

# WHITE PAPER

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## **BUILDING A TECH-ENABLED INTEGRITY ECOSYSTEM THROUGH DIGITAL SKILLS, PLATFORMS AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

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Presented at: International Anti-Corruption Day Youth Dialogue Meeting by Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ)

Side Session by Youth for Innovation Trust (YIT)

**December 2025**

Compiled by: Thando Gwinji



# YOUTH FOR INNOVATION TRUST

Youth for Innovation Trust (YIT), is a collective of active global citizens advancing youth development through social, ICT and green innovations. YIT works with young people, communities, civil society, and institutions to strengthen civic participation, and amplify marginalized voices, particularly young women, adolescent girls, youth with disability, and LGBTQ+ communities.

At the intersection of governance, technology, and youth empowerment, YIT supports initiatives that build youth competencies in digital skills, civic-tech innovation, and social accountability. Through community hubs, training programs, research, advocacy, and creative platforms, YIT enables young people to actively participate in shaping governance processes and holding institutions accountable.

This white paper is developed as part of a YIT-led side session at the Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ) International Anti-Corruption Day event, held at the Bulawayo Club. The side session situates youth, technology, and digital skills as central pillars in building a tech-enabled integrity ecosystem in Zimbabwe. By convening practitioners, youth leaders, and civil society actors, YIT seeks to contribute practical insights and grounded experiences that strengthen national anti-corruption efforts through participatory, technology-driven approaches.

## CONTACTS

Email: [programs@youthforinnovation.com](mailto:programs@youthforinnovation.com)

Website: [www.youthforinnovation.com](http://www.youthforinnovation.com)

# INTRODUCTION

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## UNITING WITH YOUTH AGAINST CORRUPTION: SHAPING TOMORROW'S INTEGRITY

Corruption continues to weaken service delivery, trust, and economic growth. At the same time, young people are digitally active but largely excluded from accountability processes. Technology presents an opportunity for transparency, participation, and evidence-based reporting.

This white paper brings together presentations delivered as part of the YT side session to present a consolidated perspective on building a tech-enabled integrity ecosystem in Zimbabwe.

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# BUILDING A TECH-ENABLED INTEGRITY ECOSYSTEM

**Presentation by Nkosikhona Dibiti**

**Community Podium**

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While corruption continues to weaken service delivery, trust & economic growth in Zimbabwe, technology presents an opportunity for transparency, participation & evidence-based reporting. Young people are digitally active but excluded from accountability processes. This therefore calls for an integrated environment where: citizens, government & civil society interact digitally; Data flows openly & securely, Tech tools detect, prevent & expose corruption, youth drive civic-tech innovation and institutions respond and improve based on evidence. This defines what is meant by a Tech-Enabled Integrity Ecosystem.

Zimbabwe currently has Digital Governance tools that promote accountability through eliminating human contact and chances of bribery. These include; the Electronic Government Procurement (eGP) which is an e-procurement to reduce manipulation, the ZIMRA TaRMS Platform which is a digital tax submissions & compliance, the eRecruitment Portal which is an online recruitment for transparency and the ZimServices (PFMS) for digital payments & government services.

However, there are gaps and limitations in the currently existing digital governance tools as they are; fragmented (no interoperability), poorly publicized, have limited youth engagement, their data is not publicly available (lack of Open Data), there are weak feedback loops (no response mechanisms), there is also a risk of digital exclusion (rural areas left behind) and there are cyber security & privacy vulnerabilities.

A Tech-Enabled Integrity Ecosystem Requires

- *Interoperability* → systems should talk to each other
- *Open Data Framework* → public access to non-sensitive datasets
- *Digital Accountability Platforms*
- *Civic-Tech Innovation Hubs*
- *Youth Competency Development (AI, Data, Coding)*
- *Government–Civil Society Collaboration*

Youth play an integral role in building a tech-enabled integrity ecosystem through creating civic-tech apps, crowdsourcing corruption cases, data analysis & visualization, digital storytelling for accountability, monitoring public service delivery and promoting online transparency culture.

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# BUILDING DIGITAL SKILLS & PLATFORMS THAT STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS INSTITUTIONS

**Presentation by Racheal Voko Ncube**

**Skill a Community**

Zimbabwe should be concerned about building digital skills and platforms because the digital now governs the physical as digital footprints shape public life. While digital spaces are our new community, this should spill over to governance issues in order to influence transparency and accountability. Unfortunately there is still a serious digital divide as some still lack access to internet infrastructure and resources regardless of the 95% mobile penetration (DataReportal; 2025). Regardless, Zimbabwe currently has 16.2million active digital connections which mean that participation in shaping digital spaces matters.

In building digital platforms it is important to ensure that the platforms are made accountable through; open-source elements, clear reporting mechanisms, block & delete protections and community tracking tools. Digital Platforms have to be grounded by community experiences; therefore, youth need to be supported in hosting, ideas labs, community dialogues, hackathons, and tech competitions to frame their participation.

While youth actively become creatives, innovators, and enthusiasts they need to develop key digital skills that include: Cyber security & Digital Safety, AI & Data Management, Coding & Software Development, UI/UX Design as well as IT Support & Digital Marketing.

These skills interconnect as; Creatives imagine solutions → Developers build platforms → Cyber security protects users → Storytellers communicate impact → Advocates promote platforms. The teamwork and collaboration strengthens accountability. One can be a creative or a visionary and others can be movers or even just supporters

It is recommended that Zimbabwe develops youth-led technological systems that complement government platforms and enhance transparency. The use of real stories, documentation, and storytelling will address misinformation and build digital trust. In the same vein, there is need to strengthen policies on cyber security, data protection, and responsible data handling.

# KEY ISSUES RAISED

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## **1. Limited Awareness and Accessibility**

Many young people are not aware that government digital platforms already exist. Although these platforms are meant to minimize human interaction and reduce corruption, awareness and effective usage remain low. Information on public portals (e.g., NASSA, ZIMRA) is not easily accessible despite citizens contributing significant funds to these institutions.

## **2. Fragmented Digital Systems**

Systems are highly interoperable where revenue collection is involved, but not when citizens need to access services. Example: NASSA has its own platform, ZIMRA has its own, yet citizens often still have to talk to officials and become vulnerable to corruption. Existing technologies such as municipal websites, body cameras, and other digital tools often have technical errors and are not user-friendly.

## **3. Digital Literacy and Understanding of Technology**

There is a need to build a common understanding of technology so that citizens can use it to simplify their lives. Technology should make services easier and more accessible, not increase confusion or dependency on intermediaries.

## **4. Surveillance vs Accountability**

There is a growing concern about digital surveillance and invasion of privacy. At the same time, monitoring corruption through technologies like cameras is crucial. Citizens struggle to distinguish between tools for safety and tools for surveillance.

## **5. Digital Behaviour and Social Dynamics**

The digital space increasingly influences physical decision-making (e.g., WhatsApp groups warning communities to avoid roadblocks). Digital platforms must be safe, transparent, and accountable.

## **6. Digital Security and Protection**

There is a need to strengthen security to protect citizens from cyber-attacks. Reporting mechanisms, appeal systems, and whistleblower protection remain weak or non-existent. Users constantly need to be cautious about their surroundings and how they use digital platforms.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Strengthen and Innovate Digital Systems

It is recommended that Zimbabwe develops youth-led technological systems that complement government platforms and enhance transparency. Use these systems to monitor inconsistencies in existing digital government services.

## 2. Investment in Youth Skills and Innovation

Fund youth-led innovations in accountability, including data management, petitioning tools, documentation, and digital storytelling

## 3. Policy and Regulatory Reform

Strengthen policies on cyber security, data protection, and responsible data handling. Ensure tech companies are accountable for how they manage citizens' information.

## 4. Counter Misinformation and Disinformation

The use of real stories, documentation, and storytelling will address misinformation and build digital trust.

# ABOUT THE RESOURCE PERSONS

**NKOSIKHONA DIBITI**



Nkosikhona Dibiti is a Zimbabwean media practitioner, social innovator, and civic leader passionate about harnessing storytelling and technology to advance social change. He serves as the Founder and Executive Director of Community Podium, a nonprofit media organization amplifying marginalized voices and promoting civic participation through participatory journalism and digital storytelling.

**RACHEAL VOKO NCUBE**



Racheal Ncube is an award-winning poet, digital rights advocate from Zimbabwe. She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Skill A Community, an arts-based initiative established in 2021 that empowers women with creative skills and knowledge to advance gender equality, climate action, and digital safety. Racheal also serves as an Internet Society Youth Ambassador, promoting online safety and digital inclusion globally.