was important to include national and refugee youth in the process of the consultations.

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<sup>2</sup> Some examples of key resources accessed include: *Youth Consultations for a Post-2015 Framework: A Toolkit*. Youth in Action (2013); *A Kit of Tools for Participatory Research and Evaluation with Children, Young People and Adults*. Save the Children Norway (2008); *Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents*. UNHCR (2012); *Community Consultations Using Extended Dialogue Methodology*. UNHCR (2010-11); *Post 2015 Youth Engagement Event Planning Kit*. World Vision (2012); *Considering Consulting? A Guide to Meaningful Consultation with Young People from Refugee and Migrant Backgrounds*. The Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2007).

<sup>3</sup> The Advisory Committee Regional Leads include: World Vision (Africa); Save the Children (MENA); RET (Americas) and APRRN (Asia-Pacific).

<sup>4</sup> Reference: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36084858>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36092917>; <http://video.aljazeera.com/channels/eng/videos/zambia-xenophobia-foreigners-targeted-in-violence/4857091910001>

## National NGO Partner

The Zambia Consultation was organised at the national level and run by Action Africa Help Zambia (AAHZ)<sup>5</sup>, World Vision Zambia and the UNHCR Zambia country office. This team was supported by the GRYC team, including the Coordinator, Project Officer, and a global representative from UNHCR in Geneva.

A team consisting of staff from AAHZ, UNHCR Zambia team and World Vision Zambia, worked together to coordinate the logistics, recruitment of facilitators and interpreters, selection of youth, planning for the stakeholders' meeting, and preparation of materials, as well as engaging in regular Skype meetings with the GRYC team. Staff were committed for the full length of the consultation which helped ensure that all consultation roles were covered and increased familiarity with the young people for post-consultation activities.

### Facilitators

- The Zambia national consultation was led by two external facilitators, identified by UNHCR Zambia. One was a youth themselves, and both have experience of working with vulnerable young people in Zambia.
- The lead facilitators were supported by the GRYC Coordinator.
- The lead facilitators and the GRYC Coordinator rotated around the four groups during the small group exercises, to support as required. These small groups formed the basis of many of the activities.
- 8 small group facilitators from AAHZ, World Vision Zambia UNHCR Zambia were identified and committed themselves to the process during preparation, delivery and debrief, ensuring that they had a good understanding of the whole programme.

### Interpreters

- The primary language of facilitation in Zambia was English.
- Two professional interpreters were provided for four youth who did not speak English.

### Venue and Accommodation

The venue for the workshop and the accommodation were on one site in a venue approximately an hour's drive away from Lusaka, well suited to large events. It was a peaceful setting for the consultation with few distractions, and plenty of space indoors and outdoors for work and recreation.

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<sup>5</sup> AAH Zambia is a Non-Governmental Organization which seeks to support refugees and disadvantaged communities and improve their livelihoods through community empowerment approaches in partnership with stakeholders - [www.actionafricahelp.org/zambia](http://www.actionafricahelp.org/zambia)

## **Evening social activities**

The partners organised different activities each evening, which involved an interactive presentation by a youth leader from Lusaka, a workshop with a Zambian youth entrepreneurship organisation<sup>6</sup>, and a dance night hosted by a DJ. These activities enabled the group to relax and have fun, get to know each other better, and connected them to youth leaders and organisations.

## **Application and Selection Process**

Information about the Zambia consultation was shared by UNHCR Zambia and AAHZ. Information was distributed to UNHCR field offices and amongst urban refugees. Applications were received from 3 locations and participants were selected according to the criteria that had been established with all three organisations at the national level participating in the selection process.

The participants were nominated and approved based on a set of criteria determined by the Global GRYC team, in consultation with the GRYC Advisory Committee, which included:

- Age (15-24)
- Willingness and ability to participate in an interactive, participatory 4-day consultation
- Proven experience as participants of an existing youth programme (for refugee youth) or national youth organization (for host country youth)
- Openness to engage on refugee issues
- A statement of motivation which included details about why the applicant was interested in being involved in the consultation, what they could contribute and what they hoped would be the results of the consultation.

Selection guidelines were provided to the Zambian team to ensure that the participants were as representative of their communities as possible, with particular attention paid to ensuring that the chosen applicants were inclusive of persons with disabilities and represented a diverse range of gender, age, nationality, geographic locations in Zambia, education and employment background and ability, sexual orientation, marital and parental status, and a range of experiences of youth and community work.

## **Youth Participant Profiles**

25 young people aged between 15 and 24 years participated in the Zambia consultation. All youth completed a participant application form as part of the application process, from which we obtained their demographic data, which can be summarised as follows:

- 20 refugees and 5 nationals
- 15 female/10 male
- 16 aged eighteen and over/9 aged under eighteen

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<sup>6</sup> Alliance for Youth Entrepreneurs (AYE) is a youth organization founded by and for youths which serves as an information bureau and platform for business oriented youth to access developmental business resources. The Alliance is certified with Zambia's National Youth Development Council. [https://www.facebook.com/Alliance-of-Youth-Entrepreneurs-215660751780745/info/?tab=page\\_info](https://www.facebook.com/Alliance-of-Youth-Entrepreneurs-215660751780745/info/?tab=page_info)

- The refugee youth came from Angola (3), Democratic Republic of Congo (8), Rwanda (5), Burundi (3) and Somalia (1)
- The national youth came from various locations in Zambia – 2 from Lusaka, 1 from Meheba camp<sup>7</sup>, 1 from Lumwana and also known as a pupil at Meheba High School situated in Meheba Refugee camp and 1 from Mayukwayukwa
- Of the refugee youth, 6 identified as living in a ‘large town or city’, 2 in a ‘village or very remote area’, and 9 in a ‘camp’, and 1 in an ‘informal settlement’
- 15 of the refugee youth identified as having been away from their home country for more than 10 years, 1 as having been away for 5-10 years, 1 has been away for 2-5 years, 1 for 6 months to one year, and the remaining young person identified as having been away from their home country for less than 6 months
- In terms of the highest level of education the refugee youth had completed –
  - 8 identified as having completed primary school
  - 12 identified as having completed secondary school
- In terms of the current education or employment status of the refugee youth, they identified themselves as follows (multiple choice was possible) –
  - 12 in formal education (e.g. school, university, college)
  - 1 employed part-time
  - 2 self-employed
  - 2 looking for a job
  - 2 volunteering (e.g. with an NGO or community group)
  - 1 as ‘other’ (out of school)
- All of the refugee youth identified themselves as living with family.
- 10 of that number identified their father as the head of their household, 5 identified their mother, 2 identified a sibling, 1 identified an aunt/uncle, and 2 identified themselves.
- None of the refugee youth identified themselves as married or as a parent.
- 4 of the refugee youth identified themselves as caring for a family member on a regular basis, which included younger siblings for 3 of the youth, and a disabled or sick family member for 1 youth.
- Two of the refugee youth identified as having a disability.

Participants’ motivation for taking part in the national consultation, as outlined in the application forms, include:

- To meet other youth and learn from them, in order to help other youth after the consultation.
- To work together to find durable solutions to the problems that are facing young refugees.
- To have platform to speak and be heard, for example: *“As a refugee this is one way through which our voices could be heard”*.
- To bring positive change to their lives, for example: *“... being a youth, I have experienced activities that young people are engaging themselves in which are negative to [the quality of] their life. If I undergo this consultation, I will be able to change and share my ideas to them”*
- To make friends and meet people here and globally.

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<sup>7</sup>In Zambia, many locals also live in the settlements and utilise the public services provided, such as schools. Meheba camp is in the North Western province, and close to the borders with DRC and Angola.

Participants' expectations from participating in the consultation, as specified in the application forms, include:

- That the consultation brings change and a positive impact for refugee youth, e.g. *"I hope my ideas will change young refugee lives in our nation and the whole world... because we are the leaders of tomorrow"*.
- To create networks between refugee youth and national youth, e.g. *"To be able to socialise with not only refugees but also non-refugees, and interact over important issues among us"*.
- To develop skills and increase knowledge, e.g. leadership, empowerment and *"how to educate others through drama"*.
- New and lasting friendships.

### **Bringing together host community and refugee youth**

One of the objectives of the national consultations was to provide an opportunity for refugee and host country youth to meet, exchange ideas, build friendships and alliances, and establish networks. It was hoped that as a result of the consultations, refugee and host country youth would gain a better understanding of the issues they face – as youth – and that there would be opportunities for refugee youth to work more closely with national youth organisations. The participants were asked the question on day one - *"Why did we invite refugee and national youth to this consultation?"* The answers included: to reduce discrimination; to share ideas, as one national youth suggested: *"To help each other understand more than what we know"*; and to identify shared problems and solutions; as one participant highlighted: *"Because we share the same problems"*. Finally, there was an emphasis on equality from one participant: *"We are all youths from different backgrounds; I hope we all look at ourselves as one after this consultation."*

In an exercise on day one about exploring perceptions and facts about refugees, misconceptions about refugees were identified by participants and discussed openly, which set the tone for the rest of the week and demonstrated the group's willingness to learn more about each other's circumstances. This aspect was reflected upon by a participant in their evaluation form: *"My favorite part of the consultation was the activity on separating facts and perceptions about refugees. It made me aware of the many misconceptions that exist about refugees"*. Another participant commented on the value of the exercise to understand each other better and find commonalities: *"... this part really touched me and again opened me because I thought that I was isolated among others"*.

Given that many of the refugee and host country youth live side-by-side in or near the refugee settlements and urban areas, it was natural for them to identify common issues. For some of the urban youth, this was also a significant learning opportunity as some of them were hearing and learning about life in the camps (settlements) for the first time. The final evaluation forms provided an opportunity for reflection at the end of an intense week. Many of the comments demonstrated the value that was placed on the opportunity for refugee and national youth to meet and socialize with each other. As one refugee youth explained, when asked what learning they are taking away: *"I thought national youth discriminate us but during this consultation I have come to understand that we're one"*, and another youth made the following recommendation to the GRYC team: *"To continue involving nationals in these youth consultations"*.





Finally, a very powerful example of solidarity came through music, as 11 of the participants, refugee and national, joined up in their spare time and created a song about the consultation and the issues facing youth. They incorporated multiple languages to reflect the many nationalities in the group, and some of the lyrics were as follows: *“Us youths we can change things – we can make change – education, discrimination, we can do sensitisation – In our society we have early marriages, stand up, let’s stand and be empowered ... We are living behind a curtain, we believe we can fight, be the face of change.”*

### National Consultation Structure

Each of the National Consultations had two components, with the same structure for all locations. The first component was a three-day consultation with 20 refugee youth and 5 host country youth - working together to be heard, develop ideas, build alliances and networks, and contribute to improving work with young refugees globally. The second component was a half-day ‘stakeholder dialogue’ where participants share consultation outcomes and recommendations with key local, national and international agencies and organisations and develop next steps for the post-consultation period.

#### Day One

- Getting to know each other, building trust and teambuilding
- Identity
- Youth Participation

#### Day Two

- Identifying and prioritising issues
- Analysing issues and identifying causes and impacts
- The role of youth in addressing the issues

#### Day Three

- Addressing the issues and developing solutions
- Advocacy/Communicating our messages and recommendations
- Stakeholder analysis
- Planning for the stakeholders meeting

#### Day Four

- Stakeholders meeting
- Group action planning – what next for this group

## Main themes from Zambia Consultation

The following is an overview and analysis of the key themes and issues that emerged during this consultation:

General themes included:

- **The role of youth:** As the consultation progressed, there was a clear acknowledgement by the group that youth have an important role to play, and that they can take the lead in pushing for the change they want to see. This was not an easy conclusion for some of the groups to reach; as they struggled to transition from the idea that external organisations make change happen. A number of the young people who were already active in their communities provided helpful examples from their own experiences of projects of what youth can achieve. The final evaluation forms highlighted how many young people had changed mind-set in the course of the consultation. Most participants commented on how they now recognized the crucial role of youth and talked about the need for youth to be more proactive in organising activities and seeking out relevant stakeholders. For example:
  - *“I have learnt that you don't always have to sit down and wait for the problem to be solved, but you as youth can also take action in finding solutions with some other stakeholders in our various communities”*
  - *“My favourite part of the consultation was role of youths, and this really helped me in developing my skills I have realized that I shouldn't just sit... but I should stand and play my role”*
- **Friendship and solidarity:** Developing friendships was an important outcome for this group, as in all of the consultations. During formal and informal discussions, participants talked about the importance of feeling less isolated, meeting like-minded people, and feeling part of something bigger than themselves and their immediate communities. Some of the participants suggested the consultation should be longer and replicated to enable more young people to take part. The following comments from the final evaluation forms emphasise the importance of providing opportunities such as this for youth to meet and connect. When asked what their favourite part of the consultation was, one youth answered: *“Interacting with refugee youths and building friendships and relationships with them”*. In response to whether the consultation met their expectations, one youth explained: *“It did and much more. I was not expecting to meet this amazing group of friends...”* another replied *“... I hope [this] will be the bridge linking [us] to one another”*. While friendship is an important outcome in its own right, it is also a major contributor to the sustainability of the goals of this consultation, as in other locations. It is often friendship and shared goals that connect a group after a consultation, especially where there are significant physical distances between participants.<sup>8</sup>
- **Networking:** Building on the theme of friendship and relationships, many participants recognized the importance of developing networks with other youth and stakeholders in order to achieve their goals. The stakeholder meeting was the first time many of the participants had the opportunity to sit down and speak directly with decision makers. This taught many

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<sup>8</sup> The global aspect of the GRYC project also appealed as many participants expressed their desire to connect with other consultation participants through social media, to learn about each other and share their ideas. As one young person reflected in their evaluation form: *“I am looking forward to working hand in hand with more youths locally, nationally and internationally, hold on hands and stand as one”*.

participants the value of identifying and building networks of stakeholders to work with, rather than waiting for stakeholders to appear and offer assistance. A number of the participants acknowledged this shift in their relationship with stakeholders in the final de-brief meeting. One commented *“I’m excited, in the past it was difficult to share with senior people but now I spoke with them and it was fine”* and *“I’ve learned that I can work hand in hand with them and contribute to our solutions”*.

- **Greater youth involvement in decision-making and leadership:** On many occasions, members of the group discussed their desire to be involved in the decision making processes that affect them and their communities, and to be given opportunities to take on positions of responsibility. During the discussion on day one on perceptions and facts associated with the word ‘youth’, participants identified three issues that they feel impede them in this: lack of opportunities (to be a part of decision making), lack of resources (to implement their ideas and plans), and a lack of guidance and capacity building from adults. The last point also relates to a discussion at the stakeholders meeting about role models, and the need for youth to be connected with other young leaders to learn from their experiences.

#### **Sector specific themes and priorities included:**

- **Education:** The group highlighted a number of challenges they face in accessing quality education. Accessing tertiary education was of particular concern to many participants, refugee and national, who considered it impossible without financial support. Language barriers were identified as a major obstacle for non-English speaking refugees. Not only do language barriers affect understanding and therefore achievement in school, but they can have a very negative effect on the psychological wellbeing of students who are often put into a lower grade than they would in their home country. Concerns were raised about the exclusion of girls from education due to societal attitudes and risks of child and forced marriage for financial or other reasons. Limited access to quality education in rural areas was also identified as a challenge, as was lack of access to schools and vocational training for young people with disabilities, both in terms of physical access and a lack of inclusive facilities, as well as negative attitudes towards youth with disabilities.
- **Documentation: Inadequate access to documentation and limited recognition of refugee documentation.** This was the most commonly discussed issue in this group, and it generated much debate throughout the consultation. It was identified as the cause of many other issues, and impacting on many other areas including access to education, lack of access to basic services, restrictions on freedom of movement, unemployment and insecurity.
- **Health:** Limited access to quality health care, good sanitation, and comprehensive public health information was discussed on many occasions, as were concerns about the prevalence of high risk behaviours and activities with negative impacts on health, such as substance abuse among youth, the use of traditional healers, early pregnancies, child labour and prostitution.
- **SGBV including child and forced marriage:** Significant concern was expressed about the consequences of child and forced marriage for girls, both the impact on their physical and mental health, as well as the impact on their education - as girls are often unable to continue with their education once pregnant. One of the small groups chose to focus on solutions to this issue to present to the stakeholders. The need for sensitisation and advocacy in communities through peer education and meetings with parents and community leaders was considered a priority to protect girls against early and forced marriage.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination towards refugees was of serious concern to this group, and was mentioned in most exercises during the consultation. The young refugees in the group

identified consequences of discrimination through their own experiences, which included negative impacts on their wellbeing, sense of security and access to basic services and employment. Many participants, refugee and national alike, identified a role for themselves and their peers in addressing discrimination in their communities. This was a particularly pertinent theme given the unexpected outburst of xenophobic violence that occurred in Lusaka during the week of the consultation.

## Main Findings from the Zambia Consultation

The following section provides a summary of the main points to have arisen in each session during the four-day consultation with refugee youth in Zambia. The structure of each exercise is described followed by the main findings:

### Perceptions and facts about refugees and youth

This exercise provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss, in small groups, facts and perceptions associated with the words ‘refugee’ and ‘youth’, with their ideas recorded on flipchart paper and shared back with the whole group.

This exercise generated much discussion and debate between the participants, and both national and refugee youth had the opportunity to consider each other’s perspectives. In three of the groups, participants highlighted the common misconceptions that refugees choose to come to Zambia to find jobs or other resources such as food or medical care. This leads to the assumption that refugees are taking jobs and other resources away from Zambians, which can lead to resentment and tension between refugees and the host community. One young refugee pointed out that in his view refugees contribute to the Zambian economy by creating jobs, especially if they come from a business background.

The groups felt that refugees are often perceived poorly, and as a result they experience discrimination. One group highlighted that the labels sometimes applied to refugees include ‘trouble makers’, ‘thieves’, and ‘killers’, or that they are only focused on getting benefits for themselves. In one of the groups, a lot of emotion was displayed when discussing the insecurity experienced by refugees as a result of this discrimination, and the associated frustrations of not having the freedom to build a safe, self-reliant and productive life in Zambia. In another group, refugee youth argued that they could not ‘enjoy full human rights’ in Zambia, whereas the national youth felt that this was not accurate and that refugees have equal access to the same rights as Zambian citizens. The exercise provided an opportunity to ensure that everyone in the group



understood the real definition of 'refugee' before moving forward with the consultation. Each group demonstrated clarity on this point.

In the discussions about the term, 'youth', as in previous consultations, each group identified common negative perceptions associated with youth, while highlighting that youth have capabilities and capacities. Familiar labels for youth were discussed, such as – 'lazy', 'disrespectful', 'violent', 'stubborn', 'self-centred', and 'easily influenced'. While acknowledging that of course these labels are true for some people, as they can be for any age group, one of the participants emphasised that it is unhelpful for all youth to be labelled the same. One of the groups also emphasised the need for support and guidance from adults at this transitional age, rather than generalising and being judgemental. There was a consensus in all groups that youth have tremendous potential for good, but are so often restricted by circumstance or by a lack of support or belief from those around them. One young refugee explained: *"Youths have strength and have higher chances of excelling if given opportunities"*, and another emphasized: *"Youth have many plans even if they have no resources to implement these"*. The desire of youth to take on roles of responsibility, and their frustration at being excluded, was echoed in all the groups, as the following comments demonstrate: *"youths in rural areas are not involved in decision making"*, and *"a youth once grown up feels like they can make decisions for themselves. [But] they also want the right to make decisions to be given to them"*. The risks of not giving young people opportunities to take on positive leadership roles was discussed by one group, which highlighted the negative consequences of those in power exploiting the energy and willingness of youth. They argued that youths may be encouraged to engage in anti-social activities, which they agree to as it gives them an opportunity to feel powerful, to vent their frustrations, to belong to a cause or sometimes to earn a living.

The group acknowledged the importance of identifying the difference between facts and perceptions. One national youth explained: If a belief about refugees or youth which is understood to be a *'fact'* is revealed to be a perception, it *"can be the key to solving the issue"*, and for example, it can reduce discrimination towards refugees. A young refugee agreed that it is *"important to separate [facts and perceptions] for us to learn more."* In the final evaluation on day one, one of the participants spoke of the value of this kind of discussion: *"I learnt a lot when we were stating the facts and opinions because [we have] different opinions; I got to learn both about positive and negative challenges [for refugees and youth]"*.

## **Youth Participation**

This exercise was structured around a set of three questions which the young people voted on and then discussed.

### **Question 1: Should NGOs, UNHCR or Government line ministries<sup>9</sup> listen/engage with youth in designing and planning their services and activities for refugee youth?**

The majority of participants who voted considered that it was important for NGOs (22), UNHCR (24) and Government line ministries (24) to listen and engage with youth in designing and planning services and activities for refugee youth. As two participants highlighted: *"[It is the] best way to help*

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<sup>9</sup> In other consultations, there have been two options, UNHCR and NGOs, but in the Zambian context, the partners explained that Government line ministries are also active at a local level as service providers. Therefore, it was decided to add a third option for this exercise.

for a bright future” and “first-hand information is always the best”. Aside from the small number of participants who were undecided and therefore chose not to vote, the only exception was with Government line ministries as one participant voted ‘no’ on the basis that: “The way they do things is different”.

**Question 2: Have you taken any steps to communicate with NGOs, UNHCR or Government line ministries to talk about the issues you face?**

- For UNHCR, the majority (more than three quarters of the 21 participants who voted) voted ‘yes’. Two participants explained why: “We have been told they are the ones able to help us”, and “[they are] able to recommend you [to the necessary services or facilities] because they have your information”.
- For NGOs, more than half of the 23 participants who voted said ‘no’. One comment by a participant who voted no suggested that they had previously misunderstood the difference between UNHCR and NGOs: “I used to think all refugee NGOs were part of the UNHCR. Meanwhile, another participant explained that they had had unsatisfactory experiences with some NGOs who had assumed that UNHCR was responsible for refugees rather than the NGOs themselves, i.e. “they (NGOs) think I can just go to the UNHCR”. On a positive note, a participant who voted yes to this question explained that they had had a good experience of interacting with NGOs: “We were once given an opportunity and they made it easy for us to communicate our issues via creative means.”
- When it came to Government line ministries, the majority of participants (more than three quarters of the 24 participants who voted) answered ‘no’, and two of the participants explained their reasoning. First, they consider that the Government lacks belief in what youth can contribute, “Because the government thinks youth lack experience”, and second, that making contact is difficult: “You cannot easily meet the leaders, as a result, it’s not easy so we come up with strategic ways to be heard.”



**Question 3: Do you feel it is easy to interact with NGOs, UNHCR or Government line ministries to talk about what you face?**

The voting for this question mirrored the previous question, as the majority felt that it is easy to communicate and interact with UNHCR, as one participant commented: “They are always there for us, and that it is difficult to communicate and interact with NGOs. The key shift in this question

concerned Government line ministries, as the majority now voted that it was either 'easy' or 'quite easy' to communicate and interact with them. Although, the comments shared by two of the refugee participants suggest otherwise: *"[It is] not easy to approach Ministries / Ministers even when you come to a set meeting; sometimes they are dismissive", and "They just look at the way I dress; with my hijab; I would love it if there was a centre instead of being humiliated; they don't understand that I was born and raised here."*

### **Youth Visions for Participation:**

In the next stage of this session, the participants had the opportunity to discuss in small groups their ideas and visions for youth participation and then to present these ideas visually through posters.

This was a very challenging exercise for some of the participants as they explained that they had not been asked this question before and they found it difficult to come up with ideas. A young refugee in one group explained that: "he failed to find solutions, and the only way he knows is to present problems". This point was echoed by the rest of his group, who were initially convinced that the only role youth can take is to share their problems. They found it very challenging to move beyond discussing the challenges they face and focused a lot on their perceived lack of access to quality education.

Ideas that the group identified for youth participation included - creating youth committees or 'boards' to ensure that youth voices can be coordinated and collected at the grass roots level, after which structures should be put in place to help connect youth with local leaders and channel their ideas and outcomes up from local to the national level. Utilising the media to both attract and engage youth to get more involved in their communities was another idea. The theme of information continued, in the form of planning sensitisation activities through which youth take the lead to tackle challenges in their communities, through for example, leading a door-to-door campaign or designing a drama to raise awareness and combat substance abuse among teenagers. It was also felt that youth could take the lead as researchers in their communities, both to identify problems and collect evidence around this, rather than being told what their problems are. Finally, the group thought that it was important to engage youth at the start of any new community project, perhaps in a committee format, as one participant explained: *"so as to include any issues that may involve them"*. A practical example of how this approach can work was shared by one young refugee: *"When government plans economic development-related projects in a given area they should involve the youth. In Livingstone, for example, a meeting with 'climate ambassadors' was convened by UNICEF and Wildlife Conservation Fund Zambia; it was the first time they called up refugee youth."*

### **Identification and prioritization of needs and issues**

During the second day of the consultation, the youth participants worked in small groups to identify and discuss challenges and issues of importance to them.

While this exercise focused primarily on the needs and issues faced by refugee youth, national youth participants were encouraged to participate and use this exercise as an opportunity to ask questions, learn more about the challenges facing their refugee peers, and identify commonalities. The needs and issues identified by the participants focused around several broad themes which in the main

correlated with those raised at previous consultations. These themes included security, health care, access to employment, discrimination and stigma, documentation, freedom of movement, and access to education.

While all the issues raised were important, and generated a lot of discussion and debate, it was clear that education was a priority for this group as it featured strongly in every small group discussion. Access to education was a challenge discussed by many of the groups. Several groups discussed the lack of support for refugee youth to access tertiary education, which they felt prevented young people from advancing with their lives. Inadequate support with fees for poorer students and the scarcity of scholarships were also raised by participants as key challenges. One group identified the shortage of schools as a specific challenge and the need for more schools to be constructed in rural areas. Another group highlighted the specific challenges faced by children and youth with disabilities in accessing school in Mayukwayukwa camp; “Mayukwayukwa<sup>10</sup> schools have only stairs, so someone with a wheel chair cannot access the school” said one participant. Two groups raised the lack of skills training and empowerment opportunities for youth and noted that where skills-training is available the necessary equipment is not available to apply the learning and generate income upon completion. One group identified a lack of awareness of the importance of education among some members of their communities, which leads to children and youth being removed from school or not engaged in the first place. Lack of education contributes to high levels of illiteracy which, according to the youth, has a negative impact on society more widely and on young people’s ability to be self-reliant.

Health care was another priority identified by the group and many camp-based youth highlighted the challenges that they face in terms of access to and quality of health care. One group explained that in their experience it is common practice for clinics to dispense expired drugs and there are fears of reprisals if the community complains. They also highlighted the prohibitive cost of medication. Another group highlighted the concern that some health facilities are managed by untrained staff due to shortage of medical staff and are overwhelmed by the number of patients, which can result in delays in treatment. As one participant asserted, “*they do not attend to our needs immediately*”. There was also a specific reference to the challenges that refugees with disabilities face in accessing emergency health care, as well as the shortage of clinics in rural areas and inability to access drugs when they are required. Some participants also felt that the attitudes of some health workers fed into delays in getting treatment.

There were further discussions about poor sanitation in the camps, as one participant explained, “*Water in the camps is often not clean, people get [water] from protected wells and boreholes, which can be far off*”. This can lead to the double challenge of protection and health risks. Substance abuse was also discussed by two of the groups and was considered to be a significant concern amongst their age group. It was suggested that frustration due to the lack of employment, education and recreational opportunities can contribute to youth using drugs and alcohol.

Many groups raised concerns about other protection risks facing refugee youth, including child and forced marriages, early pregnancies, human trafficking and worst forms of labour, such as

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<sup>10</sup> Mayukwayukwa refugee camp is located in the Kaoma District of Zambia’s Western Province, with a population of over 12,000 refugees. (UNHCR, 2016).



prostitution, which youth are forced to resort to when employment opportunities are limited and/or education is inaccessible. One group highlighted the specific needs of orphaned minors which are often neglected. Security was also a concern for many of the youth living in camps, and discussions in two of the groups focused on the need for improved security citing the burning of houses in Mayukwayukwa camp as an example.



Two groups discussed the impact lack of documentation has on freedom of movement and access to basic services. As one young refugee explained: *“We need the right documentation in order to do so many things; go to school, college, travel outside Zambia, sponsorship.”* Other issues facing young refugees included: discrimination and stigmatisation, for example when seeking employment;

language barriers, which can make it hard to understand and navigate Zambian systems and structures such as the legal and administrative systems; limited access to information about basic services; and lack of awareness amongst the host population about refugee rights. One of the participants explained: ‘Our rights are not known by Zambians’. The manipulation of vulnerable youth was also cited as a protection risk, one group argued that youth are – ‘Used as tools [by] other people for personal gain’ and used as ‘sexual objects’.

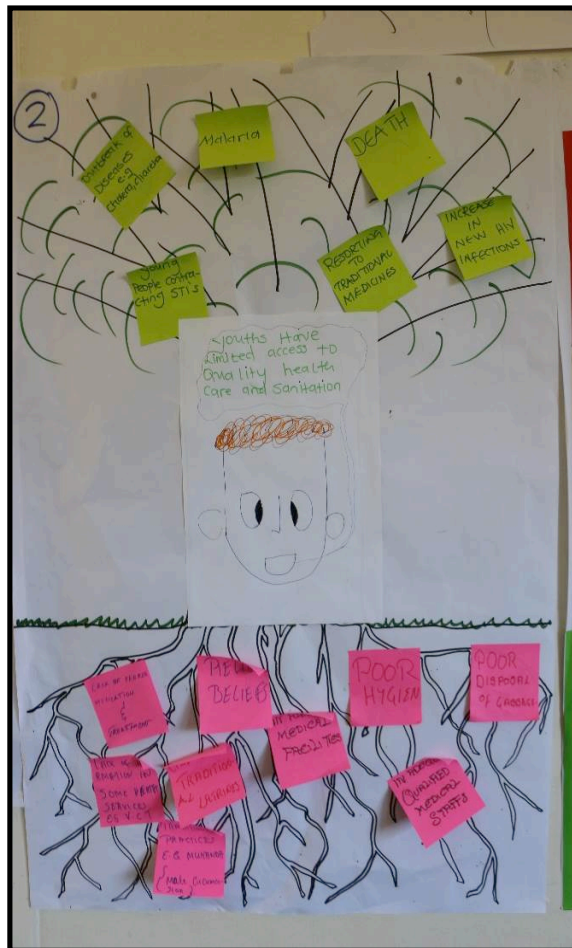
After identifying the main issues and needs facing refugee youth in Zambia, the participants were asked to prioritize the top nine issues they face through a small-group exercise called **Diamond Ranking**. This activity is designed to encourage debate and deeper analysis of the issues and to develop the participants’ understanding of the importance of reaching consensus and compromise. Of the top four issues chosen by the participants, two groups focused on education; access to tertiary education and access to scholarships. One group chose lack of documentation (or perhaps the limitations of the documentation that is available to them - please see below for more details), and the fourth group selected lack of quality health care.

Other issues that ranked high and/or provoked the most debate included: child, and forced marriage, substance abuse, lack of adequate shelter, lack of targeted care for orphans and vulnerable children, unemployment, lack of medical care and specialist services for refugees with disabilities, and lack of security.

### **Identifying causes and impacts of issues using Problem Trees:**

Using the ‘problem tree’ tool, participants selected an issue from the top three in their diamond ranking charts and considered its causes and impacts.

The first group focused on the lack of access to primary, secondary and tertiary education for both abled and disabled youth. Group 2 chose limited access for youth to quality health care and sanitation. The third group focused on lack of documentation and the last group selected child and forced marriage.



Amongst the causes of **Limited access to primary, secondary and tertiary education for both abled and disabled refugee youth**, the participants identified a lack of family support for education, and conflicting priorities at home, such as household chores or having to earn an income to contribute to the household. The group also identified discrimination and stigma, which can impact on access to and retention in education, either due to refugee status, disability or age. The example of an older student without English language skills being assigned to a class with younger students was given. The challenge of language was confirmed by several of the refugee youth in the group, who explained:

- *“When we come here without speaking the language, we are put in classes with 9 year olds, this is very discouraging.”*
- *“I was in grade 12 in my country but I was put in grade 9 here because of language barriers.”*
- *“Most youths in camps refuse to go to school because they are taken back 2-3 grades because of language.”*
- *“You are put in class with small children”*

Physical access to school is often restricted for youth with disabilities, for example, if there are only stairs and no ramps for wheelchair users. Some of the impacts of lack of access to primary, secondary and tertiary education for both abled and disabled young people include: child, and forced marriage, often used to reduce the financial burden on families’ ability to generate income or “provide protection” for girls; youth resorting to high risk activities to generate income, e.g. sex work or begging on the street, or to pass time young people may also engage in substance abuse. It was also highlighted that, an increase in inequality within society grows as more youth are illiterate or unqualified, and that it can also mean an increase in poverty as increasing numbers of youth do not have the skills, knowledge or qualifications to access meaningful work opportunities or develop businesses for themselves.

The group discussing **limited access for youth to quality health care and sanitation** identified the following causes: inadequate medical facilities with poor hygiene; inexperienced or poorly trained medical personnel; a lack of medication and quality treatment options; an inadequate referral system for patients, which prevents them from receiving appropriate care and a lack of information

provided through health centres, for example, Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT)<sup>11</sup>. Where poor sanitation is concerned causes include reliance on and use of traditional latrines, and poor waste disposal systems. Impacts include outbreak of diseases, such as cholera, and high prevalence of malaria due to poor drainage systems. Inability to treat these diseases leads to increasingly poor health outcomes and/ or death. Lack of access to public health information on sexual health and VCT services for example can result in an increase in HIV infection and other STIs. Finally, the group explained that because of the limited quality health care, more people resort to traditional medicines, traditional practices and religious beliefs around health care. One such example is the practice of, 'mukanda' or male circumcision in unhygienic conditions or using unqualified practitioners or the deliberate contradiction of proven, scientific health care practices.

The group discussing issues with the scope of refugee **documentation** and the challenges to obtain it, were specifically referring to a range of documents, including refugee identity documents (resulting from the Refugee Status Determination process), and key permits such as those for study, investment and work. They determined that the main causes of these issues fell into two broad categories. The first category was information and understanding. Language barriers can prevent new arrivals from understanding the Zambian administrative and legal system, specifically what is required of them to secure the required documentation and which documents beyond the refugee ID are needed dependent on each individual's needs and circumstance. There is also sometimes a lack of knowledge about the importance of identity documents<sup>12</sup>, which the youth considered the result of a lack of comprehensive information available to new arrivals to explain the Refugee Status Determination process. Second, participants felt that the application process for the practical acquisition of documentation for refugees, was too long, and is often affected by corruption or negligence in the issuing offices. Furthermore, some essential documents for refugee youth, such as study permits, are prohibitively expensive and issuance is handled from Lusaka which requires movement from the camps; which in itself can be challenging due to the expense of travel and restrictions on refugees' movements including the travel permits required.



To clarify the context around restrictions on refugees' movements - although Zambia is party to the 1951 Convention, the 1967 Protocol<sup>13</sup> and the 1969 OAU Convention<sup>14</sup>, and it has ratified various

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<sup>11</sup> VCT for HIV usually involves two counselling sessions: one prior to taking the HIV test and one following the HIV test when the results are given. Counselling focuses on the infection (HIV), the disease (AIDS), the test, and positive behaviour change. <http://www.aidsmap.com/Voluntary-Counselling-and-Testing/page/1746509/>

<sup>12</sup> According to UNHCR, this issue is most common for new arrivals, rather than refugees, as sensitisation sessions are regularly conducted by UNHCR and their implementing partners.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.pdf>

other international instruments protecting human rights; Zambia entered reservations to the Convention relating to the status of refugees, inter alia, on freedom of movement and employment. In line with Zambia's encampment policy, a 'gate pass' is formal permission to leave the camp.<sup>15</sup> A gate pass is obtained from the Ministry of Home Affairs-Commissioner of Refugees (MHA-COR Refugee Officer) present in each settlement and provides freedom to move outside designated areas. These passes have a time allowance, usually a maximum of 30 days. Ordinarily, all refugees over the age of 18 can obtain a gate pass, but the process can take longer for children to ensure that protection considerations are taken into account. For the most part, refugee ID and gate passes are issued within the camps. However, there are exceptions that require travel to Lusaka, for example, the Convention Travel Document<sup>16</sup>, which is issued by the Passport and Citizenship Office in Lusaka; medical documents for which refugees can only access the services from facilities outside the camp; and aliens cards and Immigration permits (for example, including study permits and work permits).<sup>17</sup>

The group viewed the impacts of the issues they identified concerning documentation as serious and far-reaching, because without documentation, access to basic services is directly affected. This includes health care, shelter, education, employment, and freedom of movement. They also explained that lacking documentation can provoke desperate behaviour in people who, for example, might try to bribe officials to obtain their documentation faster, and who may resort to prostitution to raise money for bribes. Psychological impacts were also discussed by the group at length. They highlighted that many youth begin to lose hope as they feel vulnerable, limited in their movements, and unable to access services.

The final group focused on **child and forced marriage** and identified a range of causes for this problem. These included young people choosing marriage due to peer pressure, or conflicts in the home that they want to escape; young people being forced into marriage for cultural (to abide by traditional or religious practices), or financial reasons (perhaps where parents are unable to keep a child in school, or do not value education, and force their child into marriage to generate an income for the household); a lack of peer education on child and forced marriage which could positively increase understanding amongst children and parents; and human trafficking resulting in child and forced marriage. The group highlighted many impacts of child and forced marriage including exploitation, abuse, and SGBV; psychological harm; negative physical effects, including an increase in sexually transmitted diseases in children and youth, early pregnancy, reduced life expectancy and high mortality rate connected to early pregnancies. High levels of illiteracy among girls as a result of their inability to attend school because they are married and as one of the participants explained: 'a reduction in the number of people who can be future leaders' were also discussed.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/about-us/background/45dc1a682/oau-convention-governing-specific-aspects-refugee-problems-africa-adopted.html>

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR has suggested revisions to the national refugee law which has been in existence since 1970.

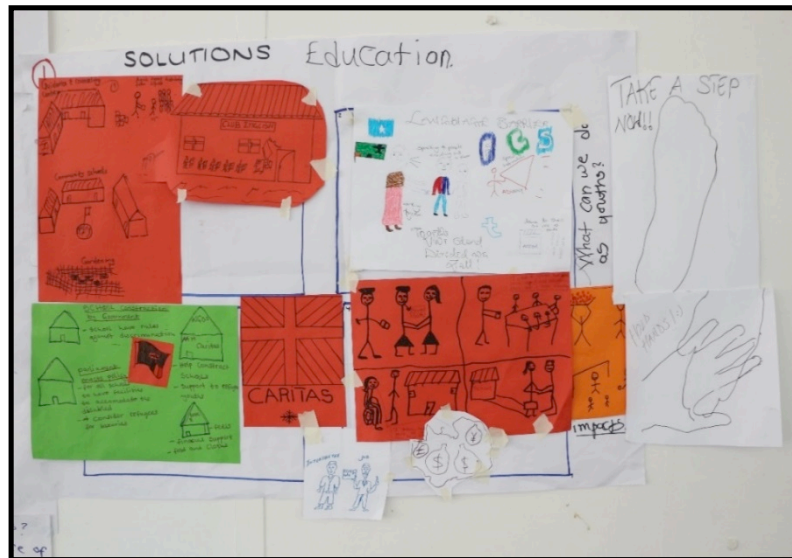
<sup>16</sup> A recognised refugee may have valid reasons to travel abroad, e.g. based on medical, study and those that engage in livelihood activities. To aid this movement, UNHCR, through Government of Zambia's Passport and Citizenship Office, has been issuing a Convention Travel document formally referred to as the United Nations Convention Travel document (UNCTD).

<sup>17</sup> Contextual information provided by UNHCR Zambia. (2016)

## Identifying Solutions using Storyboards

A follow on exercise on day three focused on how to tackle the root causes of these issues, finding solutions, identifying the role of youth and other stakeholders in realising these solutions, and identifying the impact of solutions on the lives of refugee youth.

The group focusing on **lack of access to primary, secondary and tertiary education for both abled and disabled refugee youths** decided to concentrate their solutions on the challenges of transition to a new country and education system, language barriers, discrimination, and access for children and youth with disabilities. In terms of



improving access for youth with disabilities, the group identified the need for a shift in policy to ensure that schools are constructed to be inclusive of everyone's needs, and/or that pre-existing school structures are modified, e.g. with wheelchair ramps and accessible washrooms. They also identified the need for awareness raising about disability to increase respect and understanding in and out of schools, which would hopefully reduce discrimination levels. To address the issue of discrimination in schools, the group proposed the creation of guidance and counselling centers within their schools and the wider community, to positively influence the way that people react to refugees, and to raise awareness of refugee rights. To complement this approach, they stressed the need for stricter rules around discrimination and a clear mechanism for reporting incidents of discrimination. In response to the issue of language barriers, they suggested increasing the number of language centers for refugees to learn English, and increasing the number of interpreters in schools to support non-English speaking students to integrate and learn more effectively.

The participants felt that young people could engage in advocacy to raise awareness of these issues and promote their recommendations, for example, through social media and with key decision makers in their communities. They indicated that they would need to engage the support of external actors such as Government officials to push for policy changes around the architecture and construction of schools and a change in education benefits for refugees born in Zambia; and to secure financial support for refugee youth to complete their education. Contact would also be necessary with local officials and school boards regarding establishing strict rules and zero tolerance around discrimination, and with NGOs to support with construction and financial support to refugee youth. The impact these solutions would have on the lives of refugee youth, would be increased inclusion of both refugee and national youth with disabilities in Zambian schools, an improved retention rate of refugee students in school due to the reduction of barriers such as language and discrimination, and an increased number of qualified youth with improved employment prospects.

The second group who chose **limited access for youth to quality health care and sanitation** proposed a number of solutions which focused on providing public health education and increasing medical supplies in health centres. The participants emphasised that although they envisage different roles for stakeholders and youth in these solutions, it is important that they work together through a 'partnership' approach, for sustainable impacts. External support, from Government, UNHCR, NGOs and the private sector is needed to ensure that health centres are well equipped and have enough medication to meet the needs. The group proposed that youth should take an active role in the community to share public health messages such as, promoting good hygiene and disease prevention, and strongly discouraging the use of unqualified traditional healers. They identified possible platforms for an awareness raising campaign such as social media, churches and schools and using methods such as drama to share the messages in a memorable and entertaining way. The members of this group felt that these solutions would result in improved health among youth which would increase their productivity and ensure that they can regularly attend school and work.

The group addressing **inadequate access to documentation**, were particularly concerned about refugees not understanding the administrative processes to get their identity documents and other permits. This they felt was because of a perceived lack of information and/or language barriers, and feeling compelled to engage in corrupt practices to secure their identity documents or permits. As a result, their solutions respond to the issues of information and corruption. First, they propose that staff recruited to the central issuing offices such as the MHA-COR, should speak the languages of the refugees to ensure that the communication and messaging is clear. At a local level, they suggest that multi-language awareness raising campaigns are organized to promote understanding of the importance of having documentation, to explain the application process (including the approximate timeframe for obtaining each document), and to clarify the consequences of not having documentation such as identity documents and permits, for work, study etc. Second, the groups felt that corruption needs to be tackled at the root, i.e. the staff working in the issuing institutions should be well trained and monitored.

The group identified a clear role for youth in: sensitization at local level, to explain the importance of documentation, as well as volunteering as interpreters for those who cannot speak English to help them understand the system.<sup>18</sup> They could also support national advocacy efforts to influence the government to speed up and simplify the process of issuing documentation, to better facilitate refugees integration into Zambian society. The group identified key roles for the Government and UNHCR to support these solutions. They suggested that the Ministry of Home Affairs could recruit refugees to work as interpreters for other refugees attending the issuing institutions, and UNHCR could join advocacy efforts to shorten the process of acquiring documentation. The group identified one of the impacts of these solutions to be increased mutual understanding between refugee youth and the host population. If these solutions could be achieved, the group concluded that the impacts would be significant, for example, that more refugees would be able to acquire documentation which would increase their access to basic services, such as health care and education; wellbeing of refugees would be improved, and as a result risky coping mechanisms such as substance abuse would be decreased; corruption would be reduced, along with the harmful activities associated with it, such as sex work to obtain money for a bribe.

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<sup>18</sup> This was in fact an action point for one of the participants in their final evaluation form, targeting the Somali community as they were inspired by the suggestion.



The solution proposed by the fourth group to address the issue of child, and forced marriage was the organisation and provision of peer education. Through peer education youth could explain the risks of child, and forced marriage and promote the importance of continuing education. They suggested that youth should take the lead on sensitisation campaigns in their communities, by hosting meetings with their peers, parents and religious leaders to discuss the issues. The group requested support

from UNICEF and UNHCR to help raise the profile of the campaign. The group predicted that the impacts on the lives of refugee youth would be; a reduction in incidences of SGBV, a reduction in early pregnancies, and an increase in literacy as more girls would be educated.

#### Finding more solutions to priority issues:

The World Café exercise was used to encourage youth to identify creative solutions to the problems they face. Four issues were selected from the diamond ranking exercise, which although not ranked in the top three, were the focus of much discussion and debate. These included:

1. The needs of refugee youth with disabilities are not being met
2. Discrimination towards refugees
3. Substance abuse amongst refugee youth
4. Lack of recreational facilities for refugee youth

After identifying solutions, youth were then asked to consider what role they could take in making these solutions a reality.

Youth participants identified a range of ways to address the issue of **the needs of refugee youth with disabilities are not being met**. These would be led by both able-bodied youth and youth with disabilities. Solutions included consulting with youth with disabilities in order to identify and understand their needs and priorities and their ideas for solutions. They also felt that sensitisation campaigns and advocacy at a local and national level was necessary to combat discrimination and educate people. Government support would be crucial for long lasting change. On a practical level, many participants highlighted the need for more tailored construction and equipment to ensure inclusion of youth with disabilities, for example, schools designed for blind or deaf students, vocational training centres that cater to specific access needs, and provision of mobility equipment to increase the independence of youth with disabilities. To make these solutions possible, the participants suggested that able-bodied youth should take a lead role as role models in their

communities by being more inclusive of youth, and more generally, people with disabilities. They also suggested that they could lead the way by not being discriminatory in their own actions, which could help to reduce discrimination through their communities taking notice of their inclusive and positive interactions. To complement this, they suggested several activities for able-bodied youth and youth with disabilities to work together on, for example, they proposed advocacy work using different platforms such as social media, to talk about the need for better understanding and inclusion of youth with disabilities. They also suggested that they should form a youth body/committee to represent and raise issues of disabled refugee youth to UNHCR, the Government of Zambia and NGOs. Finally, they proposed that youth need to actively engage with the Government and other key stakeholders to campaign for/mobilize resources to improve access for youth with disabilities to basic services. This might include for example, provision of braille books for schools, wheelchairs and access ramps, training for teachers in sign language, and physiotherapy sessions.

Solutions to the problem of **discrimination towards refugees** focused on mitigation and response. To mitigate against discrimination, the participants identified the importance of awareness raising activities for the Zambian community, to ensure that they are aware of refugee rights. To complement this, the group proposed integrating refugees into mainstream activities to increase



mutual understanding, in for example youth clubs and local committees. As well as requesting more understanding from the host community, participants also acknowledged the need for refugees to avoid discrimination between each other, for example, based on country of origin, religion or culture. Also refugees should be more aware and respectful of national laws in Zambia, which some participants felt,

was crucial to successful integration in Zambian society. It was suggested that skilled refugee advocates could play an important role in encouraging tolerance and cooperation, both within the refugee population and with the host community. To respond to instances of discrimination, they proposed establishing a formal reporting mechanism in each area, so that instances of discrimination could be reported to local authorities and acted upon. Within refugee camps, anti-discrimination 'clubs' could be set up by youth to tackle discrimination and raise awareness of the negative impacts of discrimination. They also highlighted the need for humanitarian programming to demonstrate more equality and not to discriminate, especially given the influence that the UN and NGOs have in communities.

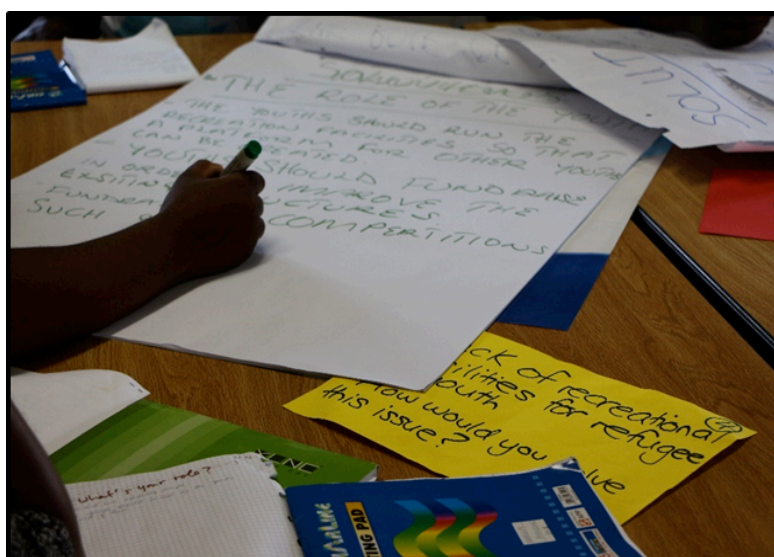
To support these solutions, the participants proposed to raise awareness and stand up against discrimination in their communities. This they suggested could be done through the use of social



media and drama performances, by connecting up different youth organisations to create a louder voice against discrimination, by engaging with community leaders and officials in their areas to discuss how to tackle discrimination and through the creation of anti-discrimination 'clubs' in communities, refugee camps and schools to discuss refugee rights, the importance of refugees abiding by national laws, and tolerance between all groups.

To address **substance abuse amongst refugee youth** (both drugs and alcohol), the participants suggested a range of solutions. These included, a strong focus on awareness raising and community sensitization, providing alternative activities for youth and tailored support for addicts. The participants identified that through awareness raising they could highlight the dangerous effects of substance abuse to discourage youth from experimenting. This could be done through either social media platforms, drama, or posters displayed in public places. They also proposed creating youth clubs to tackle the issue or using pre-existing youth clubs. It was recognised that many youth resort to substance abuse because of feelings of frustration or hopelessness when their needs are not met, and therefore the participants highlighted the need for skills development opportunities for youth, advocacy work about the importance of education, recreational spaces and activities for youth, livelihoods opportunities, and meaningful volunteering opportunities. For youth who are already struggling with addiction, the participants suggested the provision of tailored counselling and medical care, stricter penalties for substance abuse as a deterrent, and public campaigns to shame distributors of alcohol who supply to youth under the age of 18 years.

The participants decided that youth have a key role to play as peer educators on the dangers of substance abuse, especially as youth are more likely to listen to peers. They would also serve as role models in their communities, openly rejecting drugs and alcohol, as without their good example, peer education alone would not be effective. Youth-led advocacy work would be critical to gain more specialist support services for addicts, including medical interventions and counselling, and to request the Government and local authorities to provide more recreational and vocational training spaces for youth. Youth could also volunteer at a drop in centre where people struggling with addiction could visit to talk about their issues and seek help.



On the topic of the **lack of recreational facilities for refugee youth**, participants strongly encouraged the creation of youth clubs to help coordinate recreational activities, including sports events, festivals, drama activities, and competitions. They also identified the need for more facilities to improve their knowledge and skills, and provide opportunities to meet

new people and promote awareness of important issues for their age group. For example, as one young refugee explained from his experience of participating in activities led by Grassroot Soccer<sup>19</sup>: *“This is not only beneficial for refugees but for Zambians as well. In addition, they get to talk about issues such as education, HIV/AIDS, etc.”* The youth participants considered they had a role to play in lobbying the Government, NGOs and UNHCR for the provision of more recreational and skills training facilities. For example, computer centres for ICT skill development, language centres for new arrivals to help them transition into an English speaking education system, land for sports activities, and vocational training facilities, e.g. for tailoring and brick laying. They also recognised that there is much they can do without external support or funds. As young participants highlighted: *“[we can organize] some competitions in which boys and girls can take part e.g. ball games. This would help solve the issue of lack of recreational facilities”, and “youths can hold some sort of festival so that they can dance and have fun”*. Participants also identified that they could clean up pre-existing recreational facilities, and engage in local fundraising to improve existing structures. For both of those activities they decided that they could engage their peers to volunteer, which would create a sense of solidarity and increase ownership of the projects.

## Recommendations, Solutions and Core Actions

### Youth Recommendations

During the 4-day consultation, youth were encouraged in their breaks and through formal activities to consider what recommendations they would make to a global audience that would improve the lives of young refugees. A graffiti style wall provided the informal space to record their ideas at any point during each day, and a structured activity on the third day helped the youth to review their work during the consultation and to consider new ideas that they might have, or to hone the ideas that they had already shared. The group then shared their ideas and using sticky dots, voted for their top five choices.

This activity resulted in the following recommendations or core actions from the Zambia youth participants, which have been categorised for ease of reference. The numbers throughout the recommendations reflect the amount of votes a given recommendation received by the Zambia consultation participants.

### EDUCATION, TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to broaden and make more inclusive educational support, such as: providing bursaries for refugees – 3
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase support for girls’ education, including refugees so as to reduce early marriages – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase the number of institute language and cultural orientation centers for refugees / particularly new arrivals
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to provide scholarships for refugee youths and host community – 10

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<sup>19</sup> Grassroot Soccer (GRS) is an international adolescent health organization that educates, inspires and mobilizes youth in developing countries to overcome their greatest health challenges and live healthier, more productive lives. GRS has reached over 1.3 million young people in nearly 50 countries with adolescent-friendly health education. <http://www.grassrootsoccer.org/>

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to improve girls' education. More girl children must be encouraged to go to school – 3
- The stakeholders can work together to have more organizations like UNHCR and others to partner with universities and colleges to offer free education for vulnerable youth both refugees and nationals –8
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to identify skills' centers in the settlement
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to make the aliens' card be recognized when accessing education and employment – 7
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to have more schools built in refugee camps – 1
- The Government and youth can work together to improve learning standards for pupils in rural areas – 1
- The Government and youth can work together to support the employment of more qualified teachers – 2

## HEALTH

- The Government and youth can work together to enforce laws relating to drug abuse – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to encourage implementing more laws on medical practitioners
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase the number of health facilities in rural areas
- The Drug Enforcement Commission can work to reinforce the law on drug abuse – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to help get extra ambulances in the settlements – 8
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to help make available medicines and medical equipment in refugee communities – 4
- The Government and youth can work together to support the employment of more qualified nurses – 2

## LIVELIHOODS & ASSISTANCE

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to provide support and offer services to foster families and orphanages and mainstream adoption services – 4
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to provide life skills to refugees such as setting up family gardens for health and nutrition
- The Government and youth can work together to partner with electricity companies like Zesco to improve on electricity conditions – 3
- The Government and youth can work together to partner with other organizations to improve transport; e.g. (from the camp to school) – 1
- The Government and youth can work together to identify and provide funds for infrastructure in camps
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to support youths to start engaging in farming so as to be self-reliant and avoid engaging in bad vices such as prostitution
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase CBI <sup>20</sup> amount or maintain the amount and add a bag of meal and rice – 2

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<sup>20</sup> Cash Based Intervention – “Most refugees live in environments where they have access to markets and services in the same way that local communities do. Providing refugees with cash enables them to fulfil their needs in a dignified manner and contributes to the local economy” <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/cash-based-interventions.html>

- Youth should, together with stakeholders put recreational centers to good use because they are the beneficiaries – 1
- Youth, and stakeholders can work together to help land to be allocated to refugees for farming

### **RESETTLEMENT & FAMILY REUNIFICATION**

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to provide resettlement for orphaned children, education clothing
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to try and shorten family reunification – 2
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to support resettlement and local integration for stability – 8

### **GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING**

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to introduce guidance and counseling centers
- The Government and youth can work together to give support to youths in providing them with basic needs
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase budget allocation for social protection
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to encourage more organizations and institutions to teach more on behavioral change – 1
- The Government, youth and other partners can work together to support the survivors of child marriage

### **SENSITIZATION & ADVOCACY**

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to introduce rules in schools against discrimination. This should apply to both pupils and teachers
- The Government and youth can work together to raise awareness on the rights of the refugee youths on national T.V and other social media platforms – 1
- The Government and youth can work together to find a way to prevent discrimination between refugees and nationals – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase youth-led advocacy around helping orphaned children
- Both refugee and national youths should take part in national events e.g. Youth Day – 5
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase support for refugee youth advocacy work – 9
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to combat early marriages by coming to aid to (orphans) refugee youth
- The refugees who could be here should go and share the knowledge with others who could not be there
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to create linkages and collaborations – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to promote peace, love & unity – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to make sure the rights of refugee youths are known to the host community – 2
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to help build the capacities of refugee youth clubs e.g. fundraising (resource mobilization, advocacy and accountability) – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to help bring stakeholders' services to the

refugee camps e.g. ICT, birth registration

## **SECURITY**

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to make sure that immediate security can be provided for the refugees in the camps – 1
- The Government and youth can work together to enforce security among refugee youths – 4
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to increase the number of police posts in rural areas and refugee resettlement areas to increase security e.g. (no police in Meheba refugee settlement) – 3
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to make sure security is enforced in the camps – 2

## **YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES**

- The Government and youth can work together to create recreation activities for youth and also the disabled
- UNHCR, stakeholders and youth, can work together to address special needs of disabled youths and orphans – 1

## **DOCUMENTATION**

- The stakeholders and youth can work together to speed up the process of acquiring necessary documents (working on timing and speed of ID cards, gate passes) – 4
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to help improve on the refugee ID by increasing validity of cards e.g. from 1 year to 3 years
- stakeholders can work together to make it easier to acquire documentation and for this process to be shortened – 2

## **INFORMATION, PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION**

- The Government, youth and NGOs can work together to provide adequate information to refugee youths on matters concerning them – 1
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to support youth recreational facilities run by youth
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to identify ways of working together more efficiently
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to be involved in programming and implementation of activities that concern them
- The stakeholders and youth can work together to listen to young people and take action

## **Stakeholders Dialogue**

The Stakeholders Dialogue took place on the morning of the fourth day. The meeting was attended by 27 stakeholders from 17 organisations and government agencies, including:

- Commissioner for Refugees – Ministry of Home Affairs (COR-MHA)
- Ministry of Community Development
- National Olympic Committee of Zambia

- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- US Embassy
- Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC)
- YMCA
- YWCA
- World Vision Zambia
- Johns Hopkins University
- Action Africa Help Zambia
- Barefeet Theatre
- Atmosphere Entertainment
- Alliance for Youth Entrepreneurs (AYE)
- Youth Alive
- DMI St. Eugene University

### **Stakeholder dialogue structure**

The dialogue ran from 11am-2pm. Four youth participants opened the meeting with a welcome speech outlining the purpose of the consultation and provided an explanation of the previous three days, using the flipcharts and images that had been produced to explain the activities.

### **Group presentations**

On day three of the consultation, the youth created group presentations to showcase the issues they had been focusing on and explain both the actions they could take to bring about solutions and their recommendations for stakeholders to support and supplement these actions. They rehearsed their presentations during the previous evening and on the morning of the meeting before presenting to the stakeholders. With the participation of all team members, each presentation lasted for about 5 minutes and included drama, music, and formal presentations. The topics selected included lack of access to primary, secondary and tertiary education for both abled and disabled refugee youth; limited access for youth to quality health care and sanitation; lack of documentation; and child and forced marriage.

### **Round table discussions**

After the presentations, the participants had the opportunity to engage in more focused conversations during small round table discussions which involved participants rotating from one table to another (World Café style). The purpose was to create a space that was more conducive to discussions and building relationships by reducing the feeling of 'them' and 'us'. Discussion suggestions were placed on each table and then groups were divided to ensure that there was a roughly equal number of youth and stakeholders at each table, along with a facilitator to support the discussion if required.

### **Recommendations and Open Discussion**

Space was then provided for an 'open mic' session, allowing anyone in the room to speak in response to what they had heard or discussed during the morning session. Stakeholders and youth were free to speak, and the focus was on concrete suggestions and actions to ensure sustainable outcomes from the meeting.



## Review of the dialogue

- The format was the same as in the previous consultations, and it continued to work well, as it provided the participants with the opportunities they wanted to present their ideas and to have more focused discussions with stakeholders.
- After rehearsals and room set up, participants were encouraged to mix with the stakeholders as they arrived to build their confidence and to make contacts. Two young people took responsibility for the sign in sheets, managing the flow of guests arriving and handing out a one-page overview of the GRYC to all stakeholders to increase their understanding of the wider project.
- The meeting was opened with the song that 11 of the participants had prepared during the week, which was about the consultation and the issues that youth are facing. It was a very powerful start to the meeting and visibly moved many of the guests.
- During the 'World Café' small group discussions, multiple topics were discussed and many of the youth took the opportunity to express themselves and ask direct, and often challenging, questions of the stakeholders. The main topics discussed included access to education and scholarships, negative perceptions of skills training, language barriers, the need for improvements to health care and sanitation in camps, lack of capacity building and leadership opportunities for youth, lack of information around sexual and reproductive health, the need for economic empowerment opportunities for families, lack of information sharing with youth, discrimination of youth with disabilities, prohibitive cost of study permits, and barriers to accessing employment.
- Many commitments and suggestions were shared during these discussions and the stakeholders were encouraged to share them with the whole group in the following 'open mic' section.
- The open discussion section ('open mic') involved active engagement between youth and stakeholders, and was chaired by two young people with support of the facilitation team.

## Key Discussion Points and Outcomes

### Open Discussion ('Open Mic')

- Respect for the work of the youth in the consultation was expressed by several stakeholders, and there was a strong emphasis on the need for youth to take a lead role in the solutions

they propose. Building on the round table discussions, there was also a recognition that stakeholders must continue to lobby for improvements to the education system in Zambia.

- Representatives from two Zambian youth organisations, Barefeet and Alliance for Youth Entrepreneurs (AYE), spoke of their interest in expanding their services and incorporating refugee youth in their activities, as well as supporting and promoting the sensitisation campaigns suggested by the participants through their own networks.
- Several young people raised their concerns about the gate pass system, and their lack of freedom of movement in Zambia, which was responded to by a representative from the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees who agreed to look into the issue of inconsistencies in the length of time a gate pass is issued for and the issue raised about negative staff attitudes in their field offices. Youth were also invited to report concerns to the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees in Lusaka.<sup>21</sup>
- A representative from the music industry spoke passionately about the need for his industry to take a role in providing a platform and voice for refugee youth and the issues they raised, for example, discrimination. In light of the xenophobic violence occurring at the same time as this consultation, the need for more voices promoting tolerance was further emphasised by representatives of UNHCR and one of the national youth organisations, who also encouraged the involvement of other artists and religious leaders in advocacy and awareness raising efforts.

## Next Steps/Future Action

The in-country partners – AAHZ, World Vision Zambia and UNHCR Zambia - have committed to sustain the momentum created by the consultation, and to follow up directly with the stakeholders. They will also be managing the process of selecting youth representatives for the global youth consultation which will be held in Geneva in June 2016. Examples of ideas for action discussed at the end of the consultation include: to connect participants with Zambian youth organisations who attended the stakeholders meeting; more promotion of dialogue between refugees and nationals through a pre-existing 'Citizen Voice and Action model'; engage with refugee and national youth more in urban HIV/AIDS programmes; work more on the issue of child and forced marriage within GBV programmes; provide more capacity building opportunities for refugee youth; connect refugee youth with refugee leaders in communities as there currently appears to be a disconnect and they should be including and listening to youth; involve the participants in World Refugee Day and the celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mayukwayukwa refugee camp; keep the group informed on the current revisions to the Zambian Refugee Law and advocate with the Department of National Registration, Citizenship and passports for scaling up of birth registration<sup>22</sup>; encourage and work with the participants to provide support to youth and families displaced by the recent riots; and finally, as one partner concluded: *"Listening to you, you have given us a roadmap for engagement"*.

During the final debrief meeting with youth on day four and in their final written evaluation forms, many of the participants expressed an interest in future engagement, including: engaging with and utilising the media to raise awareness of the issues faced by refugee youth, e.g. television, radio,

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.homeaffairs.gov.zm/?q=commission\\_for\\_refugees](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.zm/?q=commission_for_refugees)

<sup>22</sup> UNHCR shared that they have fed into the revision process with comments on removing current limitations on the right to work, education and freedom of movement. As discussed above the current Refugee Law dates back to 1970.



magazines and social media (contacts and opportunities identified within the group to Radio 2, Muvi TV station, and the Junior Reporters’ Magazine); volunteering as Arabic-English interpreters for the Somali community; setting up partnerships locally with youth organisations who attended the stakeholders meeting, i.e. Barefeet, AYE and Youth Alive; creating a social media group to keep all participants connected and setting up youth clubs in each area to engage in advocacy and sensitisation work, e.g. concerning anti-discrimination.

## Evaluations

### Daily Youth Evaluation

A different evaluation tool was used at the end of each day to capture ideas, learning and recommendations from the participants. Aside from collecting feedback, we also wanted to be sure that the youth were recognised as active participants in the consultation process, with the power to directly influence it. Targeted questions and interactive exercises facilitated the collection of feedback on what they liked, didn’t like, what they had learned and new skills they had acquired and what they would recommend to the facilitators for the next day or for future consultations. Some examples of participant feedback mechanisms used include:

At the end of day one, participants were asked to express what they enjoyed, what they did not enjoy, and what they would recommend for the next day by sharing comments anonymously on a prepared flipchart sheet. The results showed that the majority of participants had enjoyed the day in terms of the activities, the topics, the interactions and group dynamics and the opportunity to self-reflect. The negative comments focused on timekeeping and the time pressure to complete each exercise. Meanwhile the constructive recommendations included requests for better time management, more time to discuss, and ensuring that the ideas and solutions generated are taken forward after the consultation.

At the end of day two, participants were asked to share their answers verbally to two questions: 1) One word to describe the day, and 2) One thing they learnt today? Everyone in the group answered the questions in turn around the circle. Some examples of the responses include:

One word to sum up Day Two	What I learned today
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Insightful</i></li> <li>• <i>Amazing</i></li> <li>• <i>Empowerment</i></li> <li>• <i>Interesting</i></li> <li>• <i>Fantastic</i></li> <li>• <i>Mind blowing</i></li> <li>• <i>Excellent</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“So many ways we can express ourselves” (refugee youth)</i></li> <li>• <i>“Every issue has a cause, which can be mitigated” (refugee youth)</i></li> <li>• <i>“We go through the same things” (national youth)</i></li> <li>• <i>“I learned about the role of youth” (refugee youth)</i></li> <li>• <i>“We got to learn what others feel” (national youth)</i></li> <li>• <i>“I realize my voice counts so much” (refugee youth)</i></li> </ul>

### Final Participant Evaluation

At the end of day four, participants had the opportunity to share their opinions of the consultation, what they had learned and their suggestions and recommendations for future consultations through

a written evaluation form. This was an important tool for participants to provide anonymous, individual feedback at the end of the consultation. Forms were provided in English, with interpreters available to support the four non-English speaking youth to ensure that they felt comfortable and confident to express themselves.

The written evaluation forms also provide targeted feedback on how well the participants felt they had contributed to the core GRYC objectives and outcomes. Participants were given the intended GRYC outcomes and asked to comment accordingly: completely agree; mostly agree; partially agree; do not agree. They were also given space to comment on each outcome. The results from the 25 completed forms were as follows:

**Outcome 1:** Through my participation in this consultation, I had the opportunity to identify and discuss issues that are important to me and my community, and to develop and suggest solutions.

- Completely agree - 24 participants
- Mostly agree - 1 participant

*“Through the consultations, I really had the opportunity to identify and discuss issues and I was able to express myself, the problems (issues) that I'm facing and the community”*

*“The consultation was great and it has helped me greatly in finding solution to the problems faced”*

*“I really appreciate [you] for hearing me out and hope that this consultation will go on until it meets the demands of the youths”*

*“I had a wonderful time with everyone and I got to know some of the issues that other youths are facing apart from the ones I had and the solutions to them”*

**Outcome 2:** Through my participation in this consultation, I have developed and improved my leadership and advocacy skills

- Completely agree – 19 participants
- Mostly agree – 6 participants

*“Through my participation I have indeed developed and improved my leadership and how I feel I can stand as a youth and fight against all sorts of problems and try to come up with the solutions and I feel I can change the world”*

*“I learned a lot of things in this consultation and advocacy skills I want also my friends who were (not) in this consultation I will teach them”*

*“I mostly agree with this because with this participation I have learned that I myself can become a leader and advocacy my skills through many things”*

*“I never knew that I had roles to play as a youth but I have now known my role as a youth although I have not yet improved on all of them”*

*“Given the chance to present has really given me [the chance to] develop and improve my leaderships and advocacy skills”*

**Outcome 3:** Through my participation in this consultation, I am more aware of organisations that I can engage with at a local and national level

- Completely agree – 17 participants
- Mostly agree – 5 participants
- Partially agree – 3 participants

*“I never knew that there were a lot of organisations that I can engage with although I knew some of them but I know and that's why I completely agree”*

*“The presence of the organisations gave me encourage and confidence to approach, they also encourage us to visit their departments in case of any issue at hand”*

*“Of course I will engage myself with some of the organisation to speak out to them on the behalf of other youths”*

Mostly agree – *“This is because we had a partial number of organisations. I was hoping to see more stakeholders on this last day”*

Partially agree – *“Because other organisations, I don't know their offices”*

**Outcome 4:** Through my participation in this consultation, I have more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups and organisations locally, nationally and globally.

- Completely agree – 18 participants
- Mostly agree – 7 participants<sup>23</sup>

*“Of course, I have known different NGOs which I can work with to promote change”*

*“I completely agree because I have known some of the youths that I never knew and some of them are on social media, so I think I have more opportunities”*

*“Yes, have [gained] more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups and organisation locally, nationally and internationally”*

*“I have more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups because my voice has been heard and my voice is important. I can develop relationships through social media”*

*“Through this consultation I was able to meet with some other youth groups that are making change and are open to [join] them”*

**Outcome 5:** Through my participation in this consultation, I understand more about the experiences of other refugee youth and national youth.

- Completely agree - 22 participants
- Mostly agree – 2 participants<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> The only comment that raised an issue with this outcome referred to their disappointment at the number and range of stakeholders who attended the meeting on day 4.

<sup>24</sup> 1 participant chose not to answer this question.

*“Through the consultations, I have understood experiences of refugees, I have understood the problems that they are facing as well as national youths this has helped me know how to interact with them”*

*“I thought national youth discriminate us but during this consultation I have come to understand that we're one”*

*“I understand more about the experiences of other refugees in camps and how they live their life in resettlement facilities”*

*“This gives me a chance to understand and relate to other people problems”*

*“I really understand because we came out with different ideas on how we can come up with solutions and I have known that we do face some of the same problems”*

The other questions in the written evaluation concentrated on a more in depth review of the consultation process and outcomes for youth, and requested recommendations for future consultations and ideas for individual or group action after the event. Some of the comments from participants are captured below:

Do you feel that you have been listened to at this consultation? Please explain your answer:

*“Of course, when I was coming from my community I had in mind that we should come out with some recreation activities for youth, making clubs... and advocacy for change among youth. This has been heard”*

*“Yes, because other organisations are ready to partner with us to solve the issues we raised”*

*“I don't think so because am still waiting for the solutions to happen or action - that's when I will feel that I have been listened [to]”*

*“Yes, because I was the one doing everything, like identifying the problems, issues and also recommendations. But especially that I got to personally speak with the stakeholders.”*

What specific ideas do you have for action based on your involvement in this consultation?

*“We need to be advocates, develop our own skills, let the group continue meeting”*

*“Forming a youth club in my community”*

*“Sensitisation: I, as a youth, want to work with the stakeholders to sensitise the host and refugee community on some issues, e.g. drug abuse, discrimination”*

*“Encourage, motivate, empower, inspire and teach others”*

What suggestions do you have for future National Consultations?

*“For it be better they could invite more youths not only the same ones but others so that they can also take part and express themselves”*

*“They can continue doing the GRYC maybe every year”*

*“To continue involving nationals in these youth consultations”*

*“They should happen frequently and in various parts of the world where [youth] can look for a common problem and discuss”*

Did this consultation meet your expectations? Please explain your answer:

*“It did because my expectation was finding solutions to the problem which I was facing and I did. The solution came from my fellow youths”*

*“Not really. But I believe 50% has been dealt with and the rest is implementation of discussions.*

*“It has been more than I expected. Absolutely mind blowing! Amazing feeling and I hope we will get to see more of this. More cooperation as youths and I hope there will be the bridge linking to one another”*

*“It really did and I was so happy to see how stakeholders were really listening and willing to help”*

What learning are you taking away from this consultation?

*“I have learnt that I have a big role in resolving my own problems and the problems my community is facing and the outside aid comes later”*

*“That not only my problems matter but other problems of other youth matter”*

*“I have learned how to come up with solutions because it was not easy for me to come up with that alone”*

*“The learning that I'm taking away from this consultation is that not only the stakeholders to help us but even me as a youth I can do something”*

*“That either a national or refugee, we all are one people with equal rights and deserve equal opportunities”*

## Conclusion

The Zambia consultation brought together a determined and dynamic group of youth, many of whom are already actively involved in their communities. All of the participants demonstrated a keen desire to learn from each other and to work together to make their solutions a reality, regardless of nationality, which will be crucial to ensuring that the momentum of this consultation is maintained. Their intensive work over the four days generated many innovative ideas and recommendations to address the issues that concern them most, rather than simply focusing on problems, and with the new connections made with key individuals and organisations as a result of the stakeholders meeting, there is great potential for change. This consultation highlighted the importance of providing space and opportunity for refugee youth to share their experiences, voice their opinions and ideas, and to be recognised as active and crucial partners. In a time of social unrest and rising xenophobia in Zambia, this is an important reminder of the value of investing in youth, recognising their potential as positive role models for promoting tolerance and civic engagement in their communities.