

GETTING STARTED

THIS GETTING STARTED TOOL HAS BEEN WRITTEN TO SUPPORT YOU AS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO COME UP WITH YOUR OWN VIBRANT CHILD AND YOUTH LED GROUPS.

GUIDE FOR
ESTABLISHING CHILD
AND YOUTH LED
GROUPS

Getting Started- Creating a Child Led Group

Thinking of setting up a child led group? That's great news!

Clubs are the lifeblood of child and youth participation in Zimbabwe which is why we want to provide a helping hand. This guide is jam-packed full of guidance and free to download policies and planning tools.

But, first things first, we've picked out the 8 essential steps to get you started...

Step 1: Decide what your club/group/organization is going to focus on:

- Be clear about what you want for the future of the club/child led group – what do you want the club to achieve? Mission and Vision Statements

Mission statement – this part of your strategy development is your core purpose, the underlying “why” you are climbing the mountain, why you are in business. A mission statement is a declaration of your organization’s purpose and spotlights the business you are presently in and the customer/constituent needs you are presently endeavouring to meet. To build a solid foundation for a successful organization, it is essential to have a written, clear, concise and consistent mission statement that simply explains who you are and why you exist. Keep it short – Peter Drucker would say your mission should fit on a t-shirt.

Your mission statement should serve as a guide for day-to-day operations and as the foundation for future decision-making. Keep these guidelines in mind when writing or evaluating yours:

Vision statement – this statement reflects the specific mountain you are currently trying to climb – the “where.” A vision is a picture of what your organization’s future makeup will be and where you are headed. Vision provides a clear mental picture of what your organization will look like in 5 to 10 years from now. Forming a strategic vision should provide long-term direction, delineate the organizational activities to be pursued and the capabilities the organization plans to develop, and infuse the organization with a sense of purposeful action. It serves as a unifying focal point for everyone in the organization like a North Star. It delineates the future focus and where the organization is going.

- Who are you aiming to reach? (specific target group/ age of membership and number of members)

Step 2: Club Name

It goes without saying that if you're setting up a new club, it needs a name! And your name is important in how you attract members. Make sure your name clearly defines who you are and what you stand for. We urge you to include child led group within/end of your name. Once you have a club name, you can register as a community-based organization, youth association under ZYC, affiliate with RNCYPT, open a bank account, make funding applications and start promoting yourself. its name, its regular venue and its key contacts – we can then add your details to our club directories. This will make it easier for new recruits to find you. Now you are on the map! Hooray!

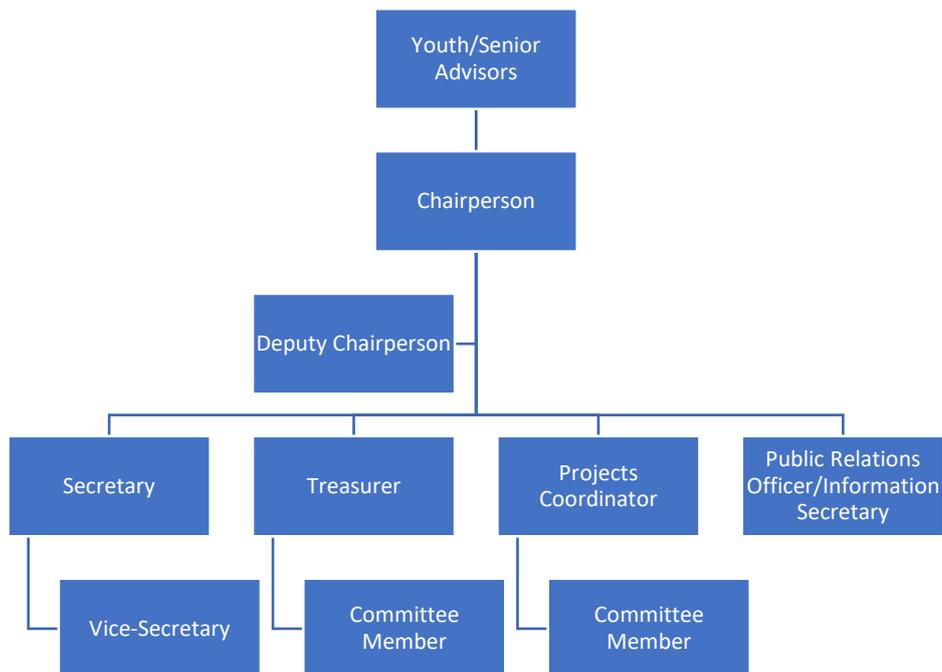
Step 3: Ask for Help!

There are plenty of people out there who are ready and willing to help you. Those you can count on include us RNCYPT and Local Authority. It's a good idea to speak to these trusty partners early on before you make any firm decisions about your new club. It also gives you affiliation and peer support from a wide range of similar or likeminded organizations/clubs

Step 4: Club Structure

This recommended structure has been working for a number of years and we strongly recommend its adoption, though you can design it to your own context. This is a big decision because it affects the work and future of your club. Take time to do your homework before you take the plunge. A clearly defined term of office period must be provisioned for in the constitution.





Youth Advisors- act on an advisory capacity to the club and have no voting power, they can assist as accompanying adult's events and also assist in fundraising and building a solid reputation for the club.

Chairperson- Shall be the head of the club/group/organization, chairs all committee/club formal meetings, chief spokesperson and bridge the gap between Advisors and the club/group.

Deputy Chairperson- acts in the capacity of the chairperson in the absence of the latter with full powers and also serves as the head of the disciplinary committee.

Secretary- heads the administration of the club, taking minutes, drafting agenda, keeps and administers records of the club/organization/group. Can chair meeting in the absence of the chairperson or vice chairperson.

Treasurer- is in control of the club's money, its collection, and disbursement. The treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate books that will enable him/her to give a full financial report whenever requested. The treasure must able to produce financial reports whenever requested.

Projects Coordinator- plans, administers all projects in consultation with the committee, shall also be the head of all steering committees and shall be responsible for reporting in collaboration with the secretary. On fundraising for activities, he/she must work with the treasurer.

Public Relations Officer/ Information Secretary – planning publicity strategies and campaigns, writing and producing presentations and press releases. Dealing with enquiries from the public, the press, and related organisations. Organising and attending promotional events such as press conferences, open days, exhibitions, tours and visits. Manage social media of the organization. Acts as the spokesperson in the absence of the Chairperson

Vice Secretary- is delegated additional responsibilities by the Secretary and can act as secretary with the same powers of the Secretary in the absence of the latter.

Committee Members- acts in the capacity of any committee member except chairperson and the deputy.

NB. The roles defined can be adjusted to suit your own setup and constitution, these serve as a guideline.

Step 5: Constitution

A constitution is also often called a governing document. Every club needs one. It helps things run smoothly. It spells out the rules by which your club will operate and how it will be managed. There is more information – including example constitutions

Once your club has a name, everyone understands its purpose and its legal status has been agreed, you now need a governing document to formalise these decisions – this is called a constitution.

They help ensure smooth and proper running of your club. Every club needs one.

It should include:

- The objectives for your club (e.g. what you want to do or provide for your members)
- The different forms of membership (e.g. adult, junior, social) and perhaps subscription rates
- The rules by which your club will operate -
- How the affairs of the club are to be managed (e.g. by officers and a committee)
- How the members control the club, usually through an meeting schedules.

Constitutions can be lengthy, complex documents, but don't worry there are plenty of templates to help guide you in the right direction.

Be careful though of simply adopting an off the shelf template. It is important to include the points your club feels are appropriate and relevant.

So, don't rush into anything. Take your time to get it right because making official changes to the constitution in the future can be a tricky process

Step 6: Disciplinary Issues

The club/group/organization must have a disciplinary committee headed by the deputy chairperson with the following mandate as will be defined in greater detail by the code of conduct:

The Committee shall be responsible for upholding the highest standard of ethical conduct and behaviour as shall be provisioned for in annex 1.1 the Code of Conduct. A disciplinary committee (5 members) elected by the group, chaired by the Deputy Chairperson shall be in charge for enforcing the Code. The code of conduct shall be the superior disciplinary code and any need that arises shall be addressed forthwith under the statutes of Annex 1.1. The chairperson and deputy chairperson cannot be summoned by the disciplinary committee without the knowledge of the advisors and they must be in attendance for any hearing.

In developing a code of conduct please note:

A well-written code of conduct clarifies an organization's mission, values and principles, linking them with standards of professional conduct. The code articulates the values the organization wishes to foster in leaders and members and, in doing so, defines desired behaviour. As a result, written codes of conduct or ethics can become benchmarks against which individual and organizational performance can be measured.

Additionally, a code is a central guide and reference for members to support day-to-day decision making. A code encourages discussions of ethics and compliance, empowering members to handle ethical dilemmas they encounter in everyday work. It can also serve as a valuable reference, helping members locate relevant documents, services and other resources related to ethics within the organization.

Step 7: Finance Management

The treasurer is the person in the club that has the main responsibility for looking after club finances. They don't need to be a money expert. But it does need to be someone who is organised and can keep a record of money coming in and going out of the club to ensure it can cover running costs. A club is often not able to open a bank account until it has a treasurer so this needs to be one of your first tasks. We strongly urge the club/organization/group to develop and incorporate a finance management system within the constitution, taking heed of acceptable standards of accounting.

Step 8: Meeting Schedule

Meetings allow the club members to discuss on pertinent issues, plan, give feedback and updates therefore we urge meetings to be conducted at a frequency desired by the club/group/organization. Normally these general meetings are conducted once a fortnight at a venue agreed upon by all members.

As may be required by the club constitution an Annual General Meeting can be conducted after every 12 months to elect new members to the committee and plan on the strategy of the club/group/organization.