Tanzania Youth Development Forum 2025

Youth Participation in Decision Making Spaces for Sustainable Development

TANZANIA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FORUM REPORT 2025



26th - 28th May 2025
Mesuma Conference Hall

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DOYODO	Dodoma Youth Development Organization
DPs	Development Partners
EAC	East Africn Community
EUYSB	European Union Youth Sounding Board
FP	Family Planning
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoT	Goverment of Tanzania
LM	LM International
MTAKUWA	National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children
NAIA-AHW	National Accelerated Action and Investment Agenda for Adolescent Health and Well-being
NACONGO	National Council of NGOs
NGOs	Non-Govermental Organizations
NYC	National Youth Council
PMO-LYED	Prime Minister's Office - Labor, Youth, Employment, and Reproductive Health
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SRH	Sexual and Reporoductive Health
TDHS	Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey
TYDF	Tanzania Youth Development Forum
VPO	Vice President's Office
WHO	World Health Organization

Acknowledgement

The Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF) 2025 extends its deepest appreciation to all individuals, institutions, and partners whose unwavering support and collaboration made this year's forum a resounding success. We are particularly grateful to the Prime Minister's Office – Labour, Youth, Employment, and Persons with Disabilities (PMO-LYED) for their strategic guidance and policy leadership, which enabled the alignment of this forum with national development priorities.

We sincerely thank our organizing partner, DOYODO Tanzania, for their tireless efforts in coordinating logistics, mobilizing stakeholders, and ensuring meaningful youth engagement throughout the forum. Special recognition is due to all participating government ministries, development partners, civil society organizations, youth-led groups, and private sector stakeholders for their valuable contributions to the thematic sessions, discussions, and policy dialogues.

To the over 600 young participants from across Tanzania, your passion, ideas, and energy were the heart of this forum. Your active participation demonstrated the power of youth voices in shaping the future of our country and highlighted the importance of inclusive platforms for dialogue, learning, and leadership.

We also wish to thank the keynote speakers, panelists, facilitators, exhibitors, and service providers who generously shared their expertise and helped spark critical conversations on issues that matter most to young people today. Your presence added depth, credibility, and inspiration to our shared journey toward sustainable youth development.

Finally, we acknowledge the technical and financial support of our dedicated development partners. Your continued commitment to youth empowerment is both commendable and essential in realizing the goals of TYDF and the broader aspirations outlined in Tanzania's development vision.

Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive future one where the youth of Tanzania are equipped, engaged, and empowered to lead transformative change.

1. Introduction

The Tanzania Youth Development Forum is an annual event organized by DOYODO Tanzania in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office – Labor, Youth, Employment, and Persons with Disabilities (PMO-LYED) and over 30 youth-led organizations. Since its inception in 2022, the Tanzania Youth Development Forum has played a significant role in empowering young people by raising awareness of policies, frameworks, and strategies that impact their development. Over the years, the forum has become a key platform for promoting youth welfare and facilitating their participation in national development initiatives. To date, the forum has reached more than 12,900 youth across Tanzania, providing them with knowledge and opportunities to influence change in their communities and beyond.



1.1. About Tanzania Youth Development (TYDF) 2025

Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF) 2025 was convened at Mesuma Hall from 26th to 28th May 2025 in Dodoma with theme ***"Youth Participation in Decision-Making Spaces for Sustainable Development" (Ushiriki wa Vijana katika Ngazi za Maamuzi kwa Maendeleo Endelevu).*** The forum brought together 600 young people, youth-led organizations, civil society actors, policymakers, and development partners under one roof to engage on critical issues affecting youth in Tanzania. The event aimed at amplifying youth voices, fostering collaboration, and developing practical strategies for youth development.

TYDF 2025 opened by Chairperson of the Board for the Coordination of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), **Hijat. Mwantumu Mahiza** on behalf of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy, Hon. Dr. Doto Biteko on 26th May 2025. Hijat. Mwantumu Mahiza speech opened with gratitude to God and appreciation to organizers and participants of the youth forum. Emphasized the importance of such platforms in empowering the youth and fostering national development. She acknowledged the existence of specific government policies and legal frameworks aimed at guiding young people. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their goals and turn challenges into opportunities. The government was commended for creating an enabling environment for youth. Additionally, key messages were shared about the importance of patriotism, unity, and national security, especially in light of upcoming general elections. The speech closed with a call to action for all youth to participate actively in building the nation.



TYDF 2025 opened by Chairperson of the Board for the Coordination of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), **Hijat. Mwantumu Mahiza**



TYDF 2025 closed by Deputy Minister for Constitution and Legal Affairs of Tanzania Hon. Jumanne Abdallah Sagini on behalf of Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office responsible for Labour, Youth, Employment, and Persons with Disabilities, Hon. Ridhiwani Jakaya Kikwete.

TYDF 2025 featured a wide range of participatory formats including panel discussions, breakout sessions, keynote addresses, youth-led exhibitions, policy briefings, pitching sessions, and success story showcases. Participants engaged with thought leaders, government officials, and peers across six core thematic areas:

1. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Wellbeing
2. Climate Change and Environmental Action
3. Gender-Based Violence and Mental Health
4. Digital Transformation, Innovation, and Creativity
5. Youth Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making
6. Youth Civil Society Coordination and Engagement

The forum resulted in the adoption of strategic policy recommendations, the launch of the TYDF Secretariat, and the formation of a Youth CSOs Working Group to strengthen coordination and advocacy efforts nationally. It also produced commitments for increased investment in youth-led initiatives, inclusive health services, climate-smart innovation, digital inclusion, and civic engagement.

TYDF 2025 reaffirmed its role as a transformative space where Tanzanian youth co-create solutions and influence national development priorities. The forum set a strong foundation for continued implementation, follow-up advocacy, zonal forums, and the preparation of TYDF 2026.

2.0. Objectives of the Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF) 2025

i. Support Policy Implementation: Contribute to the realization of the National Youth Development Policy (2007, Revised 2024) and National Accelerated investment agenda for adolescent Health and Wellbeing and other related policies by providing a platform for youth engagement and empowerment.

ii. Enhance Youth Participation: Promote youth representation in decision-making processes at local and national levels.

iii. Address Socio-Economic Challenges: Identify and propose solutions to critical issues such as unemployment, education, health, and inclusion.

iv. Foster Collaboration: Strengthen partnerships between youth, government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders.

v. Promote Innovation and Capacity-Building: Equip youth with skills and knowledge to innovate and drive sustainable development initiatives.



3.0. Format of Methodology of TYDF 2025

The forum adopted a hybrid participatory approach, combining:

I. Roundtable Discussions

Focused conversations addressing key challenges and opportunities for youth in Tanzania. During the Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF), roundtable discussions played a central role in fostering in-depth dialogue on the most pressing challenges and emerging opportunities facing young people in the country. These focused sessions brought together youth leaders, government officials, civil society representatives, educators, and private sector stakeholders to engage in open, participatory conversations. Topics covered included youth in leadership position, climate change, digital inclusion and innovation, gender equality and mental health, digital economy. Each roundtable was designed to encourage active participation, allowing youth to voice their lived experiences, propose practical solutions, and hold duty-bearers accountable. These discussions not only deepened the understanding of systemic issues affecting youth but also built consensus around strategies to promote inclusive development and empower the next generation of Tanzanian leader.

II. Pitching Sessions

Youth entrepreneurs and innovators have an opportunity to present their ideas and initiatives for feedback, mentorship, and potential funding. Also, some topics pitched out for youth understanding as follows;

a. Effect of Alcohol to Youth

Alcohol consumption among youth has become a growing concern due to its long-term negative effects on health, behavior, and future prospects. According to the World Health Organization (2023), more than 26% of adolescents aged 15–19 worldwide consume alcohol, which contributes to increased risks of accidents, mental health issues, and substance dependency. In Tanzania, the Tanzania Bureau of Statistics (2022) reports that about 14% of youth aged 15–24 have used alcohol in the past year, often leading to poor academic performance, risky sexual behavior, and conflict with the law. Early exposure to alcohol can also damage brain development, leading to impaired decision-making and reduced career opportunities. These effects hinder young people from reaching their full potential and contributing positively to society.

Appreciation Awards to Key Partners and Youth Champions

In this category, appreciation awards were presented to key supporting partners who were recognized for their significant and long-standing contributions in making the Forum possible. These included LM International, UNFPA Tanzania, Plan International, Marie Stopes, EANNASO, and DSW Tanzania.








In addition, recognition was given to youth who have demonstrated outstanding commitment in supporting youth development in Tanzania. **Mr. Arafat Lesheve** was honored for his contribution in establishing the **Tanzania Emerging Youth Awards**, which celebrate young changemakers across the country. Similarly, **Mr. Joseph Brighton Malekela** was awarded for his impactful work in founding and advancing **youth peace and security programs** nationwide.



III. Keynote Speakers

a. Renowned speakers from government, private sector, and youth-led organizations to inspire and challenge the participants.

IV. Exhibitions and Service Delivery

Exhibitors from various sectors showcase opportunities, products, and services aimed at empowering youth. Booths were strategically arranged to allow easy access and engagement, with representatives offering on the spot services such as health screenings, blood testing. Youth participants had the opportunity to ask questions, register for ongoing programs, and network with service providers. There was Marie Stopes providing SRH services, show casing and providing knowledge to youth concerning SRH.

This hands-on approach not only increased awareness of available resources but also fostered meaningful connections that could support long-term youth development. The exhibition area remained active throughout the forum, serving as a practical space where knowledge met opportunity and young people were inspired to take the next steps in their personal and professional journeys.



V. Youth Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Forum

Aimed at strengthening coordination and collective advocacy among youth-led and youth-serving organizations. This special session was designed specifically to address the sustainability of youth-led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Tanzania. Recognizing the critical role youth CSOs play in advancing development agendas, the session focused on the growing challenges they face in sustaining their operations, particularly in the context of reduced donor funding and limited institutional capacity.

The discussion unpacked practical approaches to financial independence, strategic positioning, and resource mobilization for youth-led organizations. Key issues raised included the need to diversify funding sources, strengthen internal governance, and foster partnerships that promote long-term sustainability without relying solely on donor support.



Key Highlights

- Emphasis on building self-reliant youth organizations through innovative fundraising, local resource tapping, and social enterprise models.
- Recognition of weak coordination and limited platforms for information sharing among youth CSOs.
- Shared experiences on overcoming financial constraints while maintaining program relevance and community impact.

Session Outcomes

- Formation of a Youth CSOs Working Group to coordinate efforts, facilitate information exchange, and advocate for a more enabling environment.
- A commitment to develop a national database of youth organizations to enhance visibility and partnership opportunities.
- Agreement to host an Annual Youth CSO Coordination Forum as a space for sustained peer learning, collaboration, and policy engagement.

The session was moderated by Mr. Arafat Lesheve, Grant Officer at Save the Children Tanzania. Panelists included:

- Mr. Rajabu Juma Suleiman, Executive Director, DOYODO Tanzania
- Mr. Denis Bwana, SRHR Officer, EANNASO
- Ms. Fransisca Mboya, Youth Representative, NaCONGO
- Ms. Aisha Msantu, Executive Director, Glaring Future Foundation



Each speaker brought unique perspectives on how youth organizations can strategically navigate funding challenges, strengthen internal systems, and build resilience in the face of shrinking donor space.



VI. Policy Brief Presentations

Sharing of policy recommendations to address youth challenges and create actionable steps for stakeholders. (NAIA – AHW), Youth Development Policy 2007 version 2024 and Tanzania vision of 2030.

During the Policy Brief Presentations at the Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF), discussions centered on key policy recommendations aimed at addressing critical challenges facing Tanzanian youth, while proposing actionable steps for stakeholders and government. A primary focus aligned these recommendations with the National Accelerated Action and Investment Agenda for Adolescent Health and Well-being (NAIA-AHW), which emphasizes integrated and multisectoral approaches to improve adolescent health, education, protection, and empowerment. Presenters highlighted gaps in current implementation and propose strategies to enhance coordination among ministries, NGOs, and community leaders. Additionally, the forum examined the updated Youth Development Policy (2007 version revised in 2024), discussing its provisions for youth participation, employment, skills development, and digital inclusion, while emphasizing the importance of funding and localized implementation.

These recommendations framed within the broader national priorities outlined in Tanzania's Vision 2030, stressing youth as key agents in driving economic transformation, innovation, and social equity. The presentations concluded with a call to action for stakeholders including government bodies, development partners, and private sector actors to adopt the recommendations, allocate resources, and collaborate with youth networks to ensure policy impact and accountability.

VII. Success Stories

Showcasing inspiring stories of youth-led initiatives, highlighting achievements and best practices.

VIII. Games and Traditional Dance

At the Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF), games and traditional dance were creatively integrated as engaging methodologies to promote cultural expression, unity, and active participation among youth. In addition to these performances, the forum featured an exciting lineup of entertainers including comedians, singers, dancers, and acrobatics, which brought energy and enthusiasm to the event. These performances not only entertained but also conveyed powerful social messages related to youth empowerment, mental health, and national identity. The use of art, humor, and movement helped break communication barriers and encouraged open interaction among participants, making the forum both impactful and memorable





IX. Panel Discussions

Expert-led panels to discuss thematic areas relevant to youth development, such as education, employment, innovation, and civic participation.

X. Breakout Sessions

Smaller, interactive groups to delve deeper into specific topics and foster closer engagement among participants.









4. Key Topics Discussed

4.1. Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Health Wellbeing

Participants emphasized the importance of accessible, youth-friendly SRH services and comprehensive sexuality education. Concerns around early pregnancy, access to contraception, and stigma were addressed, with calls for stronger policy implementation and awareness campaigns. On this topic during panel discussion moderated by Adv.Denis E Bwana from Eannaso and another panelist was;

i. Gerald Kihwele – Coordinator of SRH and Adolescent From Ministry of Health
ii. Dr.Francis Mbwilo, from UMATI Tanzania
iii. Dr. Mashingo – from Marie Stopes
iv. Rovaldo Firmino Munish from Plan International
v. Benedict Marco - Youth Representative from Dar es Salaam



Key issues discussed during this topic based on the following;

Key Note Address: "Investing in Holistic Health for Youth: From Access to Equity"- From Access to Equity" by Mr. Gerald Kiwere from the Ministry of Health, where provided a strategic overview of Tanzania's Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) landscape with a strong focus on youth-centered approaches. The country has made progress in expanding access to SRH services, significant disparities persist that limit the effectiveness and inclusivity of these services Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) 2022, shows that only 34% of sexually active unmarried adolescent girls aged 15–19 are using modern contraceptive methods, and the adolescent birth rate remains high at 116 births per 1,000 girls in this age group. Also, highlighted that youth in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged, with only 19% reporting access to youth-friendly services compared to 38% in urban centers. Additionally, girls with no formal education are three times more likely to become adolescent mothers than their peers with secondary education or higher.



These figures illustrate the urgent need to move beyond basic access and address the deep-rooted regional, gender, and socio-economic inequities that hinder youth from fully exercising their SRH rights. Mr. Kiwere called for stronger, data-driven interventions and inclusive policies that ensure equitable service delivery tailored to the diverse realities of Tanzanian youth

Discussant One: SRH & FP access to Tanzania what is the situation; This explored the current situation regarding SRH and Family Planning (FP) access in Tanzania. They highlighted key challenges such as limited-service availability in rural areas, stigma around contraceptive use among youth, and a gap in youth-friendly service provision. Despite increased policy support, the implementation at the grassroots level remains inconsistent, often leaving adolescents without adequate information or services.

Discussant Two: "Cultural Norms and Their Influence on Youth Health Choices" – Pointed out that taboos around discussing sexuality, early marriage expectations, and gender roles significantly limit young people's ability to seek and utilize SRH services. Cultural pressure, especially on girls, was noted as a barrier to informed and autonomous decision-making regarding their sexual health.

Discussant Three: Period, Planet, Possibilities for Youth in Tanzania underscored the intersection between menstrual health, environmental sustainability, and youth empowerment. Also, advocated for accessible menstrual hygiene products, education on sustainable menstruation, and policies that support environmental and reproductive health simultaneously.



Discussant Four: "Voices of a Generation: Centering Adolescents in the SRH Agenda of the Dodoma, Manyara and Morogoro Regions"- The discussion emphasized participatory approaches where young people are not just beneficiaries but active contributors in SRH policy design and implementation. Examples included adolescent advisory boards and youth-led needs assessments that shaped localized SRH interventions.

Discussant Five: Youth Representative – Best practices Youth Access to AYSRH/GK: Youth representative offered practical best practices from the field regarding Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (AYSRH). This included peer education models, mobile outreach services, and school-based health clubs that have successfully increased youth engagement and service uptake. The youth emphasized the value of relatable messaging, digital platforms, and youth-friendly environments in health facilities to reduce fear and stigma among adolescents seeking SRH services

Recommendation

- Expand and improve youth-friendly services across health facilities, ensuring confidentiality, non-judgmental care, and trained providers who understand adolescent needs.

- Integrate age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and evidence-based sexuality education into school and community programs to empower youth with knowledge and informed decision-making.

- Engage community leaders, parents, and influencers to challenge harmful cultural norms and reduce stigma associated with youth access to SRH services, especially around contraception and menstrual health.

- Create formal platforms that allow youth to participate in policy-making, program design, and implementation, ensuring their voices and experiences shape SRH initiatives.

- Strengthen outreach services, mobile clinics, and community-based interventions to ensure that youth in remote regions have equal access to SRH information and care.

- Invest in affordable, reusable menstrual hygiene products and promote eco-friendly solutions that protect both adolescent health and the environment.

- Foster collaboration between government, NGOs, youth-led organizations, and development partners to ensure coordinated and sustainable SRH programming.

4.2. Climate Change

Young people voiced the urgent need for climate action, highlighting the role of youth in environmental conservation, green innovation, and climate advocacy. Emphasis was placed on incorporating youth in national climate policies and adaptation strategies. This panel session hosted by ActionAid Tanzania aimed to highlight impactful youth-led climate innovations, share best practices from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and foster collaborative dialogue on effective strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The overarching theme emphasized empowering youth through innovation, collaborative approaches, and the dissemination of best practices in climate action. This topic Moderated by Arif Noorally Fazel from ActionAid Tanzania. Another panelist was as follows



i. Aloyce Kamando – Environment Ambassador, Vice President's Office (VPO)
ii. Happy Itros Sanga – Climate Change Program Coordinator, ActionAid Tanzania
iii. David Kitinya – Youth Coordinator, VSO
iv. Mariam Mahanjile – ActionAid Youth Hub Member, Local Government Committee Member, Farmer (Dodoma)
v. Michael Deogratious – Youth representative from ActionAid, Kigoma

Key areas discussed

Key Note Address; "Positioning Youth in Climate Action: From Local Voices to Global Impact"

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns caused by greenhouse gas emissions, primarily carbon dioxide from human activities like burning fossil fuels and deforestation, leading to global warming, floods, and droughts. We underscored the role of trees in carbon absorption and referenced international frameworks such as the Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement as guiding principles for climate action in Tanzania and globally.

Discussant One: Youth in Clean Energy: Addressed governmental efforts in climate change combat and mitigation, where global nature of climate change and detailed Tanzania's policies, including a target of 80% natural gas use by 2034 to reduce carbon emissions. 90% of Tanzanians still rely on firewood, contributing to deforestation, and stressed government promotion of tree planting and clean cooking initiatives as both environmental and economic opportunities.

Discussant Two: Demystifying COP: Youth Experiences, Entry Points and Opportunities Unclean energy sources lead to lost time and health risks, advocating for clean energy technologies supported by government subsidies and new innovations. Also, agroecology farming, supported by ActionAid's Shamba Darasa training program, offers a more sustainable and beneficial alternative to large-scale commercial agriculture.

Discussant Three: "Youth-Led Environmental Volunteering Models" : Youth shared insights from her work in Chamwino District, where an ActionAid youth hub actively participates in village, district, and regional meetings to champion climate change mitigation and food security. She detailed their promotion of natural products, advocacy for ecological farming, and encouragement of natural pesticides, insecticides, and animal fertilizers for community health. Ms. Mahanjile's group successfully advocated for an increased parliamentary budget for ecological farming and further climate change strategies.

Tumsifu Aron Mwasamale, a board member of DOYODO from the Vice President's Office, commended the discussion and emphasized government initiatives like appointing regional environment ambassadors and launching the National Carbon Monitoring Center. He encouraged youth to leverage carbon credit business opportunities, citing examples of villages generating up to 2 billion Tanzanian shillings annually.

During the audience Q&A, participants raised concerns regarding national policy gaps, particularly transparency and fairness in development projects causing displacement. Discussions also covered the new clean energy policy's opportunities and hazards for youth, and the balance between agribusiness and environmental conservation. Michael advocated for agroforestry, ecological farming, and climate-smart agriculture to achieve this balance.

A representative from an environmental conservation organization contributed by emphasizing the transition from a linear to a circular economy, highlighting recycling and sustainable business practices as crucial for climate action and economic benefits.



4.3. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Mental Health

The forum discussed the growing concern of GBV among young people, particularly among girls and young women. Recommendations included enhancing reporting mechanisms, community education, and legal reforms to ensure victim protection and perpetrator accountability. Mental health emerged as a pressing issue, with discussions centering on stigma reduction, access to services, and integrating mental health into educational and health systems. According to WHO data 1B people in the world face mental health problem, 350M to 450M people already have that problem, in Tanzania according to Mirembe Hospital Report 72 people every day reported. Youth shared personal experiences, highlighting the need for safe spaces and counseling services. During panel discussion panel moderated by Jenifer Kayombo from Dada Mkuu other discussants represented by;



i. Denis Simeo, Gender equality, Youth and Social Inclusion officer from Marie Stopes
ii. Magdalena Thomas, Gender equality, Youth and Social Inclusion Advisor, Marie stopes
iii. PO Kayombo, Dodoma Police Gender Desk
iv. Lilian Mwailuka, Gender Officer from DOYODO Tanzania

Key Note Address: "Ending GBV Starts with Youth Action"

Gender-Based Violence remains a serious human rights violation and a public health issue in Tanzania. National data from the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) 2022 reveals that 29% of women aged 15–49 have experienced physical violence, and 13% have faced sexual violence at some point in their lives. Even more concerning, nearly 1 in 4 girls aged 13 to 17 report having experienced sexual abuse. These figures are unacceptable and reflect the urgent need for a youth-driven transformation in our communities.

Why focus on the youth? Because Tanzania is a youthful nation over 60% of our population is under the age of 25. These young minds hold the key to redefining societal norms, challenging gender stereotypes, and fostering a culture of respect, equality, and nonviolence. When empowered, youth are capable of becoming strong advocates, educators, and defenders of human rights in their schools, communities, and online spaces.

Discussant 1; Community Sensitization Through Arts and Dialogues "Sample Best approaches in ending GBV: highlighted the importance of grassroots-level community engagement through creative mediums such as, poetry, music, and storytelling to raise awareness and challenge harmful gender norms for example to the project implemented by DOYODO Tanzania concerning four gown (Magauni Manne) where encourage youth to wear those gown to be away from GBV, first gown means school uniform, second gown means university gown, third gown means wedding dress and fourth maternity dress, this show that using songs and arts work to address GBV will be suitable and easy adopted by youth especially to globalization world we have. These art forms have proven effective in breaking the silence surrounding GBV, especially in rural and marginalized communities. Community dialogues following performances allow for open discussion, reflection, and the building of collective responsibility. Programs such as school clubs and youth-led art competitions were cited as powerful tools for encouraging intergenerational conversation and empowering young people to speak out against abuse.

Discussant 2; Mental Health – 'GBV Impact to youth mental health: focused on the profound psychological impact that GBV has on youth, particularly girls and young women. Survivors often experience long-term effects including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicidal ideation. This stressed that youth, especially those in conflict-affected or impoverished areas, are at heightened risk and lack access to mental health services. The stigma around both GBV and mental health further complicates recovery. Early intervention, trauma informed care, and the integration of mental health services into schools and youth centers were presented as urgent needs. Empowering peer counselors and training teachers and social workers to identify signs of trauma were also suggested to improve support systems for youth affected by GBV

Discussant 3: Current situation in GBV and Coordination of Tanzania Policy Gender desk in ending GBV: addressed the current landscape of GBV in Tanzania and how the Gender Desk within law enforcement institutions is playing a critical role. While Tanzania has made strides with the development of national policies and frameworks, such as the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children, MTAKUWA, implementation remains uneven. The Gender Desk serves as a specialized unit to receive and process GBV cases, ensuring survivors receive appropriate support and that perpetrators are held accountable. response

Discussant 4: Government efforts; Protecting young girls and children against GBV: Elaborated on the role of the Tanzanian government in safeguarding children and young girls. Government-led initiatives include school-based education campaigns, strengthening child protection systems, and enforcing laws against child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), and sexual violence. However, there remains a gap in enforcement and coverage, particularly in remote regions. Education was underscored as a powerful tool keeping girls in school not only delays early marriage but also equips them with the knowledge to understand and assert their rights.

Recommendation

- Expand community-based arts and dialogue initiatives to educate and challenge harmful cultural norms, using local language and inclusive participation models.
- Integrate mental health services into primary health care and education systems, prioritizing trauma-informed care and community sensitization to reduce stigma.
- Strengthen the capacity and visibility of Gender Desks through resource allocation, staff training, and improved collaboration with local NGOs and community structures.
- Ensure consistent enforcement of GBV laws, especially in rural areas, and increase government accountability mechanisms for reporting and follow-up.
- Enhance multi-sectoral coordination between government, civil society, and the private sector to streamline services for GBV survivors.
- Promote girl-child education and protect vulnerable youth through policy implementation and social protection programs tailored to the needs of high-risk groups.

4.4. Digital Transformation, Innovation, and Creativity

Participants explored how digital technologies can accelerate youth development, including access to education, skills training, and entrepreneurship. Barriers such as digital literacy and internet access were highlighted as critical areas needing investment. Discussions based on harnessing innovation, challenges in digital transformation, cybersecurity, and the role of data analytics in decision-making. During panel discussion this topic hosted by Plan Internation and other panelists were moderated by Zuhura Mbura from Plan International Tanzania. other discussants represented by;



i. Samwel Mazota –Youth cyber security expert
ii. Venance Majula, Plan international youth from EUYSB
iii. Representative from Government
iv. Saidi Amani – Representative from EUYSB

Key Note Address: "Youth at the Center of Digital Futures": focused on the transformative role of digital technology in shaping opportunities for young people in Tanzania and beyond. The speaker emphasized the importance of equipping youth with digital skills, ensuring inclusive access, and creating a safe, ethical, and innovative digital environment. With the global shift toward digital economies, the address highlighted how youth must be positioned not just as users of technology but as creators, decision-makers, and innovators within the digital ecosystem.

Discussant One: Digital Opportunities and Access: noting that digital platforms offer unprecedented potential for employment, entrepreneurship, and social engagement. However, disparities in internet connectivity, particularly between urban and rural areas, remain a significant barrier. According to recent data, only about 46% of Tanzanians have access to the internet, and digital access among youth in rural communities is considerably lower. Bridging this gap was emphasized as essential for equitable growth and inclusion.

Discussant two: AI Role in Economic Development and education: They explained how AI can personalize learning, improve efficiency in public services, and unlock new job sectors such as data science, automation, and digital marketing. They also noted that AI literacy must be integrated into school curricula and youth training programs to prepare future generations for a rapidly evolving job market. The discussant stressed that with proper investment, AI could be a catalyst for innovation, especially in the education and health sectors.

Discussant three: Challenges in Digital Word: including cyberbullying, online fraud, misinformation, and the digital divide. Many youths lack digital literacy, making them vulnerable to online exploitation and manipulation. Additionally, the cost of data and lack of local content in Kiswahili were cited as practical barriers to full participation in digital spaces.

Discussant Four: Digital Ethics (Verification of information) safety and reporting mechanism: stressing the need for responsible digital citizenship. They discussed the importance of teaching youth how to verify information, report harmful content, and navigate online spaces safely. Platforms need robust reporting mechanisms and digital rights policies to ensure accountability and protect users—particularly vulnerable youth—from abuse and misinformation

Recommendation

- Invest in internet and mobile coverage, particularly in rural and under served areas, to reduce the digital divide and ensure inclusive access for all youth.

- Integrate digital skills, coding, and AI education into national curricula and youth training programs to prepare young people for future jobs and innovations.

- Support the development of digital content in local languages and contexts, making platforms more accessible and relevant to Tanzanian youth.

- Develop national policies and school programs that educate youth on digital safety, privacy, and responsible online behavior.

- Encourage youth participation through digital incubators and innovation spaces where they can co-create solutions, startups, and platforms tailored to local needs.

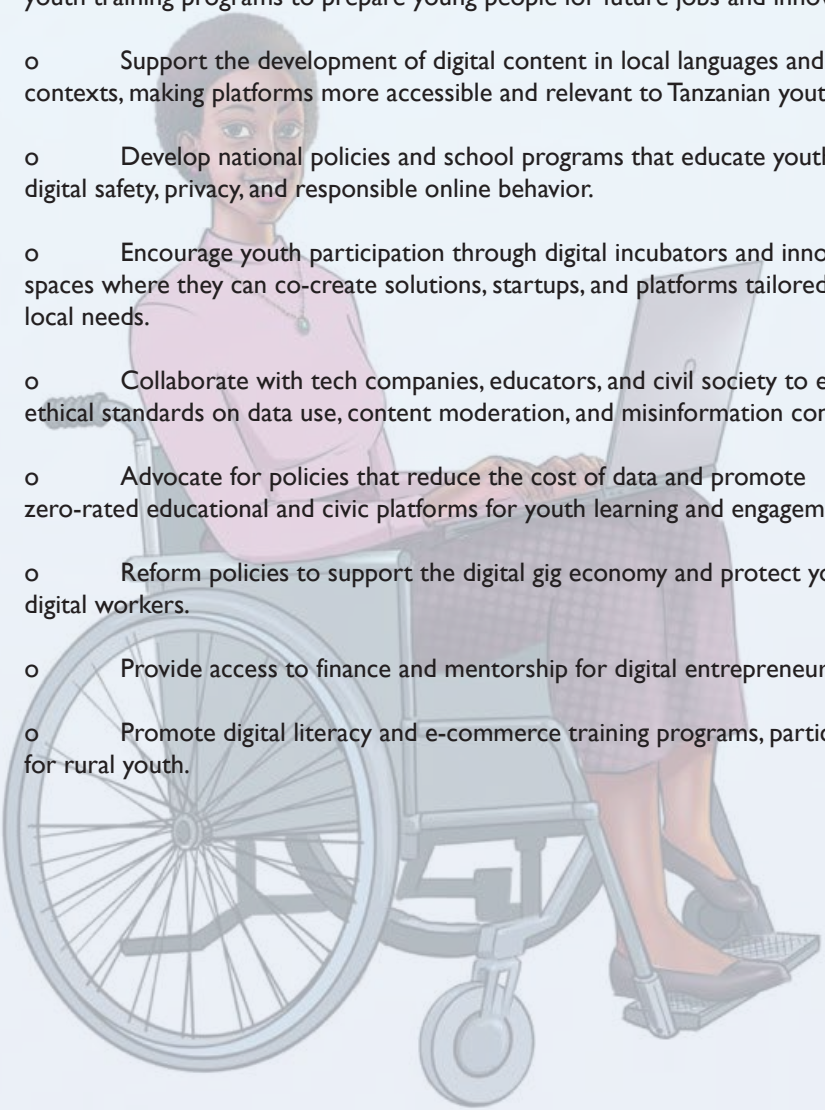
- Collaborate with tech companies, educators, and civil society to establish ethical standards on data use, content moderation, and misinformation control.

- Advocate for policies that reduce the cost of data and promote zero-rated educational and civic platforms for youth learning and engagement.

- Reform policies to support the digital gig economy and protect young digital workers.

- Provide access to finance and mentorship for digital entrepreneurs.

- Promote digital literacy and e-commerce training programs, particularly for rural youth.



4.5. Youth Inclusion and Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making and clean energy

Sessions focused on inclusive leadership and effective coordination of youth programs across sectors. Youth called for better engagement in policy-making and the establishment of clear frameworks for collaboration between youth stakeholders and government institutions. The discussion centered on peace during elections, innovation in youth leadership, inclusion of people with disabilities (PWDs), and gender in leadership, moderator was Hussein Melele, executive Director of Mulika Tanzania and other panelists were



i. Arif Noorally Fazel - ActionAid Tanzania
ii. Fransica Mboya - National Council of NGOs
iii. Diana Mkinga - Plan International
iv. Joseph Malekela - African Leadership Initiative for Impact

Key Discussion Areas and Insights

Discussant one: Peace Towards the General Election: Emphasized the pivotal role of youth in maintaining peace during elections. Also, highlighted that youth are often targeted for manipulation and to made efforts to promote peaceful participation and responsible use of social media.

Key Note Address; Country Director Save The Children International Tanzania, Ms Angela Kauleni



Discussant two: Gender and Leadership: on this addressed the challenges young women face in accessing decision-making spaces. Although political parties have statutes supporting gender empowerment, few young women hold top leadership positions. Therefore, increased leadership training platforms and collective advocacy to enhance young women's representation, particularly at the grassroots level where cultural barriers persist.

Discussant three: Inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWDs): On this stressed the importance of a human rights-based approach in including PWDs at every stage of programming. Advocated for organizational budgets and plans that support PWDs, including the use of sign language and assistive technologies., while the government has inclusive plans, many PWDs are unaware of these opportunities, and stakeholders must actively reach out and educate them.

Discussant four: NGO Coordination and Youth Civic Engagement: Highlighted the role of NGOs in educating youth about civic participation and influencing youth-friendly policies. Encouraging NGOs to support youth candidacy for government positions and to empower both those who have tried and those who have not yet participated. This session also stressed the importance of youth supporting each other's campaigns and voting for their peers.

Recommendation

o Youth were encouraged to recognize their majority status and the power of their vote, urging them to register and participate fully in political processes.

o The panel called for intergenerational leadership, with both young men and women actively involved at all levels.

o It was emphasized that youth should utilize their transitional period productively for personal and national development.

o The importance of peaceful participation and post-election engagement was underscored.

o Enhancing training and mentorship, genuine inclusion of marginalized groups, removing financial and informational barriers, and fostering a culture of peaceful and active civic engagement among Tanzanian youth.



4.6. National Coordination of Youth Development Initiatives

This session focused on the **harmonization and coordination of youth development efforts** across government, civil society, development partners, and the private sector. With a national outlook, the discussion explored how to streamline youth programming in alignment with **Tanzania's Vision 2050** and the revised **Youth Development Policy (2007, Version 2024).** The session emphasized the importance of multi-sector collaboration, shared accountability, and sustainability in youth-led development efforts.

The session was officially opened with a **Keynote Address** from the **PMO-LYED Representative**

The keynote highlighted the government's commitment to streamlining youth interventions under the upcoming policy and called for coordinated implementation frameworks among stakeholders to avoid duplication and enhance impact.

*Session Moderator: Charles Ruben - **DOYODO Tanzania***

Panelists and Discussion Highlights:

- **Fransisca Mboya – CSO Representative (NaCONGO):**

Reflected on the **vital role of CSOs** in driving youth programming at grassroots and national levels. She emphasized the need for inclusive partnerships and accountability mechanisms that ensure youth priorities are central to development agendas.

- **Barnabas Kaniki – Save the Children Tanzania**

Addressed the need to strengthen multi-sector collaboration by establishing formal structures for engagement between government and CSOs. He highlighted the importance of policy coherence, resource sharing, and joint monitoring as key to achieving long-term youth development outcomes.

- **Mathew Kidola –Save the Children Tanzania**

Spoke on the **sustainability of youth-led initiatives,** stressing the challenges of donor dependency, short project cycles, and leadership turnover. He called for institutional capacity building and youth innovation hubs to ensure youth-led efforts are resilient and impactful.

- **Representative – Director, PMO-LYED (Youth Development):**

Provided insight into government-led coordination actions and **plans to operationalize the revised Youth Development Policy,** including mechanisms for data sharing, program alignment, and youth inclusion in national planning frameworks.



Key Recommendations:

- Establish a **national youth coordination platform (National Youth Council)** with inclusive youth representation

- Promote **policy and program alignment** under the revised Youth Development Policy (2024) and Vision 2050 goals.

- Strengthen the institutional capacity of youth organizations to engage meaningfully in national processes.

- Develop a **national youth database and dashboard** to track progress, investments, and impact of youth initiatives.

- Enhance transparency and joint accountability among actors supporting youth development.

5. Sustainability Plan for TYDF

The Tanzania Youth Development Forum (TYDF) is committed to ensuring the long-term impact and continuity of youth empowerment initiatives beyond the annual event. To achieve this, TYDF will implement a multi-faceted sustainability strategy focused on ongoing engagement, institutional partnerships, and continuous improvement.

Key elements of the sustainability plan include:

- **Establishment of Zonal Forums:** TYDF will set up active zonal forums that operate year-round, providing platforms for continuous communication, mentorship, and collaboration among participants and partners. These forums will ensure sustained youth engagement across different regions.
- **Strengthening Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborations with government ministries, private sector stakeholders, and development partners will be deepened to secure reliable funding streams and technical support. This network of partnerships will enhance resource mobilization and capacity building for youth initiatives.
- **Development of a Digital Platform:** To facilitate knowledge sharing and continuous learning, TYDF will launch a digital platform designed to provide access to resources, training modules, and networking opportunities. This platform will serve as a central hub for youth development information and community interaction.
- **Annual Impact Assessments:** TYDF will conduct yearly evaluations to measure progress against its objectives, identify challenges, and adapt strategies accordingly. These assessments will guide decision-making and help maintain the relevance and effectiveness of the forum's activities.
- **Institutionalizing Youth Participation:** By aligning its activities with national development goals and integrating youth input into policy-making processes, TYDF aims to institutionalize youth engagement as a core component of Tanzania's development agenda.

Furthermore, during the launch day of the forum, the Guest of Honour, Bi. Mwantumu Mahiza, officially inaugurated the **TYDF 2026 Executive Committee.** This committee is tasked with the day-to-day implementation of programs, specifically focusing on executing resolutions developed by each cluster during the forum. The committee will play a pivotal role in maintaining momentum, ensuring accountability, and driving continuous progress on youth development priorities.

Through these initiatives, TYDF is positioned to become a sustainable and impactful vehicle for youth development across Tanzania.



CLosing Remarks from the TYDF Chairperson

As Chairperson of the Tanzania Youth Development Forum, I am deeply encouraged by the collective commitment and passion demonstrated by all stakeholders involved in this transformative journey. The establishment of zonal and regional forums, coupled with the launch of the 2026 Executive Committee, signals a new era of sustained youth empowerment in Tanzania. Our young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow but active drivers of today's development. It is our shared responsibility to create spaces where their voices are heard, their talents nurtured, and their aspirations realized.

Looking ahead, I am confident that through strategic partnerships, continuous learning platforms, and institutionalized youth participation, TYDF will remain a dynamic and influential force for positive change. Together, we will build an inclusive and resilient youth movement that contributes meaningfully to national growth and development. I invite all partners, government bodies, private sector players, and youth themselves to join us in this mission. Let us work hand in hand to ensure that the energy, creativity, and potential of Tanzania's youth continue to shape a brighter future for our nation.


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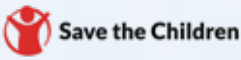

























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Tanzania Youth Development Forum 2025

Youth Participation in Decision Making Spaces for Sustainable Development

