

Zimbabwean team in Kenya to learn from YEDF, other youth initiatives

Nairobi 22 January 2024 - Youth Enterprise Development Fund has today hosted a delegation from the Republic of Zimbabwe's Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training. The seven officials, led by Permanent Secretary Solomon Mhangla, are in Kenya for a five day benchmarking visit with a focus on youth incubation and production hubs. They were received by YEDF CEO Josiah Moriasi and his management team.

PS Solomon Mhangla, said that Zimbabwe is keen to learn the mechanisms behind Kenya's success in integrating youth into the economic mainstream through government initiatives, such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund. He emphasized the importance of utilizing Africa's large youth demographic to spearhead development across the continent. Mr. Mhangla said that it is imperative that Africa views its youth as a dividend, not a dilemma.

“Our aim should be to harness their potential, creativity and energy for the betterment of our continent,” he said. He revealed that Zimbabwe has a population of 5.4 million youth population, with about 800,000 of them currently involved in mining noting that Zimbabwe seeks to engage more youth in other sectors of the economy particularly farming.

The Youth Fund team made a presentation detailing its establishment, mandate, achievements, challenges and lessons learnt. The Fund also highlighted its support for youth innovations through its commercial infrastructure mandate. "Our mission has always been to empower the youth by providing them not just with financial aid but also with the necessary business support to thrive in today's competitive market. We support youth owned innovations by collaborating closely with institutions of higher learning, assisting them from the inception of their ideas through to prototyping and commercial scaling in line with our mandate of providing financing, entrepreneurship training and market support," stated CEO Josiah Moriasi.

The Zimbabwean officials appreciated Kenya's efforts in supporting its youth. They expressed their admiration for Kenya's achievements in areas like technology adoption, financial inclusion, and the establishment of youth empowerment centers. They also commended the accessibility of Youth Fund services throughout all 47 counties in Kenya. They highlighted the desire for continued interaction and learning from Kenya's model to enrich their own youth empowerment programs.