

THE ACCOUNTABILITY BRIEF

CHECK THIS OUT

- SADC People's Summit | Durban
- Regional Policy Lab | The Youth Accountability Roundtable
- Community Mural Painting
- International Youth Day Commemoration



SADC People's Summit | Durban

YAI joined young people and civil society actors at the 2026 SADC People's Summit, contributing to regional conversations on youth participation, economic justice, natural resource governance and accountability. The Summit provided a platform to amplify youth demands and push for a more people-centred SADC



The Youth Accountability Roundtable

As part of the Regional Policy Lab, YAI brought young people and stakeholders together to critically engage with the Youth Bill and what it means for meaningful youth participation in Zimbabwe. The discussion explored opportunities to strengthen the Bill, ensure young people's voices are reflected in policy and move beyond symbolic consultation towards meaningful participation.



International Youth Day | Youth, Resources and Our Future

This International Youth Day, YAI Africa reflected on the role of young people in shaping the governance of our natural resources. In a resource-rich region like Southern Africa, youth must be at the centre of decisions on who owns, manages and benefits from our minerals and other natural resources. Resource wealth should translate into decent jobs, opportunities and sustainable development for young people not deepen inequality and exclusion.



EDITORIAL NOTE

This month, the Youth Accountability Initiative pushed that question across policy spaces, regional platforms and communities, challenging systems that continue to make decisions about young people, natural resources and public resources without meaningful youth influence.

From the 2026 SADC People's Summit in Durban to the Regional Policy Lab: Accountability Roundtable on the Youth Bill, YAI created spaces for young people to move beyond being consulted to actively shaping the policies and decisions that affect their lives. At the regional level, YAI amplified young people's demands for natural resource wealth to deliver decent work, economic opportunities, community benefits and shared prosperity rather than deepen inequality and exclusion.

At home, the conversation continued through the Regional Policy Lab: Accountability Roundtable, bringing young people and stakeholders together to interrogate the Youth Bill and push for stronger, more meaningful youth participation. In Mutare, YAI took accountability beyond the policy room and into the community through a creative mural initiative, demonstrating how art can become a powerful tool for environmental advocacy, civic participation and collective action.

Across these engagements, one message remained clear that young people are not asking to be included as an afterthought. They are demanding to be part of shaping the decisions, resources and futures that belong to them.

YAI continues to bring conversations that matter — conversations on accountability 🙌





SADC PEOPLE'S SUMMIT | DURBAN SOUTH AFRICA



Youth Accountability Initiative Africa participated in the 2026 SADC People's Summit in Durban, South Africa, joining youth-led organisations and civil society actors to advance a youth-centred vision for a more just and accountable Southern Africa. Supported by TrustAfrica, YAI was represented by Munashe Masiyiwa who serves as the Team Lead and Nodeshah Maingehama, Digital and Communications Lead

Under the theme “The People's SADC: Strengthening People's Solidarity in a Polycrisis of Debt, Inequality, Conflict, Extractivism and Climate Change,” YAI joined young people and civil society organisations in challenging the realities of a resource-rich region where many young people continue to face unemployment, inequality and limited opportunities.



Through the “What Youth Want” session, young people called for a different future, one where SADC's vast natural resource wealth creates decent employment, economic opportunities, meaningful youth participation and shared prosperity, rather than reinforcing the region's resource curse.

The session brought together youth voices around governance, accountability, inclusion and digital rights, culminating in a regional Youth Communiqué carrying young people's demands into the broader SADC People's Summit process and towards SADC Heads of State

REGIONAL POLICY LAB: THE YOUTH ACCOUNTABILITY ROUNDTABLE



On 4 August 2026, the Youth Accountability Initiative (YAI), through its Regional Policy Lab, convened its first Youth Accountability Roundtable in Harare, bringing together youth organisations to interrogate the proposed Youth Bill and strengthen collective youth advocacy.

Held in partnership with WELEAD Africa, Impact Centre and the Youth Democracy Network, the Roundtable brought together diverse youth voices to engage on the proposed Youth Bill and the Shadow Youth Bill developed by WELEAD through the What Youth Want Project.

The discussions reflected a growing awareness among young people of the Youth Bill and a rising demand for meaningful participation in shaping legislation and public policy. Participants challenged the culture of consultation without influence, emphasising that young people must not only be heard but must have a meaningful role in shaping decisions that affect their lives.

The Roundtable strengthened collaboration among youth organisations and laid the groundwork for coordinated advocacy to ensure that youth priorities are reflected in legislation. The message was clear: nothing about young people should be decided without meaningful youth participation.

COMMUNITY MURAL PAINTING |MUTARE



YAI Africa, in collaboration with Global Shapers Community – Mutare Hub, supported by Hivos and ActionAid, brought young people together at Simukai Vocational Centre in Mutare for a community mural painting activity under the theme “Painting Our Future: Youth, Environment and Accountability.” The activity created an interactive space for young people to reflect on environmental stewardship, youth participation and the responsibility of communities to protect their natural resources.

Through discussions and creative expression, participants transformed these conversations into a public mural carrying messages on environmental protection, accountability, positive choices and youth-led action. The initiative demonstrated how art can be used as an accessible tool for civic education, giving young people a visible platform to express their concerns and collectively envision a more sustainable and accountable future.

