

# Global Platform Zambia: A Living Example of Youth-Led Democracy in Action



from Careen Samatamba Global Platform Zambia (GPZ) stands as a vibrant learning and action space where young people reimagine democracy not as something distant or abstract, but as a lived, collective practice rooted in rights, participation, and social justice.



Mural from the entrance area of Global Platform in Lusaka.

## 1. Our Space for Collective Action

At GPZ, democracy begins with access to space. Young people are given the opportunity to organize, express their views, and take part in shaping solutions for their communities. GPZ fosters collective action, empowering youth to identify common challenges and work together to address them. This practical experience in participation mirrors the very essence of democratic governance voice, inclusion, and accountability.

## 2. Empowering the Frontline of Change

GPZ believes that democracy flourishes when people at the frontline of social change are supported. Through capacity development, coaching, and security, young activists are strengthened to continue their advocacy confidently. This approach not only nurtures leadership but also ensures that democratic participation includes those most affected by injustice.

## 3. Rethinking Activism for Modern Democracy

In an era where activism takes new forms, GPZ provides tools and inspiration for creative, innovative advocacy. From digital campaigns to community-based mobilization, the Platform encourages experimentation and new ideas, making democratic engagement relevant to today's generation.

## 4. Linking Struggles Across Borders

Democracy is about solidarity, and GPZ connects young activists locally, regionally, and globally. By linking similar struggles and promoting collective strategizing, the Platform helps build a sense of global citizenship reminding youth that democracy does not stop at national borders.

## 5. Human Rights at the Core

Guided by the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), GPZ integrates empowerment, solidarity, alternatives, and campaigning into all its work. This approach teaches that democracy is not just about elections, it's about dignity, equality, and the power to challenge unjust structures.

## 6. A Hub for Learning and Leadership

Through training on feminist leadership, democratic governance, climate justice, and movement building, GPZ builds the next generation of democratic leaders. Initiatives like the Research and Policy Analysis Corner, Youth Dialogue Program on SDGs, Climate Café, Fair Share, and Youth Mental Health Space show that young people can lead, create, and sustain democratic spaces.



Art in the courtyard of the Global Platform site in Lusaka.

## Tasks

1) Work in groups to create a collage depicting the spaces you are free to design. Show how you would fill these spaces.

2) Would you like more spaces to take action together? Write to your local community/city and local politicians about this.