Responding to inequalities in health in urban areas

REPORT
Participatory meetings in Harare on health and wellbeing of urban youth

Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC),
with the Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD)
in the
Regional Network for Equity in Health in East and Southern Africa (EQUINET)

Harare, Zimbabwe
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Contents

1. Background and introduction

By 2050, urban populations will increase to 62% in Africa. Cities concentrate opportunities, jobs and services, but they also concentrate risks and hazards for health. They are sites of inequalities in health that raise concern over how well we are promoting current and future wellbeing. As found in Loewenson and Masotya (2015) (Responding to inequalities in health in urban areas: A review and annotated bibliography), youth are particularly affected by these trends, as they will be affected by long term trends unless specific policies and measures are out in place to address them.

TARSC as cluster lead of the "Equity Watch" work in EQUINET has been exploring these questions in east and southern African (ESA) countries, gathering diverse forms of evidence from literature review, analysis of quantitative data, internet searches on practices and a participatory validation amongst different social groups of youth in Harare and Lusaka. In Harare, TARSC worked with Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) and youth living in low density, medium income suburbs; in formal employment; in tertiary education; unemployed youth; youth in informal employment and in informal settlements. Briefs and reports capturing some of this work are available on the EQUINET website (www.equinetafrica.org).

This report compiles in one document the several rounds of participatory review and validation carried out in Harare with young people from low density, medium income suburbs; youth in formal employment; youth in tertiary education; unemployed youth; youth in informal employment and youth in informal settlements on their perceptions of health and wellbeing, the drivers of wellbeing in their areas, the approaches and practices that are and could be implemented to improve their wellbeing and the implications for urban services, including for health systems.

A preparatory dialogue identified different social groups of Harare youth to include in the meetings, to cover a diversity of backgrounds, with 6 people in each group:

   i. youth living in northern suburbs;
   ii. youth in formal employment
   iii. youth in tertiary education
   iv. unemployed youth
   v. youth in informal jobs and
   vi. youth in Epworth/ informal settlements.

The Harare youth, TARSC 2018

The meetings were organised, facilitated and reported by Dr Rene Loewenson TARSC, and the youth organised and their participation facilitated by Mr Sam Chaikosa CFHD. The youth participants and voice is from Arthur Shoko, Leon Zata, Simon Kapombe, Naison Nyamajiva, Paison Mareya, Liset Makura, Tinashe Mazawazi, Lennon Manyengawana, F Molai, Bridget Kajawu, Shingie Denhere, Tafadzwa Goredema, Ishmael Makaya, Bernadette Nhandara, Millicent Banda, Mercy Chifamba, Chiedza Hanyani, Kudakwashe Madondo, Busisiwe Shumba, Dexter Madawo, Charity Tsoka, Pauline Dana, Rumbidzai Chirunga, Nancy Gweshe, Anglebert Chipangura, Sithembile Zimbeva, Marc Makuchete, Tapiwa Solani, Willard Dzamunokora, Monica Muzawazi, Wendy Molai, Forget Kwaramba, Aarthur Nyandwe, Ushe Courage, and Wilberforce Jasi (named with their consent).

The report presents the methods, discussions and findings for each stage.

2.   Understanding of and priorities in health and wellbeing

In August 2016 the first stage of participatory validation was held in Harare. It included the six groups of young people noted above (and the same young people participated throughout the process). Each group had six young people, except for the Northern Suburbs where there were 5 youth (35 total). Youth from two social groups (unemployed, informal employment) largely came from southern and high density suburbs outside Epworth and the Northern suburbs, while some in formal employment and tertiary education did also live in Northern suburbs. There was otherwise limited overlap in the groups. Nearly half (15) of the youth were female.

The participatory validation took a half day for each group separately and explored how the findings on health and wellbeing and the dimensions, determinants and priority areas of wellbeing from prior document reviews by TARSC compared with those raised by young people from different settings. It involved steps using participatory methods for
- understanding of and the dimensions of health and wellbeing (cards and line ups)
- priorities in health and wellbeing (ranking and scoring)
- drivers of health and wellbeing (social mapping)
- priority areas for follow up work (buzz groups)

The same participatory process was implemented with each of the six groups.

2.1   Understanding health and wellbeing

In general, all groups had a more narrow definition of health than of wellbeing, and many identified that *health* - as physical, mental and social wellbeing and absence of disease – has been identified with the medical profession and services, while wellbeing incorporates many dimensions in people's psycho-social, economic, environmental and daily lives that are more familiar to young people. In most groups the line-ups added education, cultural choice, living conditions (especially shelter, water and sanitation), diets, secure jobs and incomes, having a balance of time between work, leisure and family and participation in government decisions as dimensions of wellbeing. They saw some (not all) of the wider dimensions of wellbeing raised in the literature as important, including those that relate to time use, psychosocial and ecological issues. Even in Harare's context of deep economic insecurity they reflected that these often ignored aspects are important for current and future wellbeing.

There were common debates within the groups, such as
- With changes taking place, whether culture is overshadowed by other factors in wellbeing or is it, in contrast, still important for identity;
- Whether wellbeing is more determined by the ability to get a secure job or the ability to create employment by developing one's own enterprise/ activity;
- On the value of green spaces, which were seen to support social interactions and mental wellbeing for some, while others said they did not have the time to take advantage of these spaces making them less relevant to their wellbeing; and on
- How far people should participate in government decisions.

Some features of wellbeing were seen as highly important at present across the groups collectively, including:
- secure jobs and incomes; education and participation in government decisions,
- followed by shelter / housing, entrepreneurship and having a balance of time between leisure, work and family.

There were, however, differences in identified dimensions beyond the major common factors:

- Some groups identified personal features, including self-determination, self-esteem and a positive mental attitude (youth in tertiary education; in formal employment; Northern suburbs youth) and spiritual maturity (unemployed youth).
- Unemployed youth raised entrepreneurship as more relevant than secure jobs (others raised jobs or both).
- Epworth youth gave a higher rating to shelter than others, and were also the only group to raise the issue of social grants to access services.
- Youth from Northern suburbs and youth in informal employment both raised a peaceful, violence-free environment and social support networks as a key dimension.
- Youth in informal employment felt participation in government decisions to not be relevant as it did not make a difference to the decisions reached.
- Epworth youth and those in formal employment identified harmony with their environment.
- Epworth youth identified rights as key to wellbeing, while youth in tertiary education raised gender equality as a key dimension.

2.2 Priorities in health and wellbeing

The youth were given 3 beans each and in separate rounds, and *Rene* asked them, each using three beans in *each* round, to each put the beans on those individual cards in the health and wellbeing set they prepared in the previous round that
  a. are most important for young people now
  b. will be most important for young people in ten years time
  c. that are most available for young people in Harare now
  d. Those that are least available for young people in Harare now

The vote counts in each round were recorded on a flip chart.

As shown in *Table 1* below, there were differences across the groups in the features they found to be most important:

Table 1 Harare youth priorities in health and wellbeing

	Top most important for your wellbeing now	2nd and 3rd most important for youth now	Most important for youth in 10 years time
Epworth youth	Education	Economy Participatory democracy	Economy Education Participatory democracy (*) Shelter
Unemployed youth	Secure jobs	Housing	Education Entrepreneurship
Youth in tertiary education	Positive mental attitude	Good social environment Education	Positive mental attitude
Youth in formal employment	Secure income	Secure jobs Participatory democracy	Secure income Shelter Green space
Northern suburbs youth	Secure income/ financial security	Secure jobs Entrepreneurship Participatory democracy	Secure income/ financial security Participatory democracy
Youth in informal employment	Education	Secure jobs Living conditions Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship

(*) refers to participation in government decisions

Two youth groups (Epworth and those in informal employment) share education as the most important feature for them now, while Northern suburb and formally employed youth share secure income as the top feature. The other two groups raise different features to each other and to the rest.

There is also diversity in the features rated as second or third most important, although as above with some overlap in some groups on concerns with participatory democracy, secure jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The diversity reflects in part diverse contexts: those in less secure circumstances seeing education as opening possible opportunity; unemployed youth seeing jobs as critical, while those in employment or in higher income areas seeing rising incomes as more critical.

At the same time there are overlapping preoccupations with how far the economy is providing security and opportunity for young people, providing safe and supportive living and social environments and opportunities to be heard and listened to in decision making.

In thinking of the future there was a similar diversity of views across the groups. While youth in formal employment, in tertiary education and youth living in the Northern suburbs saw top features remaining relatively constant, those in Epworth, unemployed youth and those in informal employment saw changes, envisaging more competitive, overcrowded settings, but also ones that would depend on the capacities for innovation and entrepreneurship of young people.

Participants across groups from diverse backgrounds noted that their views are not taken seriously, that they lack mechanisms for proactive engagement on the issues that are important to them. At the same time they also noted that the organisations that work with young people are not consistently discussing or consulting on these concerns around wellbeing or giving voice to youth proposals, despite these preoccupations being different to those in the general population.

2.3   Social mapping of the contributors to health and wellbeing

The youth were divided into their social subgroups and asked them to draw a social map of either their own home area or the city centre. On it, using the areas currently seen as most important for young people's health and wellbeing raised in the previous exercise, the groups marked on the social maps using a graphic symbol
- In green pen - what environments, activities, factors are *promoting* those areas of wellbeing.
- In red pen - what environments, activities, factors are *harming* those areas of wellbeing.

When completed, the maps were discussed by the group. They were also presented to the full meeting in March 2017 and discussed. They are shown below with key features raised:

For Epworth youth:

The social map highlighted various features enabling or impeding health and wellbeing:

- The presence of schools, including many small private schools, churches. However the youth noted that the schools have few places, are costly, do not always provide quality or relevant education, and that people need some subsidy to access education. In the discussion they raised that this called for more *government* schools, and not for the privatisation of education.

Figure 2.1 Social map by Epworth youth, TARSC, 2016

- They noted that religious and cultural activities are growing, with street theatre and the pasa pasa music festival in Epworth. They pointed to the potential of cultural activities to provide economic and income opportunities, but that these activities do not get investment. There is thus increase in harmful recreation, such as harmful drug (marijuana) use.
- They highlighted that the informal nature of jobs, such as the small enterprise brickmaking activities in Epworth, raises risks for people and the environment, even while they provide income and commodities. However while there is a potential link in the local economy between shelter and local construction production (eg) brick making), it was also noted that allocation of stands, involvement in brickmaking and related activities are party-politically controlled vs controlled by transparent local government processes and that this excludes many young people.
- In general the above factors were seen to be ones that youth may have potential to influence, but they are not being adequately discussed or raised.
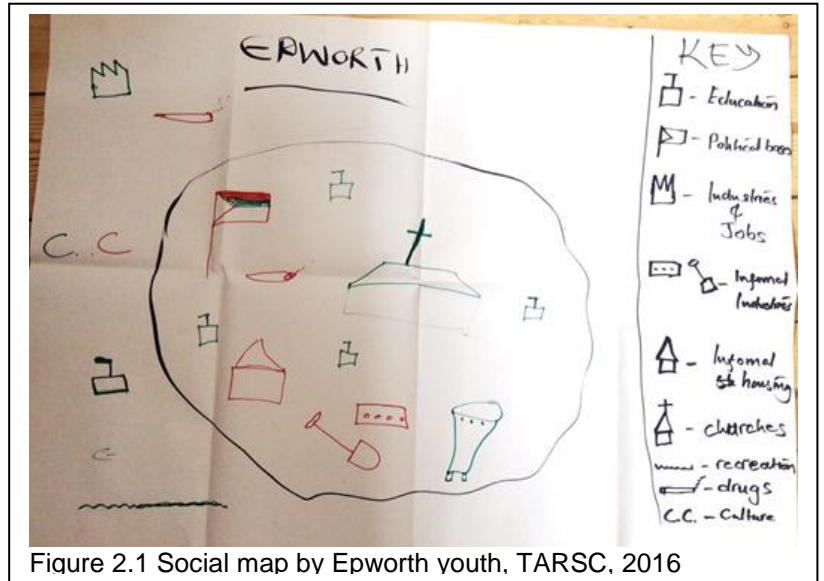
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For unemployed youth:

As the youth came from many suburbs the map is of the central business district (CBD) and the suburbs youth live in are shown as surrounding it. The social map showed

- Vending, leisure sites, schools, churches, road transport and housing schemes seen as promoting wellbeing, although vending, poor quality housing and poor transport were also seen as negative for health. The high

Figure 2.2 Social map by unemployed youth, TARSC, 2016

numbers of vendors / vending sites identified as positive (in green) for providing employment and incomes and sale of locally produced goods such as peanut butter. The negative impacts on wellbeing of vending was seen to arise from the sale of unhealthy products (unwashed fruit, etc); and the many unregulated sites across the city.

6

- It was also noted that some vending is difficult to map- products are sold from car boots and at night so they come and go. There was some discussion of the need to regularise the vending sites in the city in a way that balances market access with social environments. The youth saw this as the responsibility of council, but that it should be done in a way that engaged both councils and vendors together. It was something the youth felt they could influence if space was given, including in law, for the interaction.
- The police and council were shown in red as while they should be protective they are seen as being repressive. The youth indicated that they are not perceived by police and councils as having any credible views, and that this needs to change towards a culture of dialogue and consultation. They observed that for this, youth also need to have information and raise issues where there is potential for co-operation and mutual benefit to build more positive relations with these institutions. Often the interaction only comes at a point of conflict, like a road block or when a policy is imposed.
- Schools were uniformly seen as promoting wellbeing, although the youth noted the need for improved standards and curriculum change. The maps included many small private schools, churches. However it was noted that the schools have few places, are costly, do not always provide quality or relevant education, and that people need some subsidy to access education. In the discussion it was perceived that this called for more *government* schools, and not for the privatisation of education.
- Social media was perceived as playing an increasing role in exchanging the knowledge and information that people need for economic and social activities. However they noted that it is not currently proactively used in this way and is costly. It was also observed that leisure and recreation sites not only produce mental and social wellbeing, but can also provide opportunities for new economic activity and employment in the creative economy. It has not been given adequate recognition in Harare.

For youth in tertiary education:
The social map was focused on the university campuses and the surrounding suburbs. It gave further evidence of this reality (see *Figure 2.3*).

Figure 2.3: Social map created by Harare youth in tertiary education
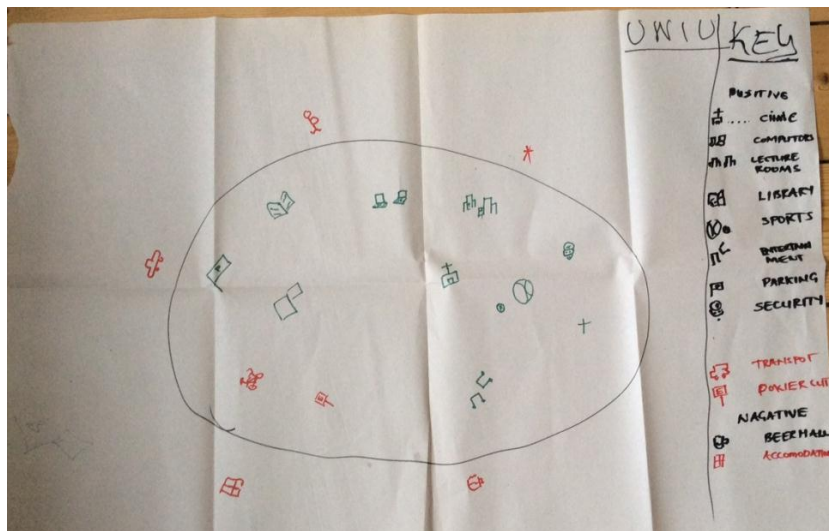
The social map showed the presence on campus of various facilities such as the library, computers, lecture theatres, churches, sports field and cultural activities that not only enable youth to pursue education but also to support social interaction. Access to IT was seen to strongly promote wellbeing as it facilitates information flow for work, cultural, and social interactions. However there are various barriers to accessing IT. For example free

wifi is often found at fast food restaurants and not at sports fields, public services, public libraries, museums and parks so young people congregate at fast food places, with negative dietary consequences. Only those involved in competitive sports get access to the sports facilities. The road transport access to campuses is reasonable but the system is overcrowded, the pickup points (ranks) are near the dormitories and disrupt the environment. There was a suggestion to revert to organised public bus transport to avoid such problems. Finally it was noted that male and female students are vulnerable to wealthier adults using them (for boys to organise access to girls, and to pick up female students) with sex exchanged for money used for living expenses.

These problems are amendable to change and could be influenced by youth. However at the same time they felt that they are not heard or recognised in debates on the curriculum, both by their own student representative councils and by the various authorities. The structures for participation are viewed as solidified and people on the councils become co-opted. The youth also noted that they don't themselves have discussions and collective policy positions on issues important to them. They raised these barriers as important as they block relevant feedback and discussion on and changes in the content of education.

Youth in formal employment:
This social map focused on the CBD and surrounding suburbs, as the youth lived in different parts of town. It showed the presence of more harmful than positive factors for wellbeing. Wellbeing was visualised as being promoted through places where youth views can be expressed, such as in interactions with the council, ministries, and through bodies like the students councils.

While the mechanisms are there, however, they noted that the hearings are not well publicised and that representative bodies do not adequately inform, consult or represent them. Also promotional

Figure 2.4 Social map by youth in formal employment, TARSC,

were recreational, cultural and leisure spaces as they provide possibilities for young people to meet and socialise, support mental wellbeing and also provide economic opportunities. There were range of transport related hazards: in poor road infrastructure, various informal transport options, poor drainage and problems of safety and noise. In the discussion it was observed that mobility and communication are important for their group- and they saw benefit in more social media availability (eg free wifi hotspots) and improved public transport.
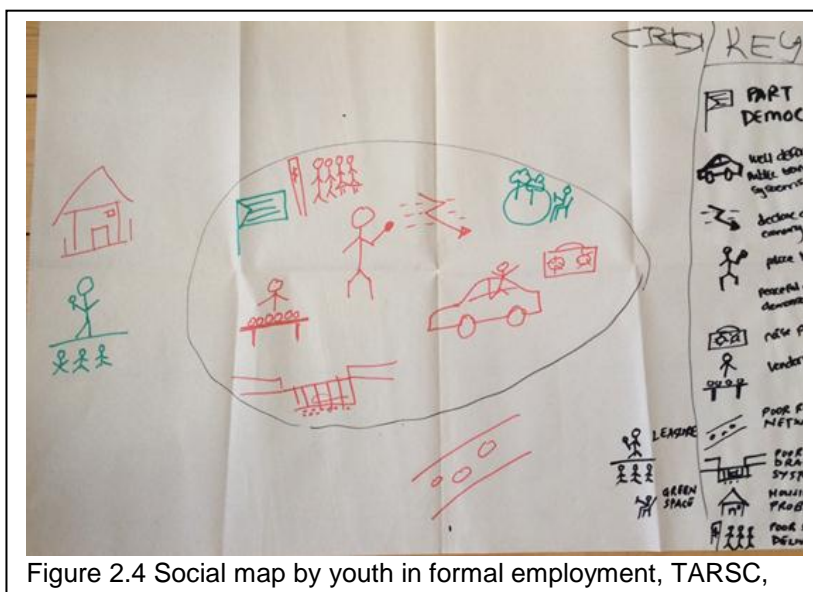
Youth from Northern suburbs:
This social map showed a reasonable presence of positive factors in the available infrastructure (although not being used or maintained); availability of green spaces and spaces for cultural activities (although poorly linked to economic resources); numerous small enterprises and cultural activities youth are involved in (although with poor access to funds), wifi access and efforts to solve needs, like water deliveries. There were also features that were seen to be harmful to wellbeing: Some were social, with corruption and institutions like councils and parliament not consulting or giving space for youth input.

This led to a perception of top down processes and not a bottom up dialogue. There were questions of how far young people accessed or participated in social mechanisms like

residents associations or student councils that can be used to proactively input to these processes. They observed that some mechanisms specifically identified for youth (youth parliament, council) were not looking at some of the issues raised, such as entrepreneurship, environments, and economic resources to support loans for young people who lack collateral.

While the university and other training institutions are paying attention to entrepreneurship, there isn't adequate support to realise and apply the skills learned in training institutions.

Figure 2.5 Social map by youth from Northern suburbs, TARSC, 2016

Lack of accessible capital or investment to realise their business plans was perceived as a major problem, especially for economic activities that also promote social or environmental goals. It was felt that this will have longer term implications in addressing future needs. The participants saw a need to adjust the education curriculum to support future needs, with an expansion of adult learning opportunities through wider processes, such as apprenticeships and greater use of new information technologies, using these to access markets.

Youth in informal employment

The social map in *Figure 2.6* gave further evidence of this reality, focusing on the CBD and surrounding suburbs, as the youth lived in different parts of town. The social map showed numerous features that were negative for wellbeing, including littering and waste, poor sanitation, lack of adequate facilities for vendors, poor road transport and repressive security services.
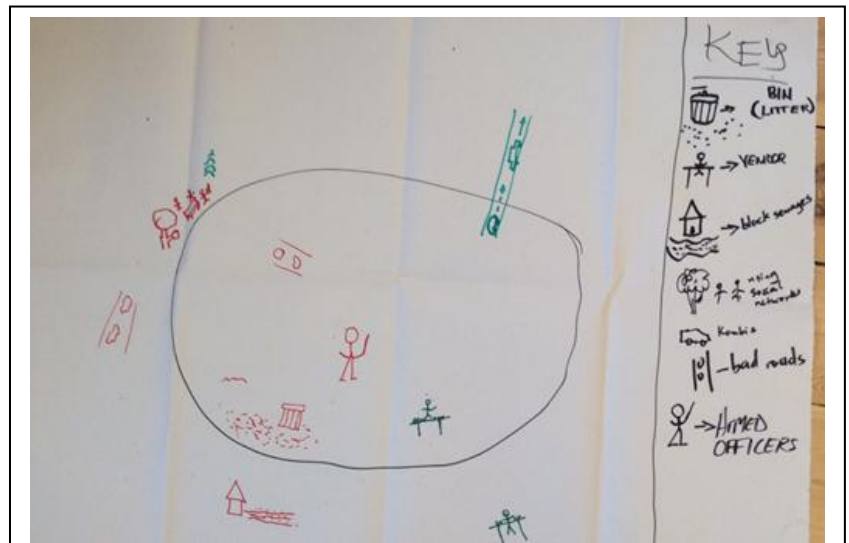
Figure 2.6: Social map by youth in informal employment, TARSC,

There were positive features: In available road transport, vending activities bringing jobs and goods and public internet access. Participants perceived that they could as young people influence the direction of some of the features, such as through access to and use of information for their business activities; or engaging councils collectively on littering and waste management. They perceived, however, that they had less influence on access to capital or on the environment for economic activities.

The discussion on these factors across the different settings suggest that improving youth wellbeing in Harare would at minimum need to address :

- The extent to which the content, organisation of and access to education and the information , social media, economic resources and investment support young people's need to access secure jobs, and also to create economic activities that can provide steadily improving incomes.

Reviewing the social maps, TARSC 2017

- The opportunities young people have to access housing / shelter in clean and secure, violence free environments.
- The measures that build youth self-esteem and supportive networks
- The opportunities for youth to exchange on, build and communicate collective proposals for policies and services that concern them, and to be heard and integrated into decision making by authorities.

At the same time the findings indicate that there is context-relevant diversity between young people in different parts of the city and different social contexts that affect which dimensions of wellbeing they perceive to be important.

2.4   Priority areas for follow up

The Harare youth participants in the meeting reviewed the areas of wellbeing, their priorities and conditions and in buzz groups discussed what areas they would like to know more about from the way these issues are being tackled in other cities globally, including by young people. The areas they raised were:

1. **On education:** How is access to education being supported? How are youth involved in shaping the education curriculum, content and systems? What social grants are there for health and education for young people to protect access and how does this work?

2. **On job creation:** What measures support job creation for youth, in what areas?

3. **On enterprise creation:** How are economic activities and small and medium enterprises for youth being stimulated, invested in with loans/capital and other resources, and encouraged? How is youth entrepreneurship being supported?

4. **On the creative and green economy:** How is the creative and cultural economy being developed and organised to support youth employment? What economic activities are youth doing in sport, in the creative economy and the green economy? How is internet and social media being used for this, including to support online markets (eg for music)?

5. **On shelter/social conditions:** How is youth access to shelter / housing being organised and supported, including through social housing? What facilities are being put in place for a non-violent enabling community environment for young people?

6. **On information and communication within youth:** How are youth influencing debates, norms and practices relating to gender equality? How is social media is being used in relation to social processes within youth? How is solidarity being built across different social groups of youth in the city?

On participating in government decision making: How are youth issues being raised nationally? How are youth influencing decision making on economic and social policies, investments and programmes?

3. How are other cities addressing urban health and wellbeing?

Evidence was gathered by TARSC on these areas of interest to share with the Harare youth. While this was in the process of being documented the participating Harare youth also recorded their own diary of notes, ideas and drawings of their own experience/ perceptions/ visions of the issues in their area of and engagement with Harare. These inputs were also discussed in the meeting reviewing the findings from other cities.

A second participatory meeting was organised by CFHD and hosted and facilitated by TARSC in May 2017 with all youth combined. There was some loss to follow up of youth in the formally employed, informally employed and unemployed youth, mainly due to work related issues. Except for the formally employed, there were still sufficient in each group to input their views in the overall discussions.

The meeting used a mix of presentation using video and written information and participatory processes (group work, Margolis wheel) to draw youth perceptions and views. Participants reviewed the findings (and debate points) on the different and shared priorities on urban wellbeing identified by the 6 groups of young people in the 2016 and 2017 meetings. It included presentation of the different approaches, practices, innovations being implemented to improve youth wellbeing that were gathered by TARSC and those raised from the Harare youth. We reviewed the potential for application of these practices with the urban youth, and discussed how shared priorities for different groups in the city may be taken forward and what this means for the health system .

3.1 Youth notes on their local urban settings

The notebooks filled by the youth have rich information on views, conditions and ideas. A summary of the key features of their local settings that affect wellbeing as recorded in the books are shown in *Table 2* overleaf. Further areas of concern and action were raised in the meeting.

Many of the reports were of negative features for wellbeing and coping strategies raised like prostitution, drug abuse, jeopardise mental, physical and social wellbeing. Some had mixed results: Informal schools may improve access but may also lead to poor education for those attending them. A double intake at the University of Zimbabwe raised debate, with some seeing it as a way of improving university access and opportunity for youth, and others as generating poorer conditions and poorer quality education for those enrolled, especially in the absence of improvements in resources and funding. Some raised demonstrations and street protests as a response and others greater engagement with religion, seeking help from prophets, and refuge and interaction in churches. There was, however, very limited report of engagement with city authorities.

There were also some positive initiatives raised in *Table 2,* and many others were raised in the course of the review meeting, such as residents coming together to contribute money to fix potholes and engaging youth to carry this out, and universities- such as Chinhoyi University- integrating entrepreneurship studies in their courses.

Social media was seen to be commonly accessible, to have a role in a range of social functions, but to more often be used for humour and stress relief than for innovations for other forms of wellbeing. Nevertheless in the meeting report was made of the use of instagrams with images to celebrate Zimbabwe, and twitter use by different curator accounts each week to share experiences of Zimbabwe. Internet was seen to be used to support wellbeing was in e-applications for grade 7 school places, making it easier for people to find and secure places, although possibly with some bias towards those

wealthier groups with easier internet access. Phone/ internet media was also being used to send or receive money and to make payments at a time when cash is difficult to obtain.

Table 2 Key features of local urban settings affecting wellbeing

Epworth (informal settlement) youth
The area lacks strategic planning and social infrastructure supporting social networks to provide less toxic environments; people work in stressful jobs with hard labour. Religion provides solace
Informal schools giving poor education; School dropouts, drug abuse to ease stress, prostitution Party linked housing /stand access, lack of funds to develop housing, housing on wetlands; dumping of hazardous waste in the absence of refuse disposal; Lack of capital for economic activities
Education affected by child labour and no time for co-curricula activities; by forced marriages; unavailable colleges; inadequate scholarships. There is need to revamp industry and improve access to loans. Access to housing is linked to political organisations with no measures to support youth generally; There are challenges of being heard; and need for apprenticeships in industry for youth
Broken borehole pumps mean people queue as early as 2am to fetch water from functioning boreholes
Unemployed youth
Zimbabwe: A Nation of jokers
Rank Marshalls needed, waste management
Seeking help from prophets, drinking 'annointed sewage'; demonstrations by tajamuka; graduations; brain drain; entrepreneurs vending on pavements; churches as a place of refuge
Refurbish roads and traffic lights, widen roads and maintain road signs. Solar traffic and street lights;
A group of university graduates joined to do street sweeping in first street in their graduation attire while singing about unemployment… sadly they were arrested as a public nuisance
Youth in tertiary education
Corruption with impunity; stands for votes in Norton; bank support to help repay the debt but 15bn missing from diamonds; stock exchange activity after bond notes to protect investments; trade affected; social action through demonstration; police confrontation; use of plastic money; boost to agriculture from fertiliser donation; recognition of health sector in the budget
Abusive families; School has implemented public lectures on topics and counselling for youth
Traffic, potholes, vending carts, easy park doesn't work, e-applying for grade 7
Many universities now have two or three intakes a year to enhance access. People are enrolling hoping Zimbabwe will improve….
Youth in formal employment
By laws preventing touts from hanging out of kombis, mushika shika; House demolition; corruption
Illegal shuttles; low capital for start-ups; voluntary initiatives, dance and drama groups; sport betting
Junior parliament offers opportunity for youth debate and empowers youth; churches taking a leading role in youth development; Zimbabwe a national of jokers- camera, video, social media common but not fully utilised for solutions
Vending blocking pedestrian space, waste management, rank marshal in ET zone
Social stratification, company closure, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution
Youth from Northern Suburbs
Receptiveness to bond notes due to limited choice; Limited youth interest in national issues
Enable entrepreneurs in youth and improved agricultural practice
Unemployment, access to education, peer pressure
Youth in informal employment
Sanitation; refuse collection; poor drainage; access to water; public boreholes
Corruption at all levels; extortion to get a license; by police taking licenses; high education, low business opportunity; access to workshops and education; competitions for young people; expertise on projects; community radio; access to loans; markets for products; access to adverts for products and businesses; adverts at HIFA and shows; revive local industry; drugs, alcohol and prostitution
High unemployment; crime. But also creativity – entrepreneurs, builders, drivers, teachers; bond notes and response to protests affecting many people; poor sanitation; illegal ways of coping with water shortages; youth in buck storage facility evicted and made homeless. Poor sanitation at informal markets making markets unhealthy and traders moving to other areas; youth being harassed by police; social networks positive and negative; no free network; water shortages
Youth campaigns, public lectures, music, drama and poetry spreading messages

Harare is a city where people are taking initiatives to enhance their individual and social wellbeing, even in the face of economic and socio-political challenges! Sometimes these challenges are motivating new developments, such as the switch to gas and solar energy due to electricity shortages. Social networks are important, even in difficult environments: *One woman pointed out how psychologically refreshing it was to walk from A to B and be greeted and converse with fellow residents as everyone knows everyone.* The role of a functioning public sector linking to society was evident. On the one hand the sustained failure by authorities to solve some problems leads to frustration:

> *The failure by Epworth Board to solve the water and sewer crisis for 36 years is taking a toll on the optimism of the people of Epworth.*

On the other hand when states reinforce social assets it stimulates self-confidence.

> G*overnment schools connect more with parents than private institutions, and this makes parents feel more assured about the safety and quality of the school environment.*

3.2 Experiences from other cities globally

Dr Loewenson presented a slide/ video show of examples of how other countries and cities are addressing some of the priority areas raised by the youth in Lusaka. She distributed an ideas book compiling these interventions: (*Loewenson R, Masotya M (2017) Responding to inequalities in health in urban areas: An ideas book of approaches and interventions from diverse countries to strengthen wellbeing for urban youth, TARSC, EQUINET, Harare*) and a brief produced from it (Brief 4) that is also found online on the EQUINET website at

http://www.equinetafrica.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Urban%20health%20Brief%204%20May%202018%20lfs.pdf

In the meeting presentation was made of selected innovations, including information and videos on these examples. It covered:
- Voices of Youth in Chicago Education
- Slum dwellers international (SDI) community-driven data
- Using Minecraft for participatory urban planning
- Sharing information on youth mental health services, Yarnsafe Australia
- Green my favela, Urban agriculture in Rio, Brazil
- Health urban conditions in the human city project, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
- Community certification of healthy public spaces in Quito, Ecuador
- Promoting Access to Community Education, Kenya
- Barrio-Ciudad: Community Based Violence Prevention in Honduras
- Healthy creative economy: thetre and radio for health in Wansmol bag Vanuatu
- Solar powered urban change, Nicaragua
- Creative healthy technology, Urban innovations in Boston, USA
- Supporting the creative economy in Innovation ZA
- Participatory budgeting, Rosario, Argentina
- Crowdfunding public space, Rotterdam, Netherlands

While she was presenting the Harare youth noted on cards the approaches, ideas and their features that they thought had relevance to their concerns in Harare.

4.   Harare youth views on improving wellbeing

4.1   Learning from other cities

Delegates observed a range of things from the international examples noted earlier that they saw as having potential relevance for and feasibility in improving wellbeing in Harare, and Zimbabwe.

The use of internet platforms in Kenya to encourage young entrepreneurs and link them to markets was appreciated.

> *Creating videos and documentaries and internet platforms is a good way to get support for and participation in an initiative.*
> *I like the idea that in Kenya they are using it in a way that improves young people's job opportunities.*

There was interest in **crowdfunding as an approach to resourcing activities** developed within communities where there is common cause.

> *It was so innovative that each plank in the bridge had the contributors name on it*
> *I liked the idea that each plank in the bridge had the individual's name – it was an exciting way to get everyone involved!*
> *Crowdfunding could help address the water crisis and the pothole menaces.*
> *Crowdfunding shouldn't replace the duty of councils to involve is in setting a good budget.*
> *In Zimbabwe we have 'tswanda.com' and 'go-fund' that can support crowdfunding.*
> *It was good to have a building where young people can think and share ideas.*

The response of people in Port Harcourt to protect their homes and status as residents in the face of demolitions was debated. It was observed that people should not be encouraged to build anywhere. However it was also observed that these were long-standing residents, and that there were similar examples in Harare environs where people had been allocated land by what they understood to be official channels and were later evicted after they had built homes. The example was appreciated for **turning a conflictual situation into communication between residents and planners and participation in urban planning**. The community radio was seen to be a valuable platform for community voice.

> *In Port Harcourt people spoke with one voice. Speaking with one voice will allow people to be heard.*
> *Having regular community meetings on a shared issue helped to build their voice. This needs skills for leadership*
> *This way of organising voice to negotiate with authorities is relevant for Epworth, where people pay rates but don't get refuse collection, clean water and proper roads.*
> *Planners meeting with residents were able to come up with a resolution more amiably than through destroying their homes.*
> *Their development of local radio helped share information for health and on the community consultations.*

The Voices of Youth in Chicago Education was appreciated for **how youth worked together on their own issues**. The free online survey monkey was seen as a useful resource for youth led surveys.

> *This could be implemented! I liked the idea that the students were united and took their world into their own hands.*
> *The youth were able to change a law affecting them after they formed one voice*
> *The use of participatory action research by youth is interesting as it involves those directly affected and provides a means to solve the problems.*

Promoting Access to Community Education, Kenya was seen to be a relevant initiative to enable unemployed college graduates to use their skills.

> *A further example is Ruzivo digital learning in Zimbabwe, that is aligned to the*

> *Zimbabwean primary and secondary curricula making support for education accessible to all pupils.*
> *In a STEM initiative IN Zimbabwe where pupils register for a full combination of STEM subjects (Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry) at A-level (highest secondary school level), the Ministry of Education pays tuition fees, levies and boarding fees at Government, Mission and Council Schools.*

Spotholes, one of the urban innovations in Boston where people use **social media to report potholes, with links to companies for repair and public reporting on repairs done**, was seen to be very relevant for Harare. In fact it was noted that the City Council already has a facility for reporting of burst pipes and potholes on its facebook page but doesn't yet link this to the resources (Zinara) or other activities for repair. It was also noted that Avondale police has a similar page for public information on crime.
> *Spotholes is an interesting initiative but looking at the bad state of our roads potholes are everywhere and we may need something with bigger impact!*
> *Spotholes is an interesting initiative because it brings the problem of potholes right to the doorstep of the local authority.*

Another innovation, Soofa, a bench where people can also charge phones, was also seen to address the need for **energy sources in public spaces**, especially if linked to other sources of energy like solar. Pulse of the city is an art work in a public space that can tell people their heart rate and blood pressure. It was seen to be an interesting way to involve people in their health.
> *Soofa combines socialising and interaction with a service*

Minecraft, a tool for online modelling of ideas, was seen as a useful low cost way of scoping and sharing ideas for planning.
> *It would be interesting to use this modelling to improve refuse collection and green areas.*

The use of old solar panels for household energy needs in Nicaragua was seen to be relevant to Harare's energy and employment needs.**Participatory budgeting** processes that involve youth in identifying needs and options to address them was seen to provide an organised way of bringing young people into decision making on budgets.
> *This participatory approach meant that all ages of youth participate in the budget*

Green my Favela, with **community organised urban agriculture in informal settlements** as a source of food and income was appreciated for its contribution to entrepreneurship and food security- both issues for urban youth.
> *We have green spaces in Harare and could cultivate them better – it would bring more unity among residents to produce and sell their produce and to generate income for other young people.*
> *It turns neglected spaces into farms!*
> *The funds raised can be used for improving the local area and supporting youth education*

Barrio Ciudad and Sudan Youth Peacemakers network were seen to provide a sustainable and feasible means for youth as peace leaders to engage authorities and community members to restore peace and reduce violence in their communities.
> *The way Barrio Ciudad identified hotspots is relevant for Harare's high density areas where long grass and rubbish that encourage crime, As a community we could get together to clean these areas and make them into community spaces like playgrounds or recreational areas.*
> *The use of radio messages is vital to reach people in peace-making processes.*
The empowerment circles were an interesting method. The soccer matches changes the focus to social life.
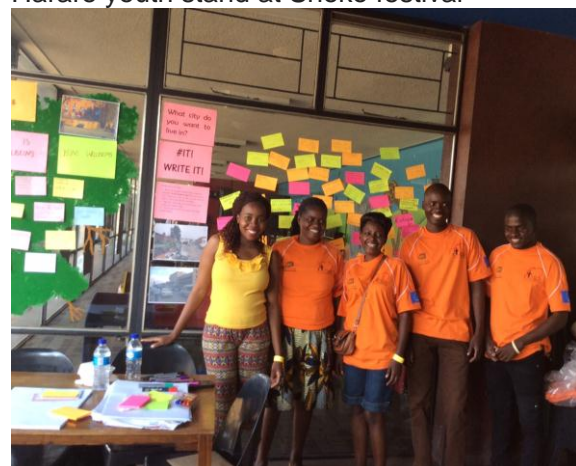
Innovation ZA was felt to be a model that could be extended to Harare as a **'festival of ideas' to share and market innovations**. It was suggested that Shoko festival in Harare and the 'unconference' that is more focused on cultural areas could extend to cover technology and other innovations.

> *Innovation ZA is a great initiative which we can adopt: it brings us closer to how others are coping with changing technology and enables us to adapt.*

Harare youth stand at Shoko festival

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This was later implemented in September 2017, in a stand at Shoko festival led by the Harare youth to provide a space for young people in Harare to draw, write short pieces and discuss the challenges to their wellbeing and how they would address them. . This festival is a major event in the city, despite the prevailing socio-economic problems potentially rendered enjoying the arts a luxury. The event provides a vibrant creative space with markets, installations, workshops and various activities. Shoko festival was thus seen to be an ideal space as it celebrates positive youth urban culture and new ideas on how to use media and technology.

The youth involved in the urban health work facilitated a range of activities, involving young people in drawing 'before and after' art work of their cities today and how they would like them to be, writing snippets on postits of the issues affecting them in the city and the things they wanted to change, and to create free space of engagement and ideas on urban health and wellbeing.

The drawings and snippets raised a number of areas seen as key for a 'healthy city' that were also raised in the participatory validation sessions, including promoting an organized transport system free of harassment and risk; improving service delivery (waste removal, improved

Facilitators of the 'before and after' art on urban health at Shoko festival © TARSC, 2017

health services; water and sanitation); access to free and affordable internet; freedom of speech and expression amongst other areas.

4.2   Implications for city health in Harare

Delegates went into a Margolis Wheel - with the outer circle young people and the inner circle directors of health. One 'young person' talked to one 'director of health'. In the first round they discussed what young people expected of the health department to support the sort of wellbeing initiatives discussed in the meeting. The outer circle then moved so that each had a new partner and they discussed what the directors of health expected of young people to be able to provide these sort of responses. We discussed what had been raised in the conversations, as an indication of expectations of urban primary health care.

Those role playing 'young people' raised that

- City health departments should be more proactive in using e-governance, providing online places for people to report issues, get information, provide feedback and so on.
- The health departments should not stop at the curative services- they need health teams to go into community to consult or implement programmes with the community.
- At the same time the care services should be adequately staffed and with personnel trained in youth friendly methods
- Health directors should be involved in dialogue with youth forums like the Junior council on programmes and budgets and should bring community evidence into decisions, such as through online surveys. They should be an ally in strengthening the voice of groups not usually heard, like young people.

The Margolis wheel to discuss actions for youth and the health department TARSC, 2017

Those role-playing 'health directors' in turn commented that

- Young people need to be more involved in the work of the council. They can be very helpful in disseminating health information in the community and as a community voice for health.
- Youth can act as watchdogs for health in the community! They can educate, inform and take up issues with peers on affecting youth, like harmful drug use, and share information on perceptions and concerns with the health services.
- Youth can take positions on health promoting issues and actions of other sectors, such as protection of green spaces, healthy foods and safe environments.

Role playing city health directors TARSC, 2017

5.   Areas for follow up

As noted earlier one follow up that has already been implemented was taking the discussions on urban health and wellbeing to the Shoko Festival in September 2017.

Beyond this type of platform for dialogue and exchange, it was suggested that it could be useful to provide health literacy training for youth health activists, as watchdogs for health, to disseminate and discuss health information in the community and as a youth voice for health.

From the evidence raised in the meeting on priority areas such as education; technology innovation; and participatory urban planning and funding it was suggested:

- While it would be relevant to work with existing structures, like the junior parliament of Zimbabwe or the local government junior council, these mechanisms need to work with a wider group of youth to adequately capture the diversity of young people and their issues, including youth may not be in school, and older youth (post school,

college level), and to use social media in an organised way to feed into and inform these forums and to give feedback to communities.

- Young people can play an important role in peer-to-peer strategies, as well as in engaging with residents on specific areas within their localities, and as catalysts for innovations, if organised to do so, especially at local level.
- While existing formal centres such as in universities can provide space for practical learning and innovation, there should also be options for more informal spaces, youth hubs or innovation festivals to reach the majority who are outside these institutions.
- Innovation and research could be more strongly linked to key areas to support wellbeing, such as through partnerships with parastatal service providers to develop solutions to priority problems, especially if linked to funders for product development and scale up.
- Social media plays a key role in all these processes, such as for online platforms and surveys and facebook polls to ask questions, gather information and assess youth views on policies before they are implemented, for youth to generate their own media, talk about and share information on issues affecting them, and interview key people who influence these issues. There are also opportunities for internet based crowd-funding, putting a project online for people to see and support it. However, this was also seen to demand reduced tariffs and access to free wifi zones*, such as in the #datamustfall* campaign.

For the city health departments it was suggested that they be more proactive in using e-governance, providing online places for people to report issues, to get information, to provide feedback on services. It was also suggested that they can work with youth health activists, training personnel in youth friendly methods and including health directors in dialogue with youth forums like the Junior council.

Suggestions were also made on how to forge more concrete work involving urban youth. For example, in a sample of districts a walk through survey could be implemented by youth, with a community leader, junior councilor and district council representative to identify and record problems and potentials in public spaces for improving urban wellbeing. These may be areas that present environmental, social, reproductive or other risks; or they may be spaces that could be used for creative economy, economic activities, technology innovation or for potential access to free wifi. The training for this activity could discuss the criteria for what constitutes healthy urban spaces that can later be used for joint community and council certification of healthy urban spaces, as for example is being practiced in Quito in Ecuador.

The findings of such a walkthrough survey could also be used to identify actions to make improvements in areas such as urban agriculture, solid waste management; urban technology innovation; appropriate technology for health activities; school peer support; creative economy activity and other activities that improve health, economic and social wellbeing.

It was agreed that these and other suggestions need to be discussed with the council, and city health and related departments. The youth participants identified the need to share their findings and priorities and proposals for improving wellbeing in a follow up dialogue with the local council and health and related services.