



# SAUTI ZAO SPACE REPORT

**JANUARY - AUGUST**

SAUTI ZAO PROJECT BY LP DIGITAL UNDER THE LAUNCHPAD TANZANIA PHASE ONE REPORT

DECEMBER 2022 - FEBRUARY 2023

PURPOSE OF PROJECT:  
PROMOTING AND PROTECTING YOUTH AND WOMEN'S VOICES ONLINE



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## **1 Contextual Background**

In recent years, the internet and social media platforms have evolved into critical tools for civic engagement and political participation. Individuals can express their opinions and participate in discussions about important social, economic, and political issues in online spaces. However, not all voices are heard and represented equally online.

Tanzania has 80% of its population under the age of 35, who are considered today's and tomorrow's digital users. Digitalization in Tanzania has created unprecedented opportunities for women and youth while also amplifying their voices through online platforms.

Women and youth frequently face barriers to participating in online civic discussions. They may face harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying, which can reduce their ability to speak out and discourage them from participating in public debate. Women and youth may also face online censorship, limiting their ability to express themselves and participate in political and development debates that have a direct and indirect impact on their lives.

### **The following are some of the difficulties identified:**

- In a small survey conducted during the The launchpad Tanzania, 27% of the women surveyed claimed to have been a victim of cyberbullying and were harassed online, while 67% were unsure what cyberbullying was and what actions they could take if they encountered it.
- Out of 627 respondents surveyed in a 2021 study on 'Youth Engagement in Civic Matters through Social Media,' 91% admitted to being active across a variety of social media platforms, but only 45% had ever engaged in a dialogue on civic or development matters through social media.
- The lack of dedicated platforms and spaces for youth to engage in civic matters in delivery and language that they can engage with was highlighted in this survey.
- Youth also insisted on the availability of content and narrative that allows them to engage in a 'youthful' manner in matters of civic engagement and responsibility through online platforms
- Youth also mentioned how online bullying and violence are one of the barriers to them being vocal or engaging in civic engagement through online platforms.

It is critical to include women and youth in these dialogues because they constitute a significant proportion of the population, and their voices and perspectives must be represented in civic engagements to ensure that policy decisions and public discourse are inclusive and representative of all segments of society. By involving youth and women in civic engagements, a diverse range of perspectives and ideas are brought to the table, resulting in more creative and innovative solutions to social, economic, and political challenges.

Engaging youth and women in civic activities empowers them to become active citizens and advocates for their rights and interests, as well as provides opportunities for them to develop leadership skills, build networks, and contribute to social change. Nonetheless, youth and women are our societies' future leaders and decision-makers, and involving them in civic activities prepares them to take on leadership roles and contribute to the development of their communities and countries.

## **2 Introduction**

The Launchpad Tanzania has been implementing a number of digital rights, digital literacy, and digital skills programs for women and youth in various professions. As a result of the numerous challenges that prevent these two groups from fully participating, the Sauti Zao project was created to promote and protect the voices of youth and women on digital platforms. The project has so far covered five regions in Tanzania, including Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Dodoma, Singida, Shinyanga, and Mwanza, and more regions in Tanzania are still to be covered.

### **Project Objectives and Goals:**

- 1. Providing women and youth with the digital knowledge, skills, tools, resources, and support** they need to navigate online spaces safely and effectively.
- 2. Promoting inclusivity in online civic engagements** by ensuring that women's and youth's voices are heard and represented and that online discussions reflect a diverse range of perspectives and experiences.
- 3. To co-create and design a platform** that will accommodate the voices of youth and women while also protecting their identities.
- 4. Through advocacy campaigns and public awareness-raising activities,** advocates and raise awareness about the importance of protecting and promoting women and youth voices online on civic issues.
- 5. Monitor and evaluate the project's impact** on the participation and representation of women and youth in online civic engagements, and use this data to refine and improve its approach over time.

### **Project Activities**

**Activity:** Create a dedicated online platform for civic engagement among youth and women.

**Objective:** Create inclusive and representative online communities and networks for diverse voices, including women and youth, allowing them to engage in advocacy and awareness-raising dialogues to promote the importance of protecting and promoting women's and youth's voices online on civic matters every month on social platforms such as Twitter Space.

Outcomes:

In January 2023, the launchpad Tanzania through #SAUTIZAO project successfully established online platform “Swahili Central” that accelerate civic engagement among youth and women across all platforms. The platform generally provides insights about different development, political and social issues that affects women youth and women directly and indirectly. Through Swahili Central twitter account, we initiated conversation and dialogues through twitter space once per month.

### **3 Month: January**

Topic: Why youth and women do not participate in Civic engagements?

Attendees:

Link: *Link is missing from the timeline*

#### **Context**

In this discussion, our objective was to initiate a conversation to comprehend and evaluate the reasons behind the lower participation of youth and women in civic engagements. LP Digital conducted an online survey to gauge the preferences of women and youth regarding their involvement in civic engagements with 627 respondents.

The findings of the survey revealed that 91% of the respondents acknowledged being active on various social media platforms. However, only 45% of them had ever engaged in dialogues concerning civic or developmental issues through social media. These statistics highlight a significant gap between the level of social media activity and actual participation in civic discourse among youth and women.

During the Twitter space session, youth shared their opinions and identified several reasons why youth and women are reluctant to participate in civic engagements online:

1. Limited understanding among youth and women: There is a lack of sufficient knowledge and awareness about civic engagement among young people and women.
2. Limited opportunities for contribution: Young people often face barriers in expressing their opinions, citing a lack of ethics and self-confidence in voicing their views.
3. Fear of freedom of expression: There is a pervasive fear among youth and women of being abducted or facing repercussions for expressing their opinions freely.
4. Lack of youth-oriented leadership: Youth-focused groups or institutions are often led by non-youth individuals, which diminishes the motivation of young people to actively participate in such organizations.
5. Inadequate educational curricula: Current educational curricula fail to adequately prepare young people to assert themselves, express their ideas, and actively contribute to the development of their country.

6. Lack of confidence among young people: Many young people lack confidence in standing up and presenting their opinions in public forums.
7. Perception of youth as lazy: There is a prevalent stereotype that portrays young people as lazy and uninterested in civic engagement.
8. Unfriendly systems for youth participation: Existing systems for youth participation often discourage young people, as they feel compelled to join political parties to have a chance to express their views, but must adhere to party guidelines.
9. Low priority given to national development discussions: Youth tend to prioritize other concerns over actively engaging in discussions on national development.
10. Exclusionary procedures: Certain discussions follow set procedures that determine whose opinions are considered, leading to the exclusion of young people and discouraging their participation.
11. Lack of mechanisms to channel youth opinions: There is a lack of proper and accessible mechanisms to channel the opinions of young people to relevant authorities for action and decision-making.
12. Inadequate prioritization of youth voices: The governance system and the nation as a whole do not prioritize listening to the perspectives and ideas put forward by young people.
13. Tokenistic debates: Debates involving young people are often conducted merely for the sake of appearance, as the conclusion or outcome has already been predetermined.
14. Influence of upbringing: The foundation laid for young people, starting from the family level and extending to higher levels of society, plays a crucial role in shaping their willingness to engage in civic activities.
15. Lack of awareness about platforms for youth participation: Apart from platforms like Swahili Central that collect youth voices, many young people are unaware of other platforms that can provide them with opportunities to voice their opinions.
16. Media restrictions: The media still faces limitations in providing certain information to the public, which can hinder the dissemination of diverse perspectives and hinder youth engagement.
17. Presence of counter-arguments: Sometimes, young people encounter the presence of individuals who have been trained and paid to oppose their arguments during discussions on development involving youth.

18. Self-imposed social hierarchies: Discrimination and social hierarchies within society contribute to the exclusion of certain youth groups, further limiting their participation in civic engagements.
19. Conducting debates in foreign languages: Debates conducted in languages that are unfamiliar to many young people can create barriers to their meaningful participation.
20. Lack of representation and information in remote areas: Youth in remote areas of the country often face challenges in accessing adequate representation and information relevant to their civic engagement.
21. Filtering of youth opinions: Despite providing their opinions, young people often find that their views are filtered, and only those aligned with the preferences of leaders are acted upon, limiting the true representation of youth perspectives.

## **Conclusion**

The discussion on the lower participation of youth and women in civic engagements illuminated numerous factors that contribute to their hesitance in actively engaging in such activities. It also emphasized the initiatives that can be undertaken to enhance their participation in online civic engagements. Addressing the underlying barriers and making concerted efforts to provide youth and women with equal opportunities and platforms for meaningful engagement in civic matters is of utmost importance. By doing so, we can foster an inclusive environment that embraces diverse perspectives and enables the active involvement of youth and women in shaping the future of our society.

#### **4 Month: February**

Topic: Is there any significance to having a youth council?

Attendees: 305

Timeframe: 1hr 27 minutes

Link:[https://twitter.com/swahili\\_central/status/1634927389372301312?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww](https://twitter.com/swahili_central/status/1634927389372301312?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww)

#### **Context**

The space topic mainly wanted to understand how do youth and women perceive the importance of establishing youth council in Tanzania, and what processes should be taken to ensure that the Youth Council represent and favor the interest of youth and women. The discussion was attended by 305 audience.

#### **Opinions of the speakers**

The establishment of a youth council holds considerable importance, particularly in the context of Tanzania. Here are some key reasons why:

- Provision and Enhancement of Education: The presence of a youth council plays a pivotal role in providing and augmenting education opportunities for young individuals within the nation.
- Facilitating Mutual Support: It enables young people to extend support to one another, especially when it comes to navigating the challenges associated with employment and addressing issues encountered in their professional pursuits and job search endeavors.
- Amplifying Youth Voices: A youth council's existence serves as a conduit to amplify the voices of young people, ensuring that their opinions and aspirations resonate with the leaders of the country.
- Mitigating Social Media Complaints: By offering a platform for expressing grievances, the youth council effectively curtails the extent of complaints aired by young individuals on social media platforms.

However, there are certain challenges and issues that need to be addressed when establishing a youth council:

- Self-centered Participation: One of the primary challenges lies in preventing young individuals from joining the council solely for personal gain, rather than actively contributing to the organization's development.
- Member Identification and Division: Another crucial aspect involves effectively identifying and categorizing the members of the youth council based on a well-defined structure.
- Maintaining Neutrality: Ensuring that the council remains impartial and immune to political influences presents a significant challenge.
- Potential Misuse by Politicians: The youth council runs the risk of being exploited by politicians, particularly during election periods, emphasizing the need for vigilance and safeguarding against such misuse.
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To establish an effective youth council, the following steps can be undertaken:

- Enacting Laws and Establishing Criteria: The first step involves enacting suitable legislation, along with defining the necessary criteria and procedures for selecting the council's leadership structure.
- Diverse Representation: To gain comprehensive insights into various challenges, it is essential to select individuals from diverse sectors who possess a deep understanding of their respective areas.
- Promoting Early Education: Encouraging the education and practical application of council formation, starting from grassroots levels such as primary schools, fosters a culture of youth participation and engagement.

**Conclusion:** Conclusion: The participants recognized the importance of establishing a youth council while acknowledging the need to concurrently address the challenges that impede its effectiveness. The objective of the discussion was to delve into the significance of a youth council, yet it became evident that there are pressing issues within the system that must be resolved beforehand. It was also noted that the existing challenges within the system pose obstacles to the successful implementation and functioning of a youth council. These challenges may include bureaucratic hurdles, lack of resources, limited representation, and inadequate support mechanisms.

## **5 Month: March**

Topic: why women are likely not to participate in civic engagements online?

Attendees: 224

Timeframe: 1 hour 25 minutes

Link:[https://twitter.com/swahili\\_central/status/1642597027652546563?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww](https://twitter.com/swahili_central/status/1642597027652546563?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww)

### **Context**

In this twitter space we adhered to understand why women are likely not to participate in civic engagement topics. According to the observation done by the team of #SAUTIZAO there are fewer women who are willing to participate in civic engagements despite of being active online. The space was interactive, participants shared their views, asked question and other speakers helped with elaborating their views.

### **Opinions of the speakers**

- The timing and location of these discussions make it difficult for women to attend and participate.  
Most of the times women are occupied with household responsibility and fail to make time to participate in these discussions.
- There is a failure to observe any changes in the proposed recommendations.  
Most women are not interested to even follow up on the recommendation and changes on the issues that concern women. Nevertheless, women do not like to raise an issue regarding women and demand changes.
- The effects of discrimination persist, continuously oppressing women.  
One of the biggest challenges that is hindering women is online violence. Online violence that is specifically targeting women especially politicians, public figures and other social media users has scared away women with interest to participate in this conversation with a fear of being bullied, harassed and undermined.
- Women are denied the opportunity to pursue their needs; they are often instructed without considering their ideas. Gender stereotype in our society has made women believe that they don't have a right to speak out about certain things, let alone share their challenges and

proposing solution that is relevant to their needs. Often women ask for a permission from their spouses to be online, thus is hard for them to participate in civic engagement for the fear

- Women are consistently portrayed negatively, even in literature, plays, and poems studied by students, which hinders their involvement in various matters.
- Family and social responsibilities contribute to this issue.
- They are made to believe their capabilities are limited, and men are the ones perpetuating their oppression.
- Men are considered leaders, created differently from women, and are regarded as leaders in all aspects.
- Referring to religion, not everything is permissible for everyone; there comes a point where women must know their place, and men must know theirs.

What steps can be taken to enhance women's involvement in online civic engagements?

- Let us foster a secure environment that encourages women's participation in civic engagements, beginning at the household level.
- Address gender-based online violence and establish safe spaces for women in the digital platforms.
- Schools and religious leaders ought to impart education about the significance of women's engagement in online civic discourse.
- Women should refrain from passively waiting for others to represent them and take an active role instead.

**Conclusion:**

Conclusion: The Twitter space session on women's participation in online civic engagements shed light on several factors that contribute to their limited involvement. The discussions revealed that timing, location, household responsibilities, fear of online violence, gender stereotypes, negative portrayals, and societal expectations are significant barriers that hinder women's active engagement in these discussions.

## **6 Month: April**

Topic: How can digital platforms be utilized to enhance the participation of youth and women in voting?

Attendees: 608

Timeframe: 2hrs 11 minutes

Link: [https://twitter.com/swahili\\_central/status/1652690934138544132?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww](https://twitter.com/swahili_central/status/1652690934138544132?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww)

### **Context**

As we approach the upcoming significant election in Tanzania, there is a concerning lack of participation among the youth and women when it comes to voting. According to Mwananchi magazine, in the 2020 election, nearly 14 million eligible individuals did not exercise their voting rights, despite 29 million being registered to vote. This decline in turnout among youth and women compared to previous election years has raised alarm bells, highlighting a significant gap in the practice of the right to vote.

However, this situation has also sparked a strong desire to explore potential strategies that can be employed to ensure the active participation of youth and women in the upcoming election, thereby safeguarding their civic rights. The discourse has predominantly focused on digital initiatives that have the potential to cultivate interest in voting and revolutionize the election experience in Tanzania

### **Participation from the audience:**

Why Youth and women opt not to participate in National Election?

1. It's just a trend. Copying those who claim that voting is not beneficial.
2. Poor education regarding the importance of voting among young people.
3. Political systems in selecting leaders do not consider who the citizens need as their leader.
4. Flawed system of result delivery.
5. Lack of trust in the electoral commission (vote rigging).
6. Lack of trust in the Tanzanian Defense Force.
7. Insufficient mobilization.
8. Time constraints, long duration of the voting process, pose a barrier for young people.

9. Youth impatience, they seek rapid development after elections, which requires patience.
10. The criteria for leadership candidacy are still inadequate to bring about good leaders. The criterion of literacy alone is insufficient to bring us a good leader thus we don't see the importance of voting.
11. Flawed system of identifying voters.
12. Politicians' visions are not sustainable.
13. Young people fail to recognize the role and authority they have in the decisions they make.
14. Fear among young people in making constitutional decisions.
15. Those in power fail to meet the needs of the voters.
16. Young people are not given opportunities to become leaders.

### **Proposed Solutions:**

1. Take responsibility to address the specific challenges, particularly by providing education to young people about the importance of voting.
2. Rectify the election system of result delivery.
3. Reforms in the Electoral Commission (vote rigging).
4. The Tanzanian Defense Force should rebuild trust with the citizens.
5. Increase the advocacy of mobilization efforts online, as young people spend a significant amount of time on the internet.
6. Utilize electronic systems to reduce time and cost in the voting process.
7. The issue of elections and development requires patience. Young people need to exercise patience after the elections.
8. Non-governmental organizations should unite their efforts to disseminate education on a larger scale.
9. The criteria for leadership candidates should be reviewed.
10. Let's not rely solely on the efforts of the government or political parties to motivate young people.
11. Let's emulate good examples from neighboring countries like Kenya, where they have improved equipment and the entire electoral system in their past elections.
12. Voters should be recognized through various identification documents, including driver's licenses, citizenship cards, etc., as many are issued to individuals aged 18 and above.

13. Ensure that a youth are assured that the vote they cast will change their lives.
14. The Electoral Commission and various organizations should allocate sufficient time to educate voters and also evaluate the education provided.

**Conclusion:**

The lack of engagement in voting among youth and women is a critical issue that must be addressed in order to protect their civic rights. The discussion surrounding this issue has centered on using digital channels to increase their participation in the electoral process. A lack of confidence in the electoral commission, poor result distribution methods, insufficient mobilization efforts, and time constraints throughout the voting process were highlighted as causes for the low turnout. A collaborative effort involving the government, non-governmental organizations, and diverse stakeholders is essential to effectively address these barriers and increasing youth and women engagement.

## 7 **Month: May**

Topic: What methods should be employed to solicit the input of the youth regarding the new constitution?

Attendees: 1131

Timeframe: 2hrs 15 minutes

Link: [https://twitter.com/swahili\\_central/status/1661758506419253248?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww](https://twitter.com/swahili_central/status/1661758506419253248?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww)

### **Context**

The subject of a new constitution has gained significant attention in Tanzania and has been a prominent topic for decades. The need for constitutional reform arose due to the recognition that the previous constitution lacked provisions that were pertinent to the welfare and rights of citizens. This growing demand for change is particularly focused on addressing the following crucial aspects

1. Matters pertaining to the union
2. Establishment of an independent electoral commission
3. Broad allocation of powers to the president
4. Exercise of public authority
5. Protection of human rights and promotion of good governance
6. Inclusion of independent candidates
7. Division of powers (government, parliament, and judicial)
8. Autonomy and independence of the parliament and judiciary

### **Opinions from the audience**

1. Provide education on the importance of a new constitution.
2. Ensure that the issue of the constitution is not politicized.
3. There is a need for guidance on how various groups can participate in constitution-making.
4. Clearly outline the challenges that necessitate the need for a new constitution.
5. Ensure that essential information is shared with the community through easily understandable means, such as short videos and infographics.
6. Power distribution is necessary.

7. People in authority should give young people a chance in this process and ensure transparency.
8. We need the right people to guide us in obtaining a new constitution.
9. Establish a unified platform that represents youth agendas for expressing opinions.
10. There is a need to study the existing constitution to determine what should be recommended for the new one.
11. Political parties should allocate space for their youth groups to contribute their opinions.
12. Academic groups, through TCU & TAHLISO, should gather opinions from young people in universities and schools.
13. Allow various entrepreneurial groups to provide their ideas on the constitution.
14. Open discussions should be held at the regional level, starting from the ward level.
15. The National Youth Council should be utilized to convey the opinions of young people.
16. Young people should be given the freedom to express their opinions.

### **Conclusion**

In light of this interactive discussion, it has become evident that a significant challenge lies in the lack of knowledge among many citizens regarding the previous constitution. However, speakers also highlighted the fact that the need for a new constitution may not be imperative, as even the previous constitution was not thoroughly implemented and explored. Furthermore, the speakers expressed concern that a considerable number of citizens tend to follow the opinions of leaders or individuals advocating for a new constitution, without a clear understanding of the deficiencies within the previous constitution.

These observations underscore the importance of raising awareness and providing comprehensive education to citizens about the existing constitution, its strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement

## **8 Month: June**

Topic: What is your perspective on the main government budget passed on June 15th?

Attendees: 412

Timeframe: 2 hours 31 minutes

Link:[https://twitter.com/swahili\\_central/status/1672958651273818113?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww](https://twitter.com/swahili_central/status/1672958651273818113?s=46&t=3R-kyyCMSLco0lgffirjww)

### **Context**

Recently, the Tanzanian government has approved the budget for the fiscal year 2023/2024. In an effort to engage active online youth and women and promote freedom of speech, Swahili Central through twitter space established a platform for the youth to examine the budget and put forth their suggestions on priority areas for the forthcoming budget. The discussions commenced by providing a concise elaboration on each budget allocation and the corresponding sectors to which the funds were allocated. This approach was implemented to ensure that participants gained valuable insights before expressing their opinions.

### **Opinions from the audience**

1. Budget allocation should be increased to effectively address the needs and aspirations of the country
2. Let's prioritize the budget for developmental ideas: such as infrastructure, healthcare, education, and technology would foster long-term growth and improve the overall quality of life for citizens.
3. Reduce inflation rate, measures and strategies to stabilize prices and control inflationary pressures, as high inflation negatively impacts the purchasing power of citizens and hampers economic growth.
4. Allocate a budget for a new constitution: allocating funds for the development and implementation of a new constitution.
5. Allocating a specific budget for civic education programs: educate citizens, particularly the youth, about their rights, responsibilities, and the importance of active civic participation.
6. Prioritize support for industries in the budget.

7. Participants stressed the importance of prudent and responsible utilization of the budget. They advocated for transparency, accountability, and effective financial management to ensure that allocated funds are utilized efficiently and effectively to achieve the desired outcomes.
8. Increase efficiency in student loan programs. They recommended streamlining processes, improving accessibility, and ensuring fair terms and conditions to enable more students to pursue higher education without financial burdens.
9. Participants emphasized the significance of a budget that supports and promotes the growth of the private sector. They highlighted the role of entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic diversification, and called for measures to facilitate a conducive environment for private sector development.

### **Conclusion**

During this discussion, it became apparent that many participants showed a keen interest in the topic under consideration. However, it was observed that a significant number of attendees lacked a clear understanding and knowledge of the intricacies of budget allocations. As a result, only a few participants actively shared their opinions, while others primarily listened and sought clarification by posing questions.

## 9 **Month: July**

Topic: Are Tanzanians using social media to demand government accountability?

Time Frame: 2 hours

Attendees: 739

Link: <https://twitter.com/i/spaces/1BRKjZZvZrZKw>

### **Context:**

Social media has emerged as a means of communication, not only for individuals but also for organizations, ministries, and various government offices, which have established an online presence to disseminate information and news related to their specific entities. As youth and women are encouraged to actively engage in civic dialogues online, social media has provided a platform to express opinions and demand accountability from the government and other leaders. It has simplified the process of sharing information and offering constructive criticism.

During this discussion, the audience shared their experiences of using social media platforms to express their opinions and call for government accountability. The discussion also touched upon ways to enhance the effectiveness of delivering such criticism and their hopes for a more responsive government

### **Opinion from Audience:**

1. Leaders disregard the opinions of people without big titles, meaning if an issue is raised by an unknown citizen, it is ignored, but if it is raised by people with certain positions or celebrities, it is acted upon.
2. The awareness of citizens demanding accountability from the government exists but not to the extent expected because of fear of being detained. Audience shared that when they share their opinion they are termed as agitators and disruptors of the country's peace
3. There is still a group of youth who do not believe that social media is the right platform to demand government accountability. Since leaders respond poorly and say it's just social media, and they don't care about the topics discussed on the internet.
4. 70% still do not use social media because we have a government that ignores the people's opinions, as leaders have not been elected by the citizens. And a large percentage of citizens

lack civic education, which hinders their ability to hold the government accountable properly

5. Tanzanians have awakened and continue to demand government accountability, but leaders block citizens who demand accountability.
6. The media chooses what news to write or say online, hence it limits participation of women and youth to demand government accountability on digital platforms.
7. The government lacks proper systems for receiving feedback from citizens, and if it exists, it doesn't work properly.
8. The issue of political parties causes confusion in presenting opinions due to differences in policies.

**Audience proposed solutions as follows:**

1. Youth demanding accountability from the government through social media should be responded to properly and not criticized.
2. Leaders should cooperate with citizens by addressing their concerns.
3. Let's use more effective methods in demanding accountability because we cannot reach leaders directly except through social media, which connects us to them. (In a respectful manner)
4. We should invest effort and energy in educating the community, so that when a citizen stands up and speaks, they have arguments that even the government itself will listen to.
5. The law on internet usage needs amendments in certain aspects to enhance citizens' freedom to express opinions about government accountability.
6. Each ministry should be present on social media, and citizens should have access to express their opinions, ask questions, and receive peaceful responses.

**Conclusion:**

while social media has emerged as a valuable platform for civic engagement and accountability, there remain significant challenges and limitations that must be addressed to ensure its effectiveness as a tool for positive change in Tanzania. The path forward calls for a more inclusive and responsive government, greater civic education, and a commitment to upholding the principles of free expression and public participation in the digital era.

## **10 Month: August**

Topic: What factors contribute to prolonged service within government offices?

Time Frame: 2 hours

Attendees: 263

Link: <https://twitter.com/i/spaces/1zqKVPjpmvAJB>

### **Context:**

Through the observations made during the #SAUTIZAO project, we have noticed that there are protracted and complex procedures that must be followed in order to receive services from government offices. These extended processes have had adverse consequences for the service beneficiaries when there are delays, which have been widely discussed and complained about on social media by various individuals.

During this discussion, we reflected on the personal experiences of individuals while receiving these services, and subsequently, the audience shared insights on how these services can be improved by streamlining and expediting the processes involved.

### **Opinion from the Audience:**

1. Lack of service from the relevant officer, such as service from students on practical training (field students). Often, they lack information or the capacity to provide services, leading to lengthy processes or a complete lack of service.
2. Employees are affected by mood swings. Services are provided based on the provider's mood. If they are angry or have any personal or office-related issues, service can be difficult to obtain or completely unavailable. Also, Government office employees lack integrity because they believe their jobs are secure, unlike private offices.
3. Responsibilities rely on a single employee; if they are absent, the service is not easily accessible or completely absent.
4. There is also a problem of lack of privacy; services are provided while the service provider is on the phone, or in the case of hospitals, there may be more than one attendant in an area where only one is needed, leading to interference or the patient's inability to express themselves effectively.

5. Corruption in service delivery, the challenge of youthfulness, and paying extra to get service led many people to wait in queues for service.
6. Call centers (customer service) either do not exist or their performance is not good.
7. The use of outdated systems in service delivery makes the queues even longer. Network issues in government services are a significant obstacle at present.

**Audience proposed solutions as follows:**

1. The government should employ inspectors to monitor the performance of its employees in its offices.
2. The government should increase the number of service providers in government offices.
3. Electronic systems used for service delivery should be improved.
4. The government should invest in better operational systems including service delivery systems should be completed before being introduced to citizens for use to eliminate long service queues.
5. Systems purchased for service delivery should be initially implemented in critical areas.
6. Seek skilled and ethical professionals for service provision in government offices. Regular seminars for service providers in government offices should be conducted to enhance their performance.

**Conclusion:**

To sum up, this topic has shed light on the issue of unskilled and untrustworthy staff working in government offices. As one of the recommendations for improving services, it is suggested that the government should establish a system for auditing government officials to ensure that they possess the necessary qualities to serve customers and service beneficiaries effectively. The audience also emphasized the need for enhancements in the government's operational systems.

## **11 Overall Conclusion**

The primary objective of the Swahili Central platform is to foster civic engagement among youth and women. However, it has been challenging to effectively encourage women's participation in these discussions. It has been observed that in many of these conversations, approximately 95% of the participants are men, which hinders the efforts established to promote women's engagement. Furthermore, the observations reveal that a significant proportion of women who are active on digital platforms demonstrate a lack of voluntary interest in participating in such content. This highlights the need for additional efforts to encourage and motivate women to actively partake in these discussions.

## **12 Recommendation**

To foster women's participation in civic engagement, one potential approach is to organize Twitter spaces exclusively for women. These spaces would provide a platform solely for women to share their views and opinions on specific issues that directly or indirectly affect them. By creating a dedicated space for women, it aims to cultivate an environment that encourages active participation and amplifies their voices. Such initiatives can contribute to addressing the gender disparity observed in previous discussions and empower women to engage in meaningful civic discourse.