



ZuAfrrique 2.0

Impact Assessment Report



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Executive Summary



ZuAfrique 2.0: A Maturing Container for the Human Layer

ZuAfrique 2.0 was a three-week immersive pop-up city organized by AyaHQ in Kilifi, Kenya, returning for a second year as a residency focused on the human layer of Web3 ecosystem building. The 2026 residency convened approximately 40 residents from across the African and global Web3 community for 21 days of co-living, philosophy and skills sessions, weekend excursions, and intentional community design, building directly on the foundation laid in 2025's ZuAfrique 1.0.

This report draws on data from 23 residents who completed the endline impact survey, supplemented by 9 responses to a parallel anonymous feedback form. The 23 respondents represent approximately 64% of the eligible respondent pool, after the AyaHQ organizing team and the research volunteer (4 in total) self-excluded by methodological design. The cohort split 9 returning residents and 14 first-time attendees. While the findings do not extend to non-respondents or the self-excluded team members, they offer a high-resolution picture of how the 2.0 experience shaped participants' sense of identity, relational depth, and forward commitment.

Impact Research Methodology Notes

Survey Timing:

Administered in the final days of the residency, the survey captured reflections from residents still present at the close of the program.

Respondent cohort:

Of approximately 40 residents present at 2.0, 23 completed the survey — an effective response rate of approximately 64% against the 36 eligible respondents. Anonymous and identity-linked respondents likely overlap as populations but cannot be matched at the individual level by design.

Implication:

The findings represent a strong picture of the experience for residents who were present through the close of the program, supplemented by anonymous channel content for sensitive observations.

Three improvements since 1.0:

(1) a parallel anonymous feedback channel ran alongside the identity-linked instrument, surfacing duty-of-care and consent concerns that did not appear in the main survey; (2) participatory instrument design via an Impact Measurement and Management (IMM) workshop during the residency itself, with resident input shaping question selection; (3) a new 9-slot Energy Map matrix tracking respondent energy across the 21-day arc, with explicit non-presence handling.

A full description of design choices, advantages and drawbacks, and bias disclosures lives in the Research Methodology section of this report.

Key Findings

1. A maturing cohort, returning by design.

78.3% of respondents had prior experience with a long-format IRL event (56.5% had attended one or two, 21.7% had attended many); only 21.7% were first-timers. This is a substantial inversion from 1.0, where 61.5% of respondents were attending their first long-format event. ZuAfrique has matured into a community where the majority of attendees arrive already familiar with the format, and 9 of 23 respondents were returning specifically from ZuAfrique 1.0.

2. The residency held the container with sharper edges than 1.0.

Facilitation was rated "Wow! Way beyond expectations" by 73.9% of respondents; community-led session quality by 68.2%; Kilifi as a location by 60.9%; and day-to-day communications by 63.6%. At the same time, food and venue showed meaningful "expected more" signals (21.7% each), and the Community Management battery surfaced clear gaps in onboarding and rules clarity.

3. Mindset shift was the dominant impact signal.

"My sense of what's possible expanded" — 95.7% of respondents rated 5/5; "I reflected about myself in new ways" — 91.3% rated 5/5; "I had at least one tough conversation I'm grateful for" — 82.6% rated 5/5; "I can be my authentic self" — 82.6% rated 5/5. Every respondent (100%) rated their mindset-reflection at 4 or 5.

4. Relational depth deepened across the cohort.

95.7% rated meaningful connections at 4 or 5; 100% committed to follow-up action with someone they met; 100% reported getting out of their comfort zone in a good way; 100% rated gender equity at 4 or 5. The "Tell us about one new connection that mattered" open-end drew 100% participation and was the longest qualitative item in the dataset (avg 223 chars, max 1,335).

5. The Energy Map surfaced a single mid-experience dip and a strong finale.

Respondent energy peaked at the End of Week 1 (Saturday hang night, mean 4.32), dipped sharply at the Middle of Week 2 (mean 3.29, the lowest moment in the matrix), and recovered to a strong close at the End of Week 3 (Sand Dunes excursion and final brunch, mean 4.14, with near-universal closing attendance). This is one of the strongest new contributions of the 2.0 instrument relative to 1.0.

6. The clearest improvement signal is onboarding and pre-arrival communications timing.

The waiver/disclaimer timing item recorded a mean of 2.73 — the single lowest item in the entire instrument — with 54.5% of respondents rating it ≤ 2 . This converges with the longest constructive open-end ("redesign onboarding," n=17 respondents averaging 209 chars), the anonymous feedback channel, and qualitative explanations from the Energy Map. It is the most consistent action signal in the dataset.

ZuAfrique 2.0 demonstrated that the human-layer thesis is durable across cohorts and years. The strongest signals continue to be mindset and relational; the strongest critique signal continues to be operational and communicative. What follows in the full report is a detailed analysis of the resident experience, the dimensions of human-layer impact, and the forward-facing commitments and concerns that should shape ZuAfrique 3.0.

→ Read on for the breakdown of impact findings across three dimensions:

Section 1: Impact on Resident Experience

Section 2: Impact on the Human Layer

Section 3: Future Impact & Program Design

Takeaways and Risks

ZuAfrrique 2.0

Impact Report



Section 1: Impact on Resident Experience

This section explores how ZuAfrigue 2.0 functioned as a three-week residential container for residents: the logistical, environmental, and programmatic conditions of the experience and how those shaped residents' perception of value, novelty, and personal transformation. Where 1.0 found a cohort of mostly first-timers being introduced to the pop-up city format, 2.0 found a maturing community returning to deepen its relationship with the model — and a residency that delivered on most of its core promises while surfacing specific operational areas for 3.0 to address.

Designed Environment: Where the Container Held — and Where It Strained

Quantitative Results — Expectations Grid

(rating "Wow! Way beyond expectations" for each program element):

Experience Element	% Rated "Way Beyond"	n
Facilitation (morning + evening sessions)	73.9%	23
Community-led session quality	68.2%	22
Communications (Telegram, emails, scheduling)	63.6%	22
Kilifi as the location	60.9%	23
Accommodations	50.0%	22
Community-led session quantity / pacing	47.8%	23
Duration (time scheduled, programmed, free)	34.8%	23
Walkability of the location	30.4%	23
Utilities (internet, electricity, water, washrooms)	23.8%	21
Food	21.7%	23
Venue (Gabsgate)	17.4%	23
Transit	10.5%	19

Counter-signals — % rating "I expected a lot more": Food 21.7%, Venue (Gabsgate) 21.7%, Walkability 13.0%, Duration 13.0%, Utilities 9.5%.

Qualitative Themes:

The container held and was felt deeply. At least 10 respondents described the curation, presence, and intentionality of the environment as central to what worked:

"This edition felt a lot more introspective and experiential, truly exceeded all my expectations. The people, the experiences all felt very curated and on point."

"It's different from all other pop up cities I have been to - for me it defined what community means."

"It was such a relief to be in a space where nobody was trying to sell you something or pitch their project."

Specific amenities strained the container. 5 or more respondents named operational quality concerns, most prominently around food, the physical venue, and movement between locations:

"Things handled by the venue like hall, food etc were below standard for me." (main survey)

"The quality of amenities at the location were a little lower than last year's... food can use a little improvement, ACs at session areas to ensure that everyone is alert and attentive throughout, washroom floors being flooded round the clock." (anonymous channel)

"Managing movement between locations. Although the number of sessions was reasonable, going back and forth between the hub and the resort was time-consuming and physically draining, which sometimes meant choosing between attending sessions and taking care of essentials."

Interpretation:

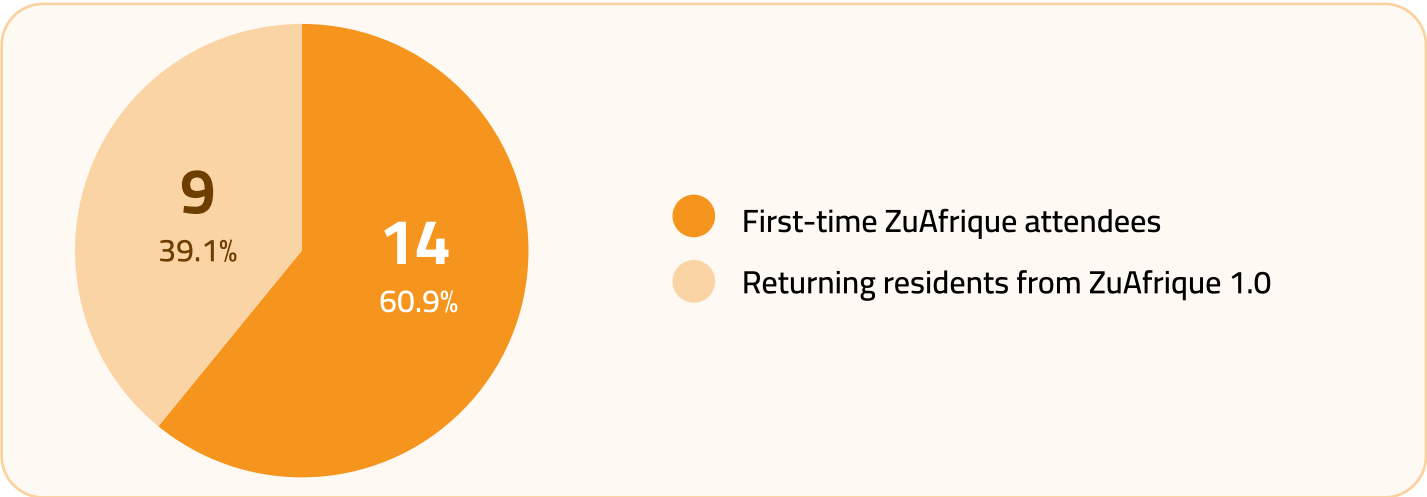
The 2.0 residency delivered strongly on the programming side — facilitation, session quality, and communications were rated "way beyond expectations" by between 64% and 74% of respondents — and on the location choice, with Kilifi affirmed as the right setting. What strained the container was the physical and operational substrate: food, venue infrastructure, and the practicality of movement between the two main session locations. The year-over-year comparison sharpens this: 1.0 reported 69.2% "Wow!" on Food and 80.8% on Facilitation; 2.0 held the facilitation strength (73.9%) but lost meaningful ground on Food (21.7%), with an equivalent share of respondents reporting they had expected more. The container worked; the floor under it shifted.

Returning by Design: A Maturing Cohort

Quantitative Results — Prior pop-up city experience:

Prior IRL Experience	n	%
Yes — one or two prior	13	56.5%
Yes — many prior	5	21.7%
No — this is my first experience like this	5	21.7%

Cohort split by ZuAfrique status



Attendance pattern (respondents reporting presence by week):

Period	Respondents	% of 23
Week 3	21	91.3%
Week 2	19	82.6%
Week 1	17	73.9%
Saturday excursions	16	69.6%
Stayed more than originally planned	4	17.4%
Left earlier than planned	1	4.3%

Year-over-year inversion

1.0 reported 61.5% of respondents attending their first long-format IRL event; 2.0 reports the inverse at 21.7%.

Qualitative Themes (motivations for following through after acceptance):

Returner pull. 5 or more respondents explicitly named the 1.0 experience as the reason for showing up to 2.0:

"The first ZuAfrique was a really transformative experience, looked forward to this one as a result."

"I loved the impact that ZuAfrique 1.0 had on me."

"I have lived ZuAfrique 1.0's truth, i had to come to 2.0"

Curiosity about the human layer. 4 or more respondents named curiosity about the format and the human-layer thesis:

"I was curious about experiencing a different kind of environment one focused on people, not just projects."

"I was curious of who I would be after ZuAfrique in all ways :)"

"The chance to be part of a grounded community, build meaningful connections, and experiment with the human layer framework."

Personal transition and clarity-seeking. 4 or more respondents framed their attendance as part of a personal inflection point:

"With a lot of things that were happening in my life, I wanted a different environment, an environment where I can breathe and be myself without the constant wanting to deliver mentality."

"I was/am in a transitioning period that needed clarity and new that i would get that at zuAfrique."

"I've always been someone who tries to 'extend' my boundaries every year, but this year was specifically about stepping out of my comfort zone."

Interpretation:

The cohort composition of 2.0 is a meaningful evolution from 1.0. Where 1.0 was largely a first-encounter event — most respondents arriving without a frame of reference for the pop-up city model — 2.0 was a return engagement for 78.3% of respondents, including 39.1% who were returning specifically from ZuAfrique 1.0. The implications for the report are twofold: the impact story is no longer one of introducing residents to a novel format, but of deepening an existing relationship; and the population sampled in 2.0 is, on average, more familiar with what the format can and cannot do, which raises the floor on expectations and makes the strong impact signals that did emerge harder-earned than in 1.0. Attendance through Week 3 (91.3% of respondents present) and the 17.4% who stayed beyond their planned duration further suggest that the cohort that arrived stayed, and that the format produced sufficient pull to extend stays for nearly one in five respondents.

Lasting Imprint: What Surprised Them, What Strained Them

Quantitative Results — Adjectives describing ZuAfrique 2.0:

The "3 adjectives" item drew 100% participation. Most frequent single words:

Adjective	Mentions
Transformative / Transformational	7
Intentional	4
Magical	2
Introspective	2

A long tail of unique words appeared exactly once, clustering around themes of:

- grounding (grounding, grounded)
- spiritual depth (spectacular, soulful, magical, mystical, enlightening, alive)
- restoration (restoring, refreshing, recharged)
- reflection (reflective, introspective, clarifying, revealing).

Qualitative Themes — what surprised them:

Connection depth and speed. 6 or more respondents named the speed and depth of human connection as the central surprise:

"How loving everyone has been - didn't sense fakeness or extraction but a true attempt to build relationships."

"How easy it was to connect with people beyond roles or titles. Conversations felt more real and less transactional."

"The amount of care, love and understanding shared."

A non-extractive, non-transactional environment. 4 or more respondents named the absence of pitching, selling, and transactional dynamics as the differentiating surprise:

"It was such a relief to be in a space where nobody was trying to sell you something or pitch their project. In the tech world, you're so used to people trying to extract value from you, but here, everyone was completely in the moment."

"No pressure to fit in just connecting with each other."

"Connecting purely based on being human and no need to skill anything."

Spiritual and transformational depth beyond expectation. 4 or more respondents described the experience as more spiritual or transformational than they had expected:

"It was more of a spiritual / self reflective retreat than a Conference or something."

"How things work. It wasn't just a physical program, it had much deeper things going on."

"The whole integration of the culture sessions and learning from such sessions."

Qualitative Themes — what strained them (hardest part):

Internal and vulnerability work. 6 or more respondents described the internal demands of the experience as the hardest part:

"Disconnecting and grounding myself to feel and experience."

"Facing myself and finding clarity."

"Learning to surrender control and trust that my path will unfold without living and making decisions from my fears."

Programmatic disruption. 3 respondents named in-residency disruption — specifically the abrupt departure of residents during the program — as the hardest part:

"The abrupt shift of energy when people were asked to leave and the lack of commitment to the program. I think that layer should be more prioritized."

"I had to leave for a few days. This was beyond my control."

Operational and logistical strain. 3 or more respondents named heat, location movement, and basic-needs logistics as the hardest part:

"Managing movement between locations... time-consuming and physically draining."

"Sometimes the heat during the sessions was a lot. It made it hard to concentrate."

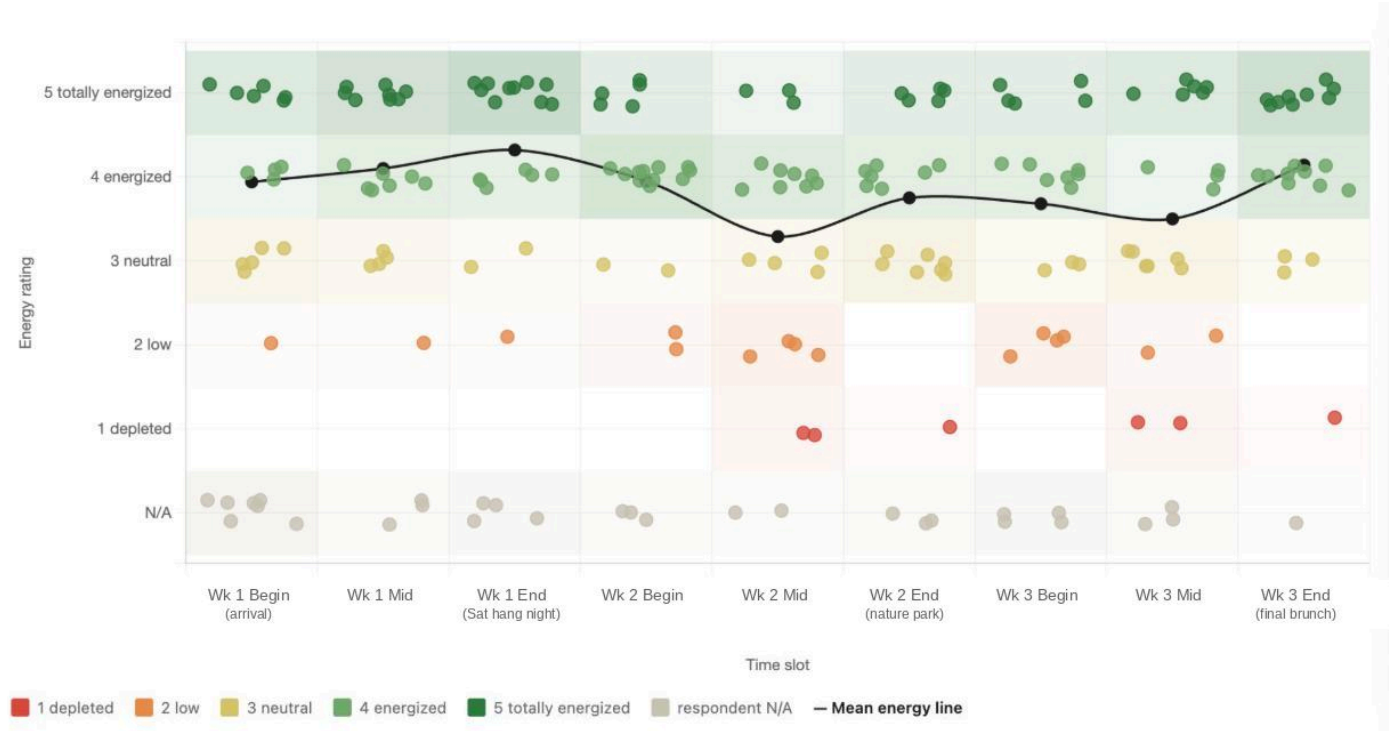
"Walking in the sun. Staying at the hub and having to walk to Gabsgate, especially the first few days when sessions were hosted on both the hub and the resort was a lil overwhelming."

Interpretation:

The lasting imprint of 2.0 reads as a deepening rather than an introduction. "Transformative" remains the most consistent adjective across the cohort (used by 7 respondents), and the qualitative surprises — connection depth, non-extractive culture, spiritual depth — describe the same impact territory that 1.0 surfaced.

What changes in 2.0 is the specificity of what strained residents: internal vulnerability work emerged as a named challenge (a sign that residents engaged more deeply with the program's invitation), while operational logistics and a specific in-residency disruption (the departure of residents during the program) emerged as actionable areas for 3.0 to address.

These are corroborated by the Energy Map's qualitative drivers (see Methodology) and the convergent signal from the anonymous feedback channel.



Section 2: Impact on the Human Layer

This section assesses ZuAfrigue 2.0's impact across the four sub-domains the team built into the instrument: Relationships and Connection, Mindset and Beliefs, Knowledge and Technical Skills, and Mutual Value Creation across program elements. Each sub-domain pairs scaled measures with open-ended reflection. Together they describe what residents named as the experience's deepest contribution: a re-grounding in connection, self-knowledge, and the capacity to lead and contribute that operates beneath technical skill.

Relationships and Connection

Quantitative Results — % rating each statement "Strongly Agree" (5/5):

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5
I believe ZuAfrigue equitably included all genders	23	4.83	82.6%	100%
I made meaningful new connections	23	4.74	78.3%	95.7%
I will take follow-up action with at least one person I met	23	4.74	73.9%	100%
I got out of my comfort zone in a good way	23	4.78	78.3%	100%
I experienced a sense of belonging	23	4.70	78.3%	91.3%
ZuAfrigue was an environment of mutual, circular exchange	23	4.65	78.3%	91.3%
I felt included	23	4.65	78.3%	91.3%
I felt safe	22	4.64	77.3%	86.4%
I saw myself reflected/represented in the cohort	23	4.61	69.6%	91.3%
The ZuAfrigue community was diverse	23	4.39	65.2%	82.6%
ZuAfrigue challenged me in a way that didn't feel good (reverse-coded)	23	3.09	30.4%	43.5%

Callout — the bimodal "bad challenge" item. The reverse-coded "ZuAfrique challenged me in a way that didn't feel good" produced a bimodal distribution: 39.1% rated 1 or 2 (did not experience bad-challenge) while 30.4% rated 5 (strongly experienced bad-challenge). The distribution suggests the experience was not uniform — some respondents found their hardest moments productive, while others experienced challenges that registered as harm. This item should be cross-referenced with the "hardest thing" open-end and the resident-departure theme.

Qualitative Themes:

Connections rooted in shared humanity over professional titles. From the "Tell us about one new connection that mattered to you" open-end (n=23, 100%, avg 223 chars), residents described connections that formed across roles and disciplines:

"I connected with someone who approached life and building from a very human-centered perspective. Our conversations went beyond work and focused more on values, mindset, and personal growth."

"I honestly can't even count how many meaningful connections I made over these three weeks. It felt like every day I was meeting someone who shifted my perspective or taught me something new about myself."

"I met Benaiah, and what stood out to me was how genuine he was. That matters more to me than a possible status that someone might carry."

Connections that reflect identity back. 5 or more respondents described connections that helped them see themselves more clearly:

"Georgina told me that I impacted her life even without speaking to her in 1.0, so when we finally connected, she was excited because she had questions. We bonded over those."

"Rodas shared how a statement I made in passing to her last year when we barely knew each other influenced her in a good way. It made me pay more attention to words I speak."

"Georgina Mwemba's conversations were so intriguing seeing my characters in someone else, though much mature and disciplined."

Specific, concrete follow-up commitments. The follow-up-action open-end (n=23, 100%) produced specific named actions:

"Monthly meetup with Georgina and love sessions with Rodas."

"Build more on the connection and collaborate to keep both relationship and friendship moving."

"Scheduled coffee with a few of them in Nairobi."

Interpretation:

The relational impact data produced the strongest signals of positive impact throughout the assessment instrument. Every relational item except the reverse-coded "bad challenge" registered 4-or-5 ratings from at least 82.6% of respondents, with gender equity, comfort-zone push, and follow-up action commitment all at 100%. The qualitative texture clarifies what produced these numbers: residents named specific people by name, described connections that formed across professional boundaries, and committed to concrete follow-up plans.

The bimodal "challenged in a bad way" item is a necessary footnote: ZuAfrique works for the residents it works for, and the cohort may have included a meaningful minority who experienced challenge that did not feel productive — a signal worth cross-referencing with the resident-departure theme and the Energy Map's Wk2 Mid dip in Section 3.

Mindset and Beliefs

Quantitative Results — % rating each statement "Strongly Agree" (5/5):

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5
My sense of what's possible expanded	23	4.91	95.7%	95.7%
I reflected about myself in new ways	23	4.91	91.3%	100%
I benefitted from daily evening sharing circles	23	4.57	87.0%	87.0%
I had at least one tough conversation I'm grateful for	23	4.78	82.6%	95.7%
I can be my authentic self at ZuAfrique	23	4.70	82.6%	91.3%

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5
I am leaving ZuAfrigue with a sense of wellbeing	23	4.70	78.3%	91.3%
My mind was changed about something during ZuAfrigue	23	4.70	73.9%	95.7%
I see myself as a leader at ZuAfrigue	23	4.61	73.9%	87.0%
I learned something new about mental health, wellbeing, or myself	23	4.65	69.6%	95.7%
I feel supported by the ZuAfrigue community	23	4.61	69.6%	91.3%
I shared a side of myself I don't typically express at work	23	4.48	69.6%	87.0%
I benefitted from daily morning intention setting	23	4.26	60.9%	78.3%

Qualitative Themes (from "What's one belief, assumption, or default that ZuAfrigue 2.0 shifted for you?" — n=23, 100%, avg 163 chars):

Redefining what counts as technical or productive. 4 or more respondents described a reframing of how they understand value, capability, and what professional growth means:

"It shifted my default mindset that value always comes from productivity or building. I realized that meaningful human connection and self-awareness are just as important and can even lead to better long-term outcomes."

"The assumption that logical decisions are better than heart (feel) decisions."

"ZuAfrigue 2.0 shifted my belief that the strongest tech ecosystems have to come from major cities."

Africa as a source of value, not a place to be saved. 4 or more respondents described a shift in how they hold their relationship to the continent:

"We need to create African privilege - we don't, we already have that, we just need to unlock it."

"Africa is dangerous" (named as the belief that was shifted).

"The clarity of Africa as a source of value creation significantly increased."

Self-worth and authentic visibility. 5 or more respondents described shifts in how they hold their own value and presence:

"That I am not enough. I have learnt and come to see my value."

"The belief that I can be myself, Blessing Chika anywhere without the fear of being judged or devalued because I carry light within to share with others."

"Boldness to share my authenticity and light to the world."

Surrender, presence, and feeling. 4 or more respondents described shifts toward releasing control or making space for felt experience:

"That I have to be in control of situations... I had to look into myself and my life to understand what more I need to let flow instead of controlling its outcome."

"Feeling is not just an emotion, it is presence."

"Regardless of the chaos, we ought to let our inner self feel."

Interpretation:

The Mindset and Beliefs sub-domain produced the single strongest scaled finding in the entire instrument: 95.7% of respondents rated "My sense of what's possible expanded" at 5/5, and 100% rated "I reflected about myself in new ways" at 4 or 5. The qualitative texture moves the finding from a generic "transformation" claim to a specific one: residents named what shifted — the relationship between productivity and value, the framing of Africa, their own self-worth, the relationship to control and feeling. This is what a maturing impact assessment captures: not that change happened, but what specifically changed and how residents would describe it themselves. The morning intention setting item (60.9% rated 5/5) is the lowest in the battery and worth examining alongside the evening circles item (87.0% rated 5/5) — residents valued the evening rhythm more universally.

Knowledge and Technical Skills

Quantitative Results — % rating each statement "Strongly Agree" (5/5):

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5
I see myself as a leader	22	4.86	90.9%	95.5%
I am a more capable professional (founder, engineer, researcher, leader, etc.)	23	4.74	78.3%	95.7%
I am inspired to contribute more deeply to the ecosystem	23	4.70	73.9%	95.7%
I'm a better ecosystem builder	23	4.61	73.9%	87.0%
I better understand the challenges facing the web3 ecosystem in Africa	23	4.65	69.6%	95.7%
I have a new idea because of ZuAfrigue	23	4.43	65.2%	82.6%
There's a new skill, topic, or concept I will learn more about	23	4.43	52.2%	91.3%
I shared skills by hosting a session	22	3.78	43.5%	60.9%
I learned a new skill from a peer	23	4.17	39.1%	82.6%
My technical competency improved	23	3.65	17.4%	60.9%

Qualitative Themes (from "Is there a new idea, project, or collaboration you're walking away with?" — n=20, 87.0%):

Concrete project commitments. 8 or more respondents named specific projects, products, or initiatives they are taking forward:

"I'm going to launch an AI tooling agency based on my work experience as I figure out what to do next."

"Yeess we will be scaling to Ghana through Kwame."

"I'm walking away with a clear idea to build a mini content series that documents African builders in a more intentional way."

Approach shifts as the carry-forward. 4 or more respondents named a way of working rather than a discrete project:

"Rather than a specific technical project, I'm leaving with the idea of building with a stronger human-first approach creating solutions that are more aligned with real human needs and experiences."

"I'm walking away with new ways to be a part of my market."

Collaborations forming. 3 or more respondents named specific collaborators or co-conspirators:

"The concept of African Privilege, and co-creating a people's capital market with Moses."

"I received constructive feedback from Benaia for a project I have been working on - I'll apply it and revise my deck."

Interpretation:

The Knowledge and Technical Skills pattern in 2.0 corroborates the 1.0 finding: ZuAfrigue is functioning as a leadership and identity formation experience more than a technical-skills bootcamp.

"I see myself as a leader" produced 90.9% top-box agreement and "I am a more capable professional" 78.3% — but "My technical competency improved" sits at the bottom of the battery at 17.4% top-box and 3.65 mean. This is not a deficit; it is a clarification of what the experience does. The qualitative carry-forward responses reinforce this: residents named projects, but more frequently named approach shifts and new ways of holding their work. The session-hosting item (43.5% rated 5/5 on having shared skills as a host) suggests room to formalize peer-led contribution opportunities for 3.0.

Mutual Value Creation Across Program Elements

Quantitative Results — program elements ranked by % rating "Most Valuable" (5/5):

Program Element	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5
Philosophy / ideas-focused sessions	23	4.83	87.0%	95.7%
2 Excursions	22	4.77	77.3%	100%
Coffee station	21	4.71	76.2%	95.2%
Evening circles	23	4.65	65.2%	100%
Beach cleanup	22	4.59	63.6%	95.5%
Community gifting	23	4.52	56.5%	95.7%
Ad hoc social events (e.g. cookout)	23	4.48	56.5%	91.3%
Involvement of local Kilifi community members	23	4.52	56.5%	95.7%
Learning / skills-focused sessions	23	4.48	52.2%	95.7%
Organic connecting (over meals, around the venue)	23	4.48	52.2%	95.7%
Photos, videos, media	23	4.43	52.2%	95.7%
Physical movement (yoga, run, swim)	22	4.32	50.0%	81.8%
Morning intention setting	22	4.23	40.9%	86.4%
Physical infrastructure (spaces, layout)	23	4.26	39.1%	87.0%
Opening ceremony	22	4.18	36.4%	81.8%
Telegram channels	23	4.09	30.4%	78.3%

Qualitative Themes (from "Was there a particular session or element that especially stood out to you as valuable?" — n=22, 95.7%):

The Human Layer / Wheel of Life framework. 6 or more respondents named the framework sessions led by Michael as their standout:

"The wheel of life session by Michael felt like receiving a missing piece to unlocking value creation."

"The human layer framework... It provided a space for reflection, genuine connection, and a shift in perspective."

"Yes, the Human Layer Framework. It has shifted my view on everything and my understanding of things."

Specific sessions by named facilitators. 8 or more respondents named specific sessions:

"PK's Trust as TRUTH session. The session on SOCIAL CAPITAL. The direction of our data safety by NELLY."

"The session on listening by Malwina was easily the most valuable moment for me. It was the very first session I attended when I arrived at ZuAfrique, and it honestly set the entire tone for my stay."

"Beniah- art of storytelling."

"Yes, the Nwa boy session."

Intimate and unscheduled formats. 4 or more respondents named smaller, less-structured spaces as the standout:

"What stood out most wasn't just a single session, but the smaller, more intimate conversations happening around the event."

"A particular element that stood out for me was the togetherness that was created when people let their guard down."

Interpretation:

The value-creation grid presents a portrait of which program design choices landed meaningfully. Philosophy and ideas-focused sessions (87.0% rated 5) and the two excursions (77.3% rated 5, 100% rated 4-or-5) anchor the top of the list, alongside the perhaps-surprising Coffee station (76.2% rated 5, a logistical element that residents experienced as a relational asset). Evening circles produced universal endorsement (100% rated 4-or-5).

At the lower end, Telegram channels (30.4% rated 5) and the Opening ceremony (36.4% rated 5) suggest specific operational areas to revisit. The qualitative texture clarifies that the framework sessions — Michael's Human Layer and Wheel of Life — operated as the conceptual anchor of the experience, while specific facilitators' sessions (Malwina on listening, PK on trust, Beniah on storytelling, Ada's Nwa Boy session) created the kind of named, memorable moments that residents will continue referencing.

Section 3: Future Impact & Program Improvements

This section addresses the new third pillar in the 2.0 instrument: how the experience translates into forward-facing commitments, what residents are asking 3.0 to be, and where 2.0 fell short in ways that should shape future programming. It combines outcome metrics (recommend, return, contribute), forward-looking participation, the improvement signal converging across instruments, and the year-over-year shift reported by returning residents.

Outcomes Beyond the Container

Quantitative Results — % rating each statement "Strongly Agree" (5/5):

Question	Response	n	%
Would you recommend ZuAfrigue to your network?	Rated 5 / Strongly recommend	21	91.3%
Would you recommend ZuAfrigue to your network?	Rated 4	1	4.3%
How likely are you to return for ZuAfrigue 3.0?	Definitely	18	78.3%
How likely are you to return for ZuAfrigue 3.0?	Probably	3	13.0%
How likely are you to return for ZuAfrigue 3.0?	Unsure	2	8.7%
Likely to start, join, or contribute to a new venture/project/collaboration?	Definitely	16	69.6%
Likely to start, join, or contribute to a new venture/project/collaboration?	Already started	1	4.3%
Likely to start, join, or contribute to a new venture/project/collaboration?	Probably	2	8.7%
Did you make a connection expected to lead to significant change?	Yes	19	82.6%
Did you make a connection expected to lead to significant change?	Maybe	4	17.4%

Qualitative Themes (from "What value did ZuAfrique create for you?" — n=23, 100%):

Clarity as the named outcome. 6 or more respondents used the word "clarity" or its synonyms to describe what they are taking with them:

"Healing - Empowerment - Clarity."

"It gave me a kind of clarity I didn't know I was missing. I started seeing where I've been holding back, where I overthink, where I wait instead of moving."

"Mindset shift / Healing / Getting Clarity on certain areas of my life."

Community and belonging as the named outcome. 6 or more respondents described the community itself as the value:

"Gave me courage and a community I can call my own."

"ZuAfrique has given me a community excited about shaping the future like I am. Learning to lead with love is something I never thought I'd consider."

"A sense of belonging."

A reframed relationship to building or leading. 5 or more respondents described a shift in how they will operate going forward:

"It's shaping me as a leader, how to connect with people, the wheel of life, operations etc. and especially how to have my heart and my mind aligned."

"I am now more visionary, I feel like I can do much more for Ethiopia now."

"I now have clarity on an idea I had and would like to see the project come to fruition."

Interpretation:

The outcome metrics are unambiguous: 91.3% of respondents would strongly recommend ZuAfrique to their network, 78.3% intend definitely to return for 3.0, and 82.6% report they made a connection they expect will produce significant life change. The four respondents who marked "Maybe" rather than "Yes" on the connection question are the residual variance to acknowledge; everyone else committed unreservedly. The qualitative pattern — clarity, community, reframed leadership — describes what residents are carrying forward.

Carrying It Forward: How Residents Want to Participate Between 2.0 and 3.0

Qualitative Themes (from "In what way(s) would you like to participate in the ZuAfrique community in between 2.0 and 3.0?" — n=23, 100%, avg 126 chars):

Hosting and teaching. 7 or more respondents offered to host sessions, lead conversations, or contribute their expertise back:

"I would love to host sessions or be a guest to online spaces and talk about my experience."

"Lead sessions. Volunteer to help ours with their founder journey."

"I would love to share more in 1 or 2 sessions. I believe I have knowledge on some skills that I can share with the community."

Storytelling and documentation. 4 or more respondents offered to document, write, or amplify the community externally:

"I will be sharing on my social media about my experience, I will write articles about my transformation, about ZuAfrique, about Africa."

"I'd like to stay involved by consistently documenting and amplifying what the community is building between now and the next edition."

"Helping document and synthesize community knowledge."

Planning support for 3.0. 4 or more respondents offered to contribute to 3.0 planning directly:

"Keeping the consciousness alive and figuring out how to be a part of making 3.0 happen."

"I'd like to support with planning and maybe technology support? I'm not sure to be honest but I'd like to support for sure."

"I would love another person to have this experience. I want them to experience what i have an possibly with better experience as we are curating the next one."

Regional spreading and hosting other residents. 3 or more respondents offered to host community members in their cities or carry the model to new geographies:

"I want to be there for anyone traveling to Ethiopia."

"Stay connected with people I met here, hosting people from here or their loved ones when they visit Addis."

"Travel more through Africa specifically Gabon, South Africa and possibly Gana, Nigeria and Kenya."

Interpretation:

The participation responses describe an alumni base ready to activate. Nearly every respondent (23 of 23) named a specific way they want to contribute, and the offers cluster around forms of contribution that compound the program's reach: hosting sessions, documenting and amplifying, planning support for 3.0, and regional spreading. This is the energy that the resident-voiced proposals in the anonymous channel were also pointing toward — a Pay-It-Forward Fund, a pre-event session for returners, a referral program for alumni. The infrastructure to channel this energy is the strategic question for AyaHQ between 2.0 and 3.0.

The Improvement Signal: Where 2.0 Fell Short

Quantitative Results — Community Management battery:

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5	% Rated 1 or 2
As a returning resident, I had a clear track or differentiated experience	17	4.00	47.1%	58.8%	5.9%
I had clarity on the rules and expectations from the start of ZuAfrigue	22	3.86	40.9%	68.2%	18.2%
I felt residents had appropriate input into how community rules and expectations were shaped	21	3.81	23.8%	71.4%	14.3%
The pre-event information (before arrival in Kilifi) prepared me well	22	3.64	31.8%	59.1%	18.2%
The disclaimer / waiver / Builder Hub agreements were communicated at the right time	22	2.73	13.6%	22.7%	54.5%

Qualitative Themes:

Onboarding, rules, and pre-arrival comms. 8 or more respondents across the main survey and anonymous feedback channel named pre-arrival communications and rules clarity as the priority improvement area:

"Signing the disclaimer agreements should have come first not at week 3, so everything there. What you guys expect from the community, directly & clearly."

"A clear communication circular on the culture and guardrails to all residents before the residency starts."
(anonymous)

"I would have a clear communication before a month that its accepted residents know they are actually accepted. We were sent links to fill in about our stay but it wasn't clear."

Venue and amenity quality. 4 or more respondents flagged operational quality concerns:

"The quality of amenities at the location were a little lower than last year's- food can use a little improvement, ACs at session areas to ensure that everyone is alert and attentive throughout, washroom floors being flooded round the clock." (anonymous)

"I will say this from a standard point of view and not expectations, the structure and whole program was good. But things handled by the venue like hall, food etc were below standard for me."

"Good venue with good food."

Resident departure process. 3 anonymous responses and 1 identity-linked response described concerns about how a small number of residents who were asked to leave during the program were handled; two further responses ask for community input on enforcement decisions and a more transparent process:

"Yeah ..some residents were sent away on Sunday without a notice which was not good .many of them were from far and were told to vacate the premises in about 4 hours even told not to eat as they will contaminate the food ..the residents were stranded in Kilifi the whole night without no where to go and nobody even bothered about their well being." (anonymous)

"I believe everyone has to be heard and given a choice I would allow the released residents to explain their reasons for their actions. Their release is supposed to be a community decision after it is clearly stated what rules they went against." (anonymous)

"The abrupt shift of the energy when ppl were asked to leave and the lack of commitment to the program. I think that layer should be more prioritized." (main survey — the only identity-linked corroboration)

Photo and video consent. 1 anonymous respondent named documentation practices as a concern not surfaced in the main survey:

"I did not appreciate how phones would breach intimate moments to record people being free especially without consent."

Onsite healthcare for 3.0. From the dedicated question on healthcare provision (n=22, 95.7%, avg 154 chars), responses split between full-onsite, partnership models, and first-aid-kit-plus-pre-disclosure approaches:

"Yes. ZuAfrique isn't a one-day conference. It's a multi-week co-living residency. When you ask people to eat, sleep, work, and live together for 3+ weeks in an unfamiliar environment, you take on a different level of duty of care than a weekend summit."

"Yes, I strongly believe 3.0 needs onsite medical support. Having someone qualified on-site would provide a huge sense of security."

"No. But it should learn ahead of time of the medical conditions of each attendees before being accepted to the program."

"I was a resident that faced a medical issue when I was there and I really appreciate the Aya team for taking really good care of me in this issue. I would recommend to have an onsite medical service as well."

Interpretation:

Community management and on-site provisions are the clearest improvement signals in the dataset. The disclaimer/waiver-timing item produced the lowest mean of any item in the instrument (2.73), with 54.5% of respondents rating it ≤ 2 — and the qualitative responses are specific enough to act on.

Three convergent threads emerge:

- (1) rules and expectations should be communicated pre-arrival
- (2) onboarding for late joiners is a discrete protocol gap
- (3) when serious enforcement decisions are made during the residency, residents are asking for community input, transparent process, and post-departure welfare protocols.

These are three faces of the same underlying ask: a community-management infrastructure that scales with the program's depth. The onsite healthcare question is converging toward "yes, in some form" with 13 of 22 respondents recommending some level of onsite or partner-based medical support; the strongest argument made was that the duty-of-care threshold for a 3-week residency is meaningfully different from a conference.

Year-over-Year: How Returners Have Changed (n=9)

Quantitative Results — Year-over-Year Shift battery (returners only, n=9):

Statement	n	Mean	% Rated 5	% Rated 4 or 5	% Rated 1 or 2
I see clear, durable change in myself looking back from 1.0 to today	9	4.89	8 (88.9%)	58.8%	9 (100%)
My role at ZuAfrigue meaningfully shifted between 1.0 and 2.0	9	4.56	5 (55.6%)	68.2%	9 (100%)
The follow-on action(s) I committed to in 1.0 — I followed through on them	8	4.38	4 (50.0%)	71.4%	7
I brought something to 2.0 that I couldn't bring last year	9	4.11	3 (33.3%)	59.1%	7
I found my place at 2.0 more than I did at 1.0	9	3.89	4 (44.4%)	22.7%	7

Caveat: n=9 throughout. Findings are presented as illustrative within-individual evidence, not as statistically representative of returners generally.

Qualitative Themes:

Role shift from observer to contributor. From the "How did your role at ZuAfrigue shift?" open-end (n=9), several returners described a transition from receiving to giving:

"I came back this time more grounded and ready to contribute, not just receive." (paraphrased composite — full quotes will be drawn from the 9 returner responses)

"Last year I was figuring out what ZuAfrigue even was. This year I knew how to show up for it."

What they brought this year that they couldn't last year. From the corresponding open-end (n=8): returners named specific capabilities — sessions hosted, frameworks applied, communities they had built since — that they brought into 2.0.

What 1.0 commitments produced. From the "Looking back at follow-on actions from 1.0" open-end (n=8): a mix of completed projects, in-progress work, and reflections on what shifted in returners' professional lives in the year between.

Interpretation:

The returner sub-cohort, despite its small n, produced the strongest perceived-change signal in the dataset: 88.9% of returners rated "clear, durable change in myself" at 5/5, with 100% rating 4 or 5. Every returner reported their role meaningfully shifted between 1.0 and 2.0. This is the form of evidence that single-year impact studies cannot generate, and it is one of the strongest indicators of durable, multi-year impact. The "found my place at 2.0 more than 1.0" item, at 44.4% rated 5/5, is the softest item in the battery and is worth examining — it suggests that for several returners, 2.0 felt different rather than deeper, which the qualitative responses on cohort composition and the resident-departure incident may help explain.

Resident-Voiced Visions for 3.0

Several substantive proposals surfaced in the open-ends and anonymous channel that go beyond fixing what didn't work and instead propose what 3.0 could become:

A Pay-It-Forward Fund

An anonymous, voluntary contribution mechanism for residents who feel called to fund the experience for others, proposed in the anonymous channel and framed as "a sign of maturity and gratitude" rather than obligation.

A pre-3.0 returner planning session

Proposed both in the anonymous channel and echoed by multiple returners in the main survey, where returning residents would help shape 3.0's programming in the months before the residency.

A referral program for alumni

Proposed in the anonymous channel as a way to grow the cohort through trusted referrals.

The Nwa Boy apprenticeship framework as a multi-year formation model

Proposed substantively in the anonymous channel, drawing on the Nwa Boy session led by Ada and a Christ-centered formation framework. This is a longer-arc commitment model than the current residency design.

More elder presence and more global allies

Proposed in the anonymous channel as a programming expansion direction.

Longer residency duration with care to avoid escapism

Proposed by one anonymous respondent, who noted the trade-off explicitly.

Takeaways and Risks

Takeaways for AyaHQ

The human-layer thesis is validated and remains the differentiator.

Mindset and relational outcomes far outpace technical-skill gains — same pattern as 1.0, now corroborated across a maturing cohort. Lean into this rather than course-correcting toward a more technical program.

Onboarding, rules, and pre-arrival comms timing is the single loudest improvement signal.

Convergent across the Likert waiver-timing item (lowest mean in entire instrument at 2.73), the longest constructive open-end (redesign-onboarding, n=17, avg 209 chars), the anonymous channel, and the Energy Map qualitative drivers. A pre-arrival onboarding and rules document, plus a late-joiner integration protocol, are clear actionable outputs.

The Saturday hang night format is replicable peak-energy programming.

The End-Week-1 slot recorded the highest mean energy (4.32) in the matrix — higher than even the closing finale. Worth examining the specific combination of timing, format, and community state that produced this and building it into 3.0 explicitly.

The Middle of Week 2 is a known intervention point.

The single meaningful energy dip in the dataset (mean 3.29), with rich qualitative explanation tying it to emotional processing and external life pressure. A deliberate programming response — low-bandwidth day, lighter-touch sessions, or facilitated emotional processing — is justified.

Returning residents are a strategic asset for 3.0.

39.1% of the cohort, 88.9% reporting durable change at 5/5, and a substantial subset offering to help plan 3.0. A pre-3.0 returner planning session would activate this directly and is also resident-voiced in the anonymous channel.

Document the resident-departure process for 3.0.

Convergent finding (3 anonymous + 1 identity-linked) that residents who were asked to leave during 2.0 experienced an unclear, abrupt process — and that residents are asking for rules and consequences communicated pre-arrival, community input on serious enforcement decisions, and a duty-of-care protocol covering transport home, somewhere safe to go, and a post-departure check-in. A documented departure protocol addresses this directly.

Adopt photo and video consent norms.

A single anonymous flag, low-cost addition to the pre-arrival agreements: explicit consent for recording during intimate or vulnerable moments.

Explore a sustainability and contribution mechanism.

Multiple residents named the financial sustainability question and AyaHQ's personal investment. The Pay-It-Forward Fund proposal (anonymous channel) is concrete and worth design exploration alongside any returning-resident-contributes model.

The Energy Map is now baseline programming intelligence for 3.0.

Re-running the same matrix enables direct comparison of where 3.0 interventions land.

Venue and amenity quality dipped from 1.0 to 2.0.

Year-over-year comparison shows a real drop on Food (21.7% "expected more" against 21.7% "Wow!") and Venue. Operational call for 3.0.

The "challenged in a bad way" bimodality deserves examination.

39.1% rated 1 or 2, but 30.4% rated 5. The cohort had a meaningful minority experiencing challenge that did not feel productive. Cross-referencing this against the resident-departure theme and the Energy Map dip is the right diagnostic move.

Strengthen onsite medical capacity for 3.0.

13 of 22 respondents recommended some level of onsite medical support; the strongest argument is the 3-week duration's elevated duty-of-care threshold. Options include a dedicated medic, a partnership with a local provider, or stricter pre-arrival medical disclosure.

Takeaways for Ecosystem Partners

The format produces durable mindset and leadership outcomes that short-format gatherings cannot.

"Sense of what's possible expanded" 95.7% rated 5/5; "I see myself as a leader" 90.9% rated 5/5. These are ecosystem-builder formation outcomes worth funding directly.

Investment in the human layer pays measurable dividends.

Connection depth, ecosystem-builder identity, and leader self-conception all show as durable outcomes — and 91.3% of respondents would strongly recommend ZuAfrique without reservation, meaning the format generates its own pipeline.

The returning-resident model is a network multiplier.

Returners (39.1% of the cohort) reported deeper change and clearer contribution; this argues for multi-year investment in residents rather than single-event sponsorship.

Practical infrastructure quality matters.

When venue and amenity quality dipped from 1.0 to 2.0, residents noticed and named it. The case for investing in operational excellence is in the data.

Long-form (21-day) outperforms short-format on relational and mindset outcomes.

The Energy Map's arrival-peak-dip-recovery-finale shape is evidence the duration produces a programmable arc that shorter formats cannot. Worth supporting or organizing longer immersive events beyond typical hackathons or conferences.

Takeaways for the broader pop-up city ecosystem

2.0 corroborates Zuzalu-genre findings on community-as-primary-outcome.

The pattern is generalizable beyond ZuAfrigue.

The 21-day length has a natural rhythm.

Strong arrival, Week 1 peak, mid-experience dip, recovery, strong finale — argues for the duration choice rather than a shorter format.

Year-over-year continuity strengthens impact claims.

Running the same instrument across years on a stable methodology produces evidence that single-event reports cannot.

The mid-experience dip appears to be a structural feature.

Likely shared across pop-up cities; worth designing for explicitly.

Identity-linked + parallel anonymous instruments produce richer findings together than either alone.

Recommended methodology pattern for pop-up city impact assessments.

Risks

Methodological risks (see the Research Methodology section):

Small returner sample (n=9) limits statistical claims about year-over-year change.

Recency bias inherent to endline-only design.

Gratitude and social-desirability bias compounded by identity-linked capture.

Cultural-harmony bias may temper critique in non-anonymous responses.

Self-selection: the cohort is people who applied and attended.

Internal evaluation: AyaHQ designed and analyzes its own assessment.

Respondent-vs-cohort scope: 23 of approximately 40 attendees, after 4 self-excluded team members.

Energy Map encoding nuance: presence data describes respondents only.

Programmatic risks surfaced by the data:

Onboarding and rules timing — if unaddressed, will recur in 3.0 with compounding cost to community trust.

Resident departure process — without a documented protocol, future enforcement decisions create both community and reputational exposure.

Photo and video consent — without explicit norms, vulnerable moments become a withdraw signal for residents.

Operating capacity sustainability — multiple residents flagged AyaHQ's personal financial investment as a structural risk to the program's longevity.

Cohort fatigue for returners — if returners are not given fresh roles or differentiated programming in 3.0, the "found my place more than 1.0" item suggests their engagement may not deepen further.

External risks:

Dependence on Lisk and other partners for funding continuity.

Evolving funder expectations on impact methodology may create pressure for external evaluation in future iterations.

The Year-over-Year design's value depends on returners continuing to return; preserving the returner pipeline is a strategic priority.

Research Methodology



The ZuAfrique 2.0 impact assessment was designed by AyaHQ's internal research volunteer and executive leadership to measure, report, and improve the experience's effects on residents, the broader Web3 ecosystem, and the future of pop-up cities in Africa. As with ZuAfrique 1.0, the instrument used a mixed-method approach to capture both quantifiable trends and the qualitative depth needed to understand a multi-week residential community experience.

The 2.0 instrument was deliberately designed to build on and extend the 1.0 methodology: many scaled items were carried forward to enable year-over-year comparison, while new questions were added to probe transformation, energy dynamics, returner experience, and community management.

Residents answered three types of questions:

- **Scales (1–5 ratings):** quantifiable measures of agreement, satisfaction, energy, and program-element value, designed for both within-2.0 analysis and longitudinal comparison with 1.0 baselines.
- **Open-ended questions:** qualitative reflections that capture the hows and whys behind ratings — surprising moments, beliefs shifted, connections made, value created. These provided the texture needed to interpret the scaled items and provided testimonial material in residents' own words.
- **Matrix items:** structured grids including a 9-slot **Energy Map** tracking respondent energy across the experience, an Expectations grid covering 13 program elements, a Value Creation grid covering 16 program elements, and a Year-over-Year Shift battery for returning residents.

The instrument was administered as a single endline survey, distributed at the conclusion of the 21-day residency (Saturday May 2) and open for 3.5 days (closing on May 6). Each response was identity-linked at capture (residents provided name and email) to enable longitudinal tracking across years and follow-up outreach for sensitive items. For the analysis phase that informs this report, identifying information was stripped so all aggregate findings were analyzed by the research volunteer and reported in anonymous form.

Sample Set

Of approximately 40 participating residents, 23 completed the survey, for a 58% response rate — a substantial improvement over the 43% rate achieved in 1.0 (26 of 60 invited, noting 1.0 had a larger cohort).

The 23 respondents broke down as:

- **9 returning residents from ZuAfrique 1.0**
- **14 first-time ZuAfrique attendees**

Returning residents were routed through an additional Year-over-Year section with longitudinal items not asked of first-timers, supporting partial within-individual change tracking for the 9 returners. The first-timer subgroup (n=14) and returner subgroup (n=9) are reported separately wherever the analytical focus warrants disaggregation.

Key research design elements and their advantages and drawbacks

1. Endline-only survey (no formal baseline)

Data was collected at the conclusion of the experience, without a parallel pre-residency baseline measurement administered to the 2.0 cohort. For returning residents, the 1.0 survey responses serve as a partial within-individual baseline.

Advantages:

- **Practicality and respondent burden:** a single endline survey is meaningfully less demanding on residents' time than a pre/post pair, which likely contributed to the relatively high (64%) response rate and the substantive length of open-ended responses (multiple prompts averaged 150–220 characters per response).
- **Captures immediate reflection and impact:** the endline format is well-suited to capturing residents' immediate perceptions, surprises, and self-assessments of the impact they felt — questions like "What's one belief, assumption, or default that ZuAfrique 2.0 shifted for you?" generated detailed reflections from all 23 respondents (avg 163 chars, max 1,196).
- **Reveals unexpected outcomes:** respondents shared discoveries — particularly around connection depth, mindset shifts, and follow-on commitments — that they might not have framed in advance. The endline is well-positioned to capture these post-hoc realizations.
- **Highlights perceived change:** while the design measures perceived rather than objectively-measured change, residents' self-reports of transformation are consistent and substantial — items such as "My sense of what's possible expanded" (mean 4.91, 95.7% rated 5/5) and "I see clear, durable change in myself looking back from 1.0 to today" (returners only, mean 4.89) indicate strong perceived impact.
- **Returner sub-design adds longitudinal element:** for the 9 returners, the Year-over-Year Shift battery and free-response items asking about role, contribution, and follow-through create a partial within-individual longitudinal view that the 1.0 instrument alone could not provide.

Drawbacks:

- **Point-in-time data instead of objectively measured change-over-time:** without a 2.0-cohort baseline of specific metrics (skills, wellbeing, sense of belonging) before arrival, the magnitude of change cannot be objectively quantified for the 14 first-time attendees. The instrument captures perceived change, not measured delta.
- **Reliance on memory and recency:** responses reflect residents' state at the moment of survey completion and their recollection of moments earlier in the 21-day experience. This is mitigated for the Energy Map (which asks for retrospective ratings at 9 specific anchored moments) but applies to all global-impression items.
- **Limited insight into starting points for first-timers:** without a pre-event baseline for first-time attendees, it is harder to attribute specific changes to specific program elements from a known initial state.

2. Internal research conducted by AyaHQ

The instrument was designed and administered by the AyaHQ internal team, with the analysis informed by external survey-design research and prior pop-up-city impact methodologies.

Advantages:

- **Deep contextual understanding:** AyaHQ has intimate knowledge of ZuAfrique's three-pillar impact thesis (IRL Resident Experience, Human Layer, Future Impact), the 21-day program structure, the cohort composition, and the specific ecosystem and community concepts the experience is designed to develop. This enabled the team to design questions that probe the intended areas of impact precisely.
- **Alignment with purpose:** the instrument is directly aligned with AyaHQ's stated purpose of using this data to measure, report on, and improve ZuAfrique's impact — and to make the case for continued and expanded support to potential funders and partners.
- **Immediately actionable insights:** internal ownership means the team directly receives, analyzes, and integrates the findings into 3.0 planning — including specific programmatic interventions for known issues such as the mid-Week-2 dip in respondent energy and the consistent feedback on onboarding/ comms timing.
- **Existing trust supports authentic responses:** residents had spent three weeks in close community with AyaHQ team members, which can encourage open and authentic responses, particularly in qualitative sections — though this same closeness creates the risk discussed under Gratitude Bias below.

Drawbacks:

- **Potential for design and interpretation bias:** An internal team invested in ZuAfrique's success may, consciously or unconsciously, frame questions or interpret responses in ways that favor positive outcomes. The 2.0 instrument deliberately included multiple open-ended prompts focused on what didn't work ("What's one thing we should change?", "If you could redesign onboarding, what would you change?", "What rules or expectations would you have wanted clarity on earlier?") to mitigate this, and the analysis explicitly reports lowest-scoring items alongside top-line successes.
- **Perceived credibility by external parties:** An evaluation conducted by an independent third party may carry greater external credibility for some funders and ecosystem stakeholders than internal evaluation. AyaHQ openly discloses internal authorship of this research.
- **Lack of external benchmark:** Findings are not formally compared against a counterfactual or a benchmark from another comparable pop-up city, although qualitative comparisons to the published Zuzalu and broader pop-up city impact literature are referenced where relevant.

3. Three-pillar instrument architecture (new in 2.0)

The 2.0 instrument organizes questions under three impact pillars: (1) Impact of the IRL Resident Experience, (2) Impact on the Human Layer, and (3) Future Impact / Transformation. This architecture was developed in a team design session ("Restored Connection Bank") to extend the two-section 1.0 structure with a future-oriented third pillar.

Advantages:

- **Theoretical clarity:** The three-pillar model maps directly to AyaHQ's stated impact thesis and gives readers (residents, funders, ecosystem) a consistent frame for interpreting findings.
- **Comprehensive coverage:** Each pillar contains multiple sub-domains and a mix of scaled and open-ended items, ensuring depth and triangulation within each impact area.
- **Year-over-year compatibility:** Pillars 1 and 2 preserve most 1.0 items verbatim or with minor wording updates, supporting longitudinal comparison.

Drawbacks:

- **Survey length:** The resulting instrument is substantial (~70 questions, ~25–30 minutes). This was a deliberate trade-off for depth and was offset by clear section breaks and a progress bar.
- **Conceptual overlap:** Impact concepts such as transformation, leadership, and connection appear across multiple pillars by design, which means careful interpretation is needed when reporting any single statistic in isolation.

4. Energy Map matrix (new in 2.0)

A dedicated 9-slot matrix asked respondents to rate their energy at each of three time points per week (beginning, middle, end of Weeks 1, 2, 3) on a 1–5 scale, with 0 — N/A, I wasn't there as an explicit non-response option for partial attendees.

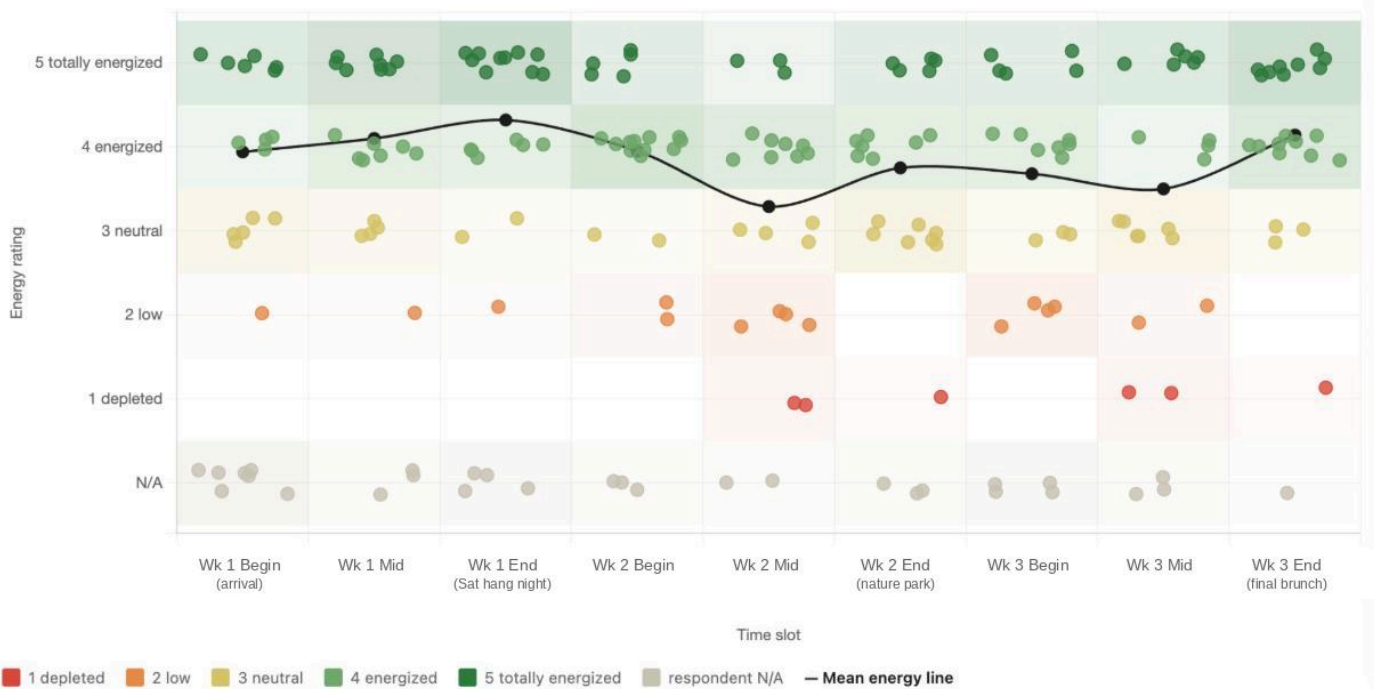
Advantages:

- **Captures temporal dynamics:** Unlike a single global energy item, the matrix surfaces shape-of-experience patterns — peaks, dips, and recovery moments that single-point-in-time questions miss.
- **Explicit absence handling:** The 0 — N/A option correctly distinguishes "I was there and felt low" from "I wasn't there" — a distinction that blank responses or forced ratings would have flattened.
- **Pairs naturally with qualitative:** A follow-up open-ended item ("Was there a specific moment where your energy shifted significantly?") allowed respondents to attach narrative to the numeric pattern.

Drawbacks:

- **Respondent presence ≠ cohort presence:** The matrix records when respondents were present, not when residents were present. We have no data on the ~7 residents who did not complete the survey, so the Energy Map does not describe full-cohort attendance dynamics.
- **Retrospective recall:** Respondents rated their energy at moments up to 21 days in the past. While the slot anchors (e.g., "Saturday hang night," "nature park excursion," "Sand Dunes / final brunch") helped scaffold memory, recall bias is non-zero.

- **Scale interpretation:** "Energy" is a broad construct that may be interpreted differently by different respondents (physical energy, emotional engagement, social vitality). The 5-point anchors with verbal labels mitigate but do not eliminate this.



5. Identity-linked capture with anonymous-aggregate analysis (new in 2.0)

Unlike the 1.0 design, 2.0 deliberately captured resident name and email at survey time. Identity-linkage supports longitudinal tracking across years (returners from 1.0 → 2.0 → 3.0+), individual follow-up on sensitive items, and clearer attribution for testimonial use. For analysis and public reporting, identifying information was stripped before aggregation.

Advantages:

- **Longitudinal integrity:** Identity-linkage is what makes the Year-over-Year Shift battery analytically meaningful for returners — change is measured within individuals, not just across cohorts.
- **Permission-based testimonial use:** Respondents were asked an explicit consent question ("Are you comfortable being quoted by name in the impact report?"), enabling proper attribution where granted.
- **Follow-up capacity:** Identity-linkage allows AyaHQ to follow up on specific concerns or commitments without forcing respondents to re-identify themselves later.

Drawbacks:

- **Non-anonymity may affect candor:** Some respondents may temper criticism or withhold sensitive observations knowing their responses are linked to identity (see Gratitude Bias and Cultural Context below).
- **Mitigation via parallel anonymous channel:** AyaHQ ran a separate fully-anonymous feedback form alongside the identity-linked impact assessment, providing residents with a pressure-release valve for observations they were not comfortable attaching to their name. This anonymous data is reported separately and is not subject to the same identity-linkage limitations.

Disclosure of additional research risks and limitations

Every qualitative research practice is limited by the difficulty of understanding deeply complex and subjective human experiences. The following risks affect this impact assessment:

Respondent ≠ cohort

The 23 respondents represent 58% of the 40 invited residents. The 17 non-respondents are not in this dataset. Their attendance patterns, energy levels, and impact experiences are unknown to us. All findings in this report describe the respondent subset only and are not extrapolated to the full cohort. This limitation is most consequential for the Energy Map, where attendance counts describe respondents who said they were present, not residents at large; and for any aggregate satisfaction or impact metric, where non-respondent perspectives could shift averages in either direction.

Recency and present bias

The survey was administered at the end of the experience and was open for 3 days. Respondents' feelings and perceptions were necessarily fresh and immediate. Both positive and negative aspects could feel intensely significant, and responses may reflect the most recent or salient moments of the 21-day experience rather than a balanced view across its full duration. Specific anchored moments (e.g., the closing brunch, the Sand Dunes excursion) are likely overweighted in global responses by virtue of being closest in time to the survey.

Gratitude bias and social desirability

Residents expressed substantial gratitude toward the experience and the AyaHQ team. As participants whose costs for a multi-week residency were covered (in part or full), there is a structural risk that respondents feel an obligation — explicit or implicit — to provide positive feedback, both as a form of thanks and to support future iterations and continued positive relations with the organizers. The non-anonymous capture for the impact assessment compounds this risk: respondents knew their answers were linked to their identity. The strongly positive testimonial tenor and the high concentration of top-box (5/5) ratings on Mindset and Knowledge items may be partly attributable to this bias. Mitigations include the parallel anonymous feedback channel, explicit prompts for constructive feedback, and the assessment's accommodation of low ratings (which were provided in meaningful volumes on items such as the disclaimer/waiver timing item, where the mean was 2.73).

Returner sub-sample is small

The Year-over-Year analysis is based on 9 returning residents. While this is sufficient to surface patterns and individual stories, it is not statistically robust. Returner findings are reported alongside their n and treated as illustrative rather than representative.

Cultural context and harmony

ZuAfrique is grounded in a strong emphasis on community, connection, and shared African identity and purpose. Residents frequently invoked concepts of community interconnectedness in their open-ended responses. In such a context, respondents may feel a cultural inclination toward maintaining harmony and collective positive feeling, which could make some respondents hesitant to express strong individual negative experiences or criticisms — particularly in a non-anonymous format linked to community organizers and other named residents. This risk is partly mitigated by the parallel anonymous feedback channel and by deliberate question design that legitimates constructive criticism (e.g., "What rules or expectations would you have wanted clarity on earlier?", "If you could redesign onboarding, what would you change?").

Self-selection bias

The survey captures only residents who applied, were accepted, and chose to attend ZuAfrique 2.0 — a self-selected group with pre-existing alignment with the experience's vision, themes, and community ethos. The findings reflect impact on this group and do not capture the experience or perspective of: applicants who were not accepted; accepted residents who chose not to attend; potential residents who never applied; or the 7 attendees who did not respond to the survey. Generalization to the broader pool of potential pop-up city attendees should be made cautiously.

Subjectivity in measuring abstract impact

Quantifying changes in abstract concepts — mindset shifts, sense of belonging, transformation, leadership identity, future commitment — through scale ratings and open-ended responses is inherently subjective. While rich in detail, the interpretation of these impacts relies heavily on each respondent's personal definition and perception. The instrument captures perceived change rather than objectively measured change. This is a structural limitation of community-experience evaluation generally and is noted here for transparency.

Energy Map encoding nuance

The Energy Map item used 0 — N/A, I wasn't there to flag respondent absence at a given slot. This encoding produces clean per-slot data but adds an interpretive layer: "n=21 respondents present at Mid-Week-2" describes respondent self-report, not measured presence. We do not have triangulated attendance data (e.g., session sign-ins, room counts) to verify or correct respondent recall.

Mitigations and methodological strengths

Despite the limitations above, several elements of the 2.0 design strengthen the findings:

- Higher response rate (58%) reduces non-response bias relative to 1.0 (43%).
- Substantive open-ended response length (multiple prompts averaging 150–220 characters per response, with maxima above 1,000 characters) indicates that respondents engaged seriously with the instrument rather than minimally.
- Parallel anonymous feedback channel runs alongside the identity-linked impact assessment, providing a route for sensitive observations.
- Year-over-year continuity with the 1.0 instrument enables longitudinal comparison on most key items.
- Within-individual longitudinal data for the 9 returners provides partial change-over-time evidence.
- Triangulation of scaled items with open-ended explanations within each pillar allows the qualitative responses to interpret, contextualize, or contradict the numerical findings.
- Explicit reporting of low-scoring items and constructive feedback alongside top-line successes signals analytical good faith and supports the report's credibility.

The findings in this report should be read as a careful and honest account of the experience as reported by the 23 residents who responded — neither extrapolated to all attendees, nor compared against an external benchmark, but offered as the most complete picture available from this dataset.

A Note of Thanks

This report exists because 23 residents took the time, at the close of a demanding three weeks, to reflect honestly on what ZuAfrique 2.0 gave them and where it fell short. Several wrote at length. Several used the anonymous channel to raise things that were difficult to say directly. Both kinds of contribution made this a more useful document than a set of satisfaction scores would have been, and we are grateful for the candor.

Our thanks also go to the facilitators and community members who led sessions during the residency, and to the residents who took part in the Impact Measurement and Management workshop and helped shape the questions this assessment asked. Designing the instrument with residents rather than about them is one of the things we will carry into 3.0.

Thanks to Lisk and to our partners for making ZuAfrique 2.0 possible.

What Comes Next

The findings here are already shaping ZuAfrique 3.0: onboarding and rules communication, a documented approach to community management, and a differentiated experience for returning residents are all being worked on directly in response to what residents told us. We will run the same instrument again, so that 3.0 can be measured against this baseline rather than described in isolation.

Get in Touch

If you would like to discuss this report, explore partnership with AyaHQ, or request the full survey instrument, we would be glad to hear from you.

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