

# POWER, PERSISTENCE AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS

## Insights and Recommendations from the Goalkeepers Youth Action Accelerator

The Goalkeepers Youth Action Accelerator is a youth-led and multi-partner global programme dedicated to accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It brings together a pioneering and truly inspiring generation of 26 young and diverse leaders to address the world's major challenges. These leaders create impact by sharing powerful stories, analysing data, forming robust partnerships and ultimately holding governments accountable for their SDG promises.

The Goalkeepers Youth Action Accelerator is a direct response to the challenges young people are facing in accessing sufficient and appropriate resources to engage meaningfully in development decisions and activities that affect their communities.

This brief shares key outcomes, reflections and recommendations from the young people who have taken part in the Youth Action Accelerator programme. It suggests ways of ensuring strengthened and more meaningful youth engagement across partnerships, policies and programmes, specifically in the areas of resourcing, health, climate change and technology.



For more information, please contact [accelerator@civicus.org](mailto:accelerator@civicus.org) or visit [civicus.org/accelerator](https://civicus.org/accelerator)



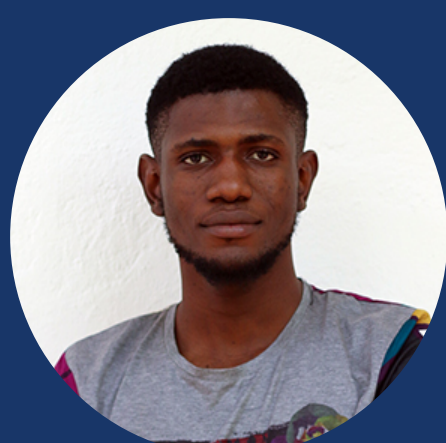
# INVESTING IN YOUTH ACTION

With a rise in youth-led social impact groups and initiatives, and young people's participation in digital activism and volunteering, we have a huge appetite to take charge and change our realities. Innovation and creativity are at the centre of our solutions and young leaders representing diverse communities of the globe are looking for long-term sustainable resourcing opportunities as the leaders of today's world. Young people need a holistic resourcing approach that creates an enabling environment for a generation of leaders and builds stronger reciprocal relationships with our funders and donors.

## Recommendations:

- **Partnerships with and resourcing for young people must be long-term, cater to our evolving needs and build strong leadership foundations to run and scale our social change solutions.**
- **Young people are not a homogenous identity and come from diverse identities and contexts. We have different demands and versions of success. We are looking for flexible and holistic resourcing solutions that are non-prescriptive. Capacity development, financial support, mentoring, access to networks and further opportunities are a combination of resourcing solutions that will set us up for success.**
- **We want more participatory approaches, where our voices are represented in solutions built by and for us. Reporting and impact assessment tools need to factor in our innovative styles of changemaking, with an equal focus on quantitative and qualitative datasets.**
- **There is a need to move away from beneficiary-service delivery approaches in which young people play a tokenistic role. Philanthropy and development support should incorporate two-way accountability processes to inform sustainable solutions in grant-making and funding.**

## GOALKEEPERS YOUTH ACTION ACCELERATOR STORIES



**Hope Jeremiah Offor** has been able to collect over 1,200 stories of young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights from across **Nigeria**.

He is using the stories to inform policy-makers and advocating that the barriers that prevent young people from accessing health services should be broken down. The technical support received as part of the Goalkeepers package has been instrumental in building his team's skills to achieve their goals.



**Marcia Alarcón** works on collecting data from slums to improve livelihoods in **Paraguay**. She is working with other civil society organisations and universities, and she has been successful in using her networks to involve the Paraguayan government in her project, receiving financial and technical support from the President of the Republic, five ministries and 28 municipalities. She is expected to secure the funds necessary to continue work in 2020 by the end of this year.



**Natasha Chaudhary** has trained young women across five cities in **India** to collect 110 stories of stigma faced by young unmarried women while accessing sexual and reproductive health services. The stories were used to launch an online campaign that resulted in a countrywide online conversation. This data was used to create legitimacy on an almost invisible issue and get the Delhi Medical Council and Delhi Medical Association to issue public statements in favour of stigma-free sexual health services. The project's success is partly due to the combination of flexible funding and technical support received from the Accelerator.



# ENSURING HEALTH FOR ALL

A holistic, efficient and reliable healthcare system is one that is accessible, takes care of all the diverse needs of its citizens and embraces technological innovation. Young people are taking leadership, moving beyond traditional approaches towards healthcare to increase accessibility for vulnerable communities. There is need to build an infrastructure that supports our initiatives that are challenging stigma.

## Recommendations:

- **It is important to adopt technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones and blockchain for health, particularly when communities are widely spread out or in remote areas that lack infrastructure. Doing so can also help address human resource gaps in terms of numbers and expertise. The integration of new tech solutions will increase the reach and impact of service providers.**
- **Governments, civil society and international donors should make malnutrition a priority and scale up interventions. When children suffer from stunting, their capacity to learn is reduced, and investments made into their education yield less successful results. This perpetuates poverty and undermines sustainable development.**
- **Governments must increase the allocation of resources to establish reliable systems of universal health coverage. Average investment in health globally is 10.2 per cent of GDP. However, it is between only 5 and 6 per cent in low-to-middle-income countries and below 4 per cent in lower-to-middle-income where healthcare needs are higher.**
- **Issues that attract high stigma such as mental health and sexual and reproductive health need attention and innovative story-based interventions. They must be a key part of universal health coverage. Young people are affected by stigma and lack decision-making power to effect change in our interest. Access to evidence-based and stigma-free information and health services will help young people to make informed and healthier life decisions.**

## GOALKEEPERS YOUTH ACTION ACCELERATOR STORIES



**Cuthbert Mukhora** has entered into a partnership with the Food and Nutrition Council in **Zimbabwe**. Together, they will establish nutrition information systems, which will help in the coordination and prioritisation of interventions.



**Dumisani Kaliati** is expected to build 10 low-cost drones by December 2019. These drones allow for the delivery of medical diagnostic tools such as HIV and pregnancy tests in remote areas of **Malawi**. Forty local drone operators have been trained, and a survey has been done in several communities. He also has access to the UNICEF drone corridor in Malawi, where he can test his solution. He is also working with local universities to make sense of drone data.



**Nay Lin Tun** has been gathering data on the healthcare needs of remote communities and conflict-affected areas in **Myanmar**. He has set up a system where patients in emergency situations or outbreak settings can be referred to humanitarian health organisations to receive treatment.



**Dumiso Gatsha** has documented the experiences of young LGBTQI+ people across **Botswana**, holding over 100 hours of conversations and storytelling sessions with community members, including health-related stories. The content has been shared through diverse national and international media, seeking to promote LGBTQI+ agency, visibility and inclusion in public health and gender policy-making.



# TAKING CLIMATE ACTION

Young people are at the forefront of delivering climate action, including by coordinating weekly climate strikes and developing new climate-smart technologies. But governments and businesses need to step up and act before it is too late, before whole populations will be wiped out by rising sea levels or extreme weather occurrences. Climate change will affect everything and everyone on this planet; young people cannot fight this threat alone. In the words of Greta Thunberg, "Instead of looking for hope, look for action. Then, and only then, hope will come. We can't save the world by playing by the rules, because the rules have to be changed. Everything needs to change, and it has to start today."

## Recommendations:

- **Young people are important stakeholders in and drivers of climate action. Governments should take steps to engage meaningfully and partner with youth-led climate movements to create greater awareness of the climate crisis at community and national levels. Young people have the knowledge and networks to catalyse action.**
- **The most vulnerable and marginalised populations are already suffering most from the impacts of the changing climate, and this situation will only get worse. Governments need to listen to the people most affected, to understand their lived experiences and co-create sustainable solutions that will help to protect them.**
- **Business as usual is not an option. More young people than ever before are developing climate-smart technologies, and what these young people need from governments and businesses is greater investment towards testing and scaling new, innovative technologies that utilise renewable, natural resources.**
- **Businesses and corporations that continue to pollute our planet, destroy nature and threaten the livelihoods of our indigenous communities must be regulated and penalised. Governments that signed up to the Paris Climate Agreement must deliver on their promises to determine, plan and regularly report on the contribution that they undertake to mitigate climate change.**

## GOALKEEPERS YOUTH ACTION ACCELERATOR STORIES



**Rahim Abas Kiobya** is developing solutions to health and climate change challenges in **Tanzania**. He campaigns for alternatives to the use of charcoal and firewood as household energy sources. In doing so, he prevents deforestation and helps avoid diseases caused by household air pollution. The funds and technical support received through Goalkeepers in 2019 have provided him with the freedom to develop an innovative project that otherwise might not have been endorsed.



**David Watson Mwabila** has helped to reduce deforestation by 95 per cent in four rural communities in **Zambia** by providing low cost beehives – ZamHives – made from wood waste as an alternative source of income to charcoal production. He has collected 300 stories of young people and women in rural communities and is using them to advocate for the creation of policies to build resilience and promote inclusion in the fight against climate change.



# LEADING A DATA AND TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION

Young people are society's leaders when it comes to designing and developing new data and tech solutions to advance sustainable development. However, youth-led solutions need investment and partnerships to ensure greater scalability and impact if they are to accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs.

## Recommendations:

- **National curriculums are falling behind when it comes to data and technology advancements and learning. Governments need to establish education programmes that promote and deliver the advancement of data and tech skills for young people.**
- **Data shouldn't just be accessible to the urban, male elite in our societies. Access to data is about power and all people should have an opportunity to gain skills and have access to datasets and technologies that can enable a better, more sustainable life. Infrastructure should be put in place that will bridge the digital divide and create open data platforms, ensuring that women, rural populations and other excluded communities can have access to information.**
- **The data and technology revolution that we need to advance sustainable development will rely on flexible, funded and long-term partnerships between different sectors, including youth networks, universities, tech industries, corporations and governments, but crucially, meaningful partnerships must be created with communities. Communities know better than anyone the challenges they face and the solutions they need, and their voices should directly inform the kinds of data and tech solutions that are needed.**
- **We live in a society of surveillance and incidences of attacks on privacy, and the theft or misuse of personal data are becoming more common. Public policies are needed that will specifically protect our human rights in relation to technology. These policies must further seek to restrict data monopolies by tech giants that are threatening democratic freedoms.**
- **Governments should prioritise and invest in the strengthening of their in-house data and tech knowledge, and ensure that this understanding and insights are shared with those who are drafting and implementing policies across government departments, in order to ensure a coherent approach to creating scalable solutions.**
- **Innovation requires flexibility. While established corporations often have the means to bear the governmental fees and permits required to test and develop new technologies, these represent an important obstacle for young people who want to innovate. Governments should make it easier for young people to test new ideas.**

## GOALKEEPERS YOUTH ACTION ACCELERATOR STORIES



**Ximena Arrieta** has coordinated interviews with 35 **Mexican** gender-based organisations to evaluate their digital capabilities and data literacy. The diagnosis includes insights about how they collect, analyse and visualise data for advocacy processes. She has launched the Campaign Camping Project, which provides organisations with tech and data skills needed to carry out advocacy campaigns through innovation, agile methodologies and civic technology – technology that enables participation.



**Onimisi Atere** has developed a tech solution in **Nigeria** that collects agricultural data and links farmers with produce buyers. As part of his programme, he has trained almost 300 farmers on the use of tech and mobile phones through onsite training and the distribution of flyers. This is helping to bridge the digital gap in the communities he works with.



**Fabienne Rafidiharirina** is harvesting and processing data on different themes in **Madagascar**. She is visualising her findings in animated videos and using them to hold policy-makers accountable. Through her project, she is also advocating for data literacy and availability, and is currently working with the government in the creation of an open data policy.



**Lina López** has launched a campaign in **Colombian** universities and with rural farmers, and is advocating for collaboration between them. While agricultural solutions are being developed in universities, they hardly ever reach local farmers, who often work in very challenging situations. Young students, professors and researchers have been reached through this campaign and many have shown their commitment to develop research in rural areas and work with farmer communities.