

Mukai-Vukani (**Wake up and get involved**) Project

A Project inspired by the Film "Toindepi" (Where are we headed?)

This film focuses on the daily struggles of young Zimbabweans caught up in a brutal socio-economic and political environment. Life in Zimbabwe is seen through the eyes and efforts of Moreblessing, a young man living in Harare's Hatcliffe Extension, a slum in the northern part of the city, residents of which are twice or more victims of forced evictions. The film peeps into Moreblessing's life as a social activist, community volunteer and family breadwinner. It focuses on his ambitions, and the challenges he faces along the way. Central to the film is how Moreblessing continues to build on his dream to be a politician regardless of the daily challenges. Moreblessing's reflections are augmented by voices and sneak peeks into the lives of two other young people in the same community. Regardless of their hard work, desires and ambitions in life, the system denies them any opportunity: it drains their energy and efforts leaving them disfranchised and hopeless. The story gives us an insight into life, thoughts and challenges of young people in a situation where their right to civic participation is void. By highlighting their day to day routines, the film elevates the voices, thoughts and ambitions of these young people as they endeavour to transform a harsh status quo into a brighter future. In the face of overwhelming challenges, young people's countless frustrations beg for an answer to the question, "Where are we headed?" (**Synopsis by Tenford Chitanana**)

Introduction

Zimbabwe is in a historical transformative process which can be stalled if critical masses do not contribute to the processes. Key to the current context is the constitution making process and the pending elections. Both events are historic and they will immensely affect the future generations. Having realized that young people are the key to influencing these decisions, the project targets young people of all backgrounds as the key recipients of the messages. The Project is titled *Mukai-Vukani* (Shona and Ndebele expressions which means 'Wake Up'). This initiative is, therefore, a Project Wake Up initiative, calling young people to become aware of what is happening and actively get involved in the transformation of their nation.

AIM

The Project is aimed at building a vibrant grassroots based movement of young people actively taking part informing, informing and contributing to transformation and development of their nation through non-conventional mobilisation, participation and advocacy approaches.

Strategy of the Project

This is a Campaign based initiative that uses Arts (storytelling), Peer to Peer Forums and Social Media to mobilise young people into Action. It combines performing arts with mass-mobilisation, seminars, film screenings and community voluntary work.

The project motivates young people to take a centre stage now and bear responsibility for creating a thriving country and a better tomorrow. It challenges the culture of apathy which currently typifies the state of young people in Zimbabwe. Inspired by the new global social movements, Project Mukai-Vukani taps on the abilities of young people to transcend physical boundaries in terms of social action and campaign for change and transformation.

Target Group: Young People in Zimbabwe

Rationale - Despite being the larger component of the population in Zimbabwe, young people remain systematically disenfranchised and demobilised. The accumulative effect of years of

marginalisation, discouraging circumstances have created a generation of young people who are disengaged and not interested in participation in civic, community and national development issues. Where they have taken part young people have usually been uninformed and often manipulated by politicians. Their numbers are exploited for sloganeering and mobilisation while their energy is used in political violence. Young people are in need of hope; they need information, solidarity and a strong sense of belonging which the current political and economic environment doesn't offer them. We believe that reaching out to and engaging young people in various communities will open doors for them to fully participate in their communities through social activism, advocacy and volunteerism, thus promoting creative, positive, and deeply rooted social change.

Note: The project intends to reach out to traditionally out of reach communities using non-conventional information dissemination and participatory community mobilisation strategies as a way of building a popular movement that actively participates in nation building.