



BLOG, P2 ZIMBABWE, REFLECTIONS, YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS /// THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

A reflection on the graffiti training workshop held at BaTonga Museum, Binga.

This blog is part of Changing The Story's #YoungChangemakers series. If you are a young person leading alternative actions for civil society building in the Global South and would like to be featured in the series, [get in touch!](#)



Photo Credit: Melis Cin

Written by Willard Muntanga, a young change maker on the Phase 2 Changing the Story project Street Art to Promote Representation and Epistemic Justice among Marginalized Rural Zimbabwean Youth.

We recently had a 5 day workshop about the use of street art to understand the lives and aspirations of marginalised youth in Zimbabwe. The workshop was held at BaTonga museum in Binga Rural District stretching from 29 July to 2 August 2019. It was attended by 12 youth (6 females and 6 males) residing from different places in Binga rural District, Zimbabwe.

African culture and traditional Zimbabwean culture, specifically in Binga, generally excludes youth from public and decision-making roles. Across the district, common challenges include; high levels of early marriages, endemic poverty, cultural decay for BaTonga people

and a general lack of opportunities for better jobs which give them leverage.

The training workshop came at the right time to the right people at the right place to revamp the culture of Tonga people in Binga. The unique part of Tonga culture hinges on the way how it was or it is practiced; only older men and women were involved in partaking in cultural activities, excluding the youth to participate meaningfully in cultural preservation. I believe, through the advent of graffiti artwork this will be erased and (it will) ensure that the youth become part of the groups who preserve the Tonga culture in Binga.

Facilitators and artists took us through the process of graffiti art work presentation and interpretation. The active participation of the participants affixed with their curiosity and interest to know more about the graffiti, had invigorated and empowered the facilitators to extend their skills. This created a platform or dimension where the youth were able to share their heroic history, experiences, achievements and the global challenges of Binga through image (pictorial) presentations on the billboards.

It is salient to note that the workshop has transformed and changed the chapter of living for the youth in Binga as they gained new and amplified skills in art works for the good of their communities. It will make them vigilant enough to speak up to issues which affect them (advocacy) in their realms of life through street or visual arts (talking using art work). The onus is upon the participants (Binga youths) to champion the project so that they cannot lose the skills which they gained through the training workshop. The fact that the workshop brought other dimensions of advocacy or ladder of engagements, it prompted Basilwizi Trust in Binga and BaTonga museum to wish that such workshop should prevail in order to equip the youth with the skills and techniques to address the host of challenges faced by young people in the District.

To me, as I was among the participants I commend that the workshop was convivial and it acted as an eye opener. Over and above, I developed skills in graffiti art work which I didn't have before. These skills will make me to be relevant in our rural communities as I will be able to produce various art products for public consumption. There is more to the (meaning of) the words graffiti art.

TAGS: GRAFFITI STREET ART YOUTH ZIMBABWE