

YWCA MALAWI 2019 - NARRATIVE REPORT

PROJECTS

1. Project Title: Community model for fostering health and well being of adolescent mothers and their babies

Background

The project community model for fostering health and well-being was a 2 year project (July 2017 to June 2019) with funding from grand challenges Canada. The goal of the project was to improve early child development and the well-being of marginalized adolescent young women who were either married, pregnant or have babies under the age of three in Malawi. It aimed to strengthen self-awareness, self-care and provision of psychosocial support to adolescent mothers and their children. It was also a study of the impact on several interventions to the adolescent mothers and their babies, the results of which would be published in two manuscripts (baseline and endline). Objectives of the project were

- To improve psychosocial wellbeing of adolescent mothers.
- To ensure that adolescent parents acquire knowledge and skills for on-going care and support to their children's development in all faculties
- To improve early childhood development of children born to adolescent mothers

The project was conducted in Machinga, Mulanje and Blantyre in southern Malawi in partnership with REPSSI.

Activities

- Monthly intervention meetings with adolescent mothers
The meetings continued in all districts, 3 meeting per district per month. These were safe spaces for the adolescent mothers to receive education on various topics. Topics ranged from Parenting skills, mental health, sexual and reproductive health and rights and child development.
- Early childhood development of children born to adolescent mothers
Children of adolescent mothers were stimulated through play and activities in special room called *Babies rooms*.
- Data collection
A component of the project was to conduct a study to assess the project intervention. In May 2019 will successfully collected data on 211 participants.

iv. Community dialogues

Every quarter, community dialogues were conducted as advocacy to traditional leaders, social workers, teachers and community members to understand the challenges adolescent mothers face and to lobby support the intervention.

v. End of year meeting

At the end of the project in June an end of project meetings was conducted in the districts with all districts stakeholders. This aimed as a feedback and a report of the project and to analyze how best this could be continued.

vi. Media engagement

The media was engaged in all activities of the project. The goal was to share stories and amplify the voices of young women.

Results and Key achievements

- i. Project started with 267 participants and ended with 211 participants providing a 79% retention rate. Each participant attended at least 80 % of the sessions. Considering the nature of the project we consider this a success. The success was attributable to champions residing in the same communities as the participants as such they were able to follow up and conduct home visits.
- ii. Enrollment of 35 fathers to join the monthly intervention meeting.
- iii. Endline survey showed at least a 70% increase in the psychosocial wellbeing of adolescent mothers i.e resilience, self-esteem and parental stress scale. It also showed that 80% of the children were meeting all their developmental milestones and improvements in the mother child interaction.
- iv. Articles highlighting the intervention were written and are to be submitted for publishing.
- v. Community support for the intervention
- vi. We partnered with AGEWE project that sponsored 6 adolescent mothers to go back to school

Conclusions

After the project, the following are some of the activities that will continue in the YWCA branches.

- Introduction of early childhood education. They will conduct pre-school classes for the children.
- Inclusion of adolescent mothers in village loan savings group where they can be empowered economically.

After two years of providing psychosocial support to adolescent mothers and stimulating the growth and development of their children, most adolescent mothers have improved in taking care

of their children, personal hygiene, mother to child interaction has also improved and cases of gender-based violence were also reduced. On the other side children's growth and development of children was also stimulated.





2. SOAW PROJECT

Background

The "State of the African Woman" campaign is a three-year (2017 -2019) advocacy, communication and awareness-raising campaign that aims at contributing to securing, realizing and extending women's rights as enshrined in African Union policies in sub-Saharan Africa. It is funded by the European Union and it is implemented by IPPF Africa Region as the lead beneficiary, with five organizations being co-beneficiaries, and two others as Associates. (KIT-Royal tropical institute, DSW, IPPF EN, F2A, YWCA Kenya, OAFILA and GIZ)

The campaign focuses on strengthening the civil society's contribution to promote the implementation of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol) and the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) at four decision-making levels across sub-Saharan Africa; continental, regional, national and sub-national levels.

“The State of the African Woman Campaign seeks to convert policies on the protection of women’s rights into reality. The project firmly believes that norms and agenda-setting at policy level need to be accompanied by changes in social and religious norms. This campaign, which combines grassroots mobilization and political advocacy, enhances sustainability where changes in norms related to women’s rights at policy and societal levels lead to long-term systems changes, with direct impact on people’s lives. The campaign builds on partner’s experiences and ongoing advocacy programmes in the region

Through the YWCA of Kenya two youth champions from YWCA of Malawi were trained together with other youth champions from 16 YWCA member associations as SRHR champions to participate in advocacy activities at the community, local, national, regional and international level championing issues in the pan African region. The two youth champions were part of a movement of youth advocates, champions and leaders working on campaigns for the rights of women in Africa.

Activities conducted were

i. RIGHT BY HER Advocacy Training (15 -17 May,2019)

YWCA of Malawi hosted a training that was conducted in Malawi with 7 other member associations from YWCA of Lesotho, YWCA of Mozambique, YWCA of Zimbabwe, YWCA of Uganda, YWCA of Kenya, YWCA of Ethiopia and YWCA of Tanzania. This was an advocacy training on the Right by her campaign that was within the SOAW campaign.

ii. International Conferences Participation

The two SRHR champions participated in several international conferences to speak on different issues affecting women and girls In Malawi and advocate for women’s rights in Malawi. Some of the conferences that were attended include:

- The civil society consultative meeting on common Africa position on population and development (4-5th September,2019) in Namibia
- ICPD25 in Nairobi (12-14 Nov,2019)

iii. #RightByHer Launch

The Young Women Christian Association of Kenya together with IPPFAR organised an activity in Lilongwe, Umodzi Park, Malawi with the aim of launching the #RightByHer campaign. The meeting started on the 4th of November to the 7th of November 2019. Family Planning association of Malawi (FPAM) hosted the activity. State of African Women Campaign (SOAW) youth

champions from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana and Malawi were invited to attend the meeting. The main activities included:

- To launch the Right by her campaign
- Award giving ceremony to SOAW champions
- Panel discussion on the status of Youth Friendly Health Services (YFHS) in Malawi

Second Deputy Speaker of the Malawi National Assembly, Honourable Ayisha Adam launched the campaign. During award giving ceremony, all YWCA of Malawi were awarded for being the best in organising advocacy activities through the SOAW campaign.

The YWCA of Malawi also organised a panel discussion on the status of youth friendly health services in Malawi. The following were the ones who were on the panel:

1. Mr Hans Katengeza – National coordinator for YFHS in Malawi from Ministry of Health (MOH)
2. Mr Dennis Paundi – Youth Friendly health Services Provider
3. Fiskani – University of North Carolina (Partner organisation)
4. Carolyn Chidandale – Youth Champion Malawi
5. Josephine Chikwana – Youth champion Malawi
6. Ruth Kulaisi (Reporter)– Moderator

All these activities were covered by the media.



ORGANISATION ACTIVITIES

1. Africa YWCAs regional meeting

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the world for more than 150 years. The YWCA is present in more than 122 countries, present in all regions and works for tangible progress in the lives of women and girls. More than 60 participants from YWCA organizations in the Africa region and some civil society partners met in Kampala, Uganda, from April 15 to 16, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was three-fold:

- To strengthen member associations in Africa to promote transformative leadership for women and young women, by building strategizing and organizing as a stronger and sustainable region
- To build up a critical mass of women, especially young women leaders who can deliver effective rights based programmes that empower communities and build the foundation for goal 2035.
- To provide support to member associations in advance of Council 2019 and the opportunity for collective vision, strategizing and action.

The Conference theme was: **Transformative and Inter-generational Leadership for a strong and sustainable movement in the African region.** The two-day meeting provided YWCAs across the Africa region with a platform to discuss tangible engagement strategies for young women in leadership within and outside the YWCA. Strategies discussed included actions World YWCA and national YWCAs in Africa can take towards improving organizational governance as a basis for a stronger YWCA movement in the region. The various sessions featured presentations from young women in YWCA leadership across the region and group discussions that highlighted the critical internal and external challenges facing YWCA and the development of strategies to build a viable movement on the African continent. On Day Two of the meeting, the engagement was around the exchange ideas and good practices, the creation and strengthening of partnerships to foster the Page development of a regional YWCA. The countries represented at the meeting constituted themselves into a formal meeting to make resolutions aimed at starting a regional YWCA body tasking a committee to take the process forward and report back during the World Council meeting to be held in South Africa in November 2019.

Representatives from the YWCA of Malawi were the Board President Dr Mtisunge Kachingwe and Executive director Nettie Dzabala.



2. 29th WORLD YWCA COUNCIL

The 29th World YWCA Council was organised by the World YWCA and hosted by the YWCA South Africa and it was held at the OR Tambo Conference Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa, from 17 to 22 November 2019. The theme chosen for the 29th World Council was “Young Women Transforming Power Structures for Gender Equality”, which was rooted in Goal 2035 that was adopted by the delegates at the 2015 World Council in Bangkok. This goal states that: “By 2035, 100 million young women and girls transform power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women.”

There was representation from 71 countries with 256 delegates, and hundreds of observers and special guests, including sponsor and partner representatives. The host association welcomed and embraced all Council attendees, as did the people of South Africa and Gauteng Province. They created a home away from home to YWCA leaders from all around the globe. Representatives of the YWCA of Malawi to world council were

- Dr Mtisunge Kachingwe – Board President
- Alice Bwanausi – Board member
- Nettie Dzabala – Executive Director

At the World Council, with young women being 30% of voting delegates and 33% of attendees overall, they and leaders of all ages lived the Council theme, “Young women transforming power structures for gender equality”. Young women leaders chaired business sessions, led workshops & consultation sessions, and were the lead speakers and facilitators of thematic and plenary sessions. The Young Women’s Global Advisory Council, established at the 28th World Council in Bangkok, Thailand, shared a formal report, including their wisdom and recommendations for the future. A four-year strategic framework and budget were approved. The framework tends to issues of operations, governance, responsibility and accountability within the YWCA movement, and also the YWCA as part of the global women's and human rights movement. It centres young women and their allies in transforming power structures for a just and peaceful world.

At Council, we embraced our history by committing to a future where Goal 2035 is realized and we witness the power of girls, young women and women, beyond measure. We committed to a future where young women and their allies transform power structures for a just and peaceful world. With the strategic framework as our guide during the new quadrennium of 2020-2023, the

World YWCA will continue to address business and mission intent to achieve Goal 2035 and ensure YWCA is relevant to girls, young women and women in communities around the globe. And, we will turn more outward, with a commitment to substance, outcomes and authentic partnership, and meaningfully engage with external stakeholders.

The World YWCA Council was a space for collective decision making, mutual learning and the sharing of stories for the movement and delegates. It provided a space to build community, nurture friendships and develop new leaders.

