

CELEBRATING **5 Years**
of Power to You(th)

LEARNING FOR LEGACY:
Embedding change beyond 2025

HELLO, WELCOME!

HERE'S THE SCOOP ON THIS MAGAZINE!

This magazine marks a celebration of five years of the Power to You(th) (PtY) programme. It documents not only our milestones but also the struggles, breakthroughs, and lessons that made the journey meaningful.

From Ethiopia to Indonesia, Malawi to Kenya, Senegal, Ghana, and Uganda, we have worked with youth to challenge harmful practices - **FGM/C, child marriage, unintended pregnancies, and SGBV**. Along the way, we have seen laws rewritten, budgets shifted, and social norms challenged.

THE MAGAZINE WILL HIGHLIGHT PtY's FIVE-YEAR JOURNEY, SHOWCASING KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES, AND CULMINATING IN THE LEARNING AND CELEBRATION FESTIVAL.

Abbreviations:

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| PtY | Power to You(th), |
| AGYW | Adolescent Girls and Young Women, |
| CMT | Country Management Team, |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization(s), |
| GSB | Global Supervisory Board, |
| GMT | Global Management Team, |
| GTA | Gender Transformative Approach, |
| YLA | Youth-Led Advocacy Model, |
| FGM/C | Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender-Based Violence |
| SRHR | Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, |
| MIYP | Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation, |
| ETE | End-of-Term Evaluation, |
| PMERL | Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning |



Quick Dive

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Key Highlights from our 5-Year Journey of Embedding Change

Over five years, we have grown from an idea into a **movement of youth-led change.**

| 2021 Foundation | 2022 Youth Empowerment & CSO Strengthening | 2023 Norms & Policy Changes | 2024 Scaling Successful Models | 2025 Results & Sustainability |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>2021 Foundation</p> <p>We launched in seven countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda), building partnerships, establishing youth-inclusive governance structures and bringing youth, civil society organizations, government and traditional/religious leaders on board.</p> | <p>2022 Youth Empowerment & CSO Strengthening</p> <p>Youth advocates & champions are empowered, unite and start to influence decision making on harmful practices (FGM/C, child marriage), SGBV, and unintended pregnancies. They are building a movement with CSOs, whose capacities are strengthened. Youth-led campaigns amplified SRHR issues at national and regional levels, giving adolescents a stronger public voice.</p> | <p>2023 Norms & policy change</p> <p>The Mid-Term Evaluation showed that through approaches such as intergenerational dialogues, community advocacy, gender transformative approach and (social) media campaigning community norms are changing and local leaders express commitments to youth rights and progressive SRHR, despite pushbacks from opposition groups.</p> | <p>2024 Scaling Successful Models</p> <p>The programme achieves impact, through scaling successful models that empower youth, change social & gender norms and influence policy change & implementation, such as the Youth Parliament, the Model Gendered Family, Reproductive Health and Sexuality Education and youth-led budget advocacy. This results in inclusion of youth in policy discussions and more progressive laws and policies.</p> | <p>2025 Results & Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 5 million people reached through campaigns & media• Over 200,000 people reached through capacity building & awareness creation• More than 36,000 young people empowered• 4,561 youth advocates are meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes and platforms• 539 civil society organizations have been strengthened• 77 laws and policies changed |



LET US UNPACK THIS 5-YEAR JOURNEY OF HARD WORK, COLLABORATION, AND TRANSFORMATION TOGETHER.



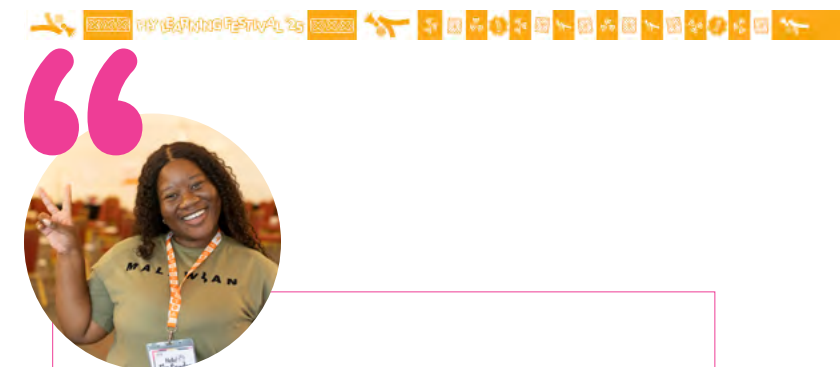
The Learning Festival - Moment Recaps!

"This event is a chance for us to celebrate our collective journey, hear from leaders and peers, to remind each other that our experiences, our ideas and voices matter. You will hear keynotes that will spark thought, challenge perspective and inspire action"

- Najab and Weston (Youth Representatives from GMT and GSB)

PICTURE THIS: >>>

A vibrant and unforgettable festival, filled with the fresh energy of youth and the confidence of inspiring leaders and mentors, the atmosphere sparked with hope and possibility. Representatives from all seven PtY countries participated, each bringing their unique spirit to Mombasa, Kenya. The attendees came ready, to learn, to reflect, to exchange, to discuss and to celebrate. The magic of the festival came alive through everyone's energy and participation. From reflecting on the results, to diving deep into breakout sessions, to dancing together, to brainstorming creative solutions to important challenges, all participants showed what true vibrancy and collaboration look like.



"I'm happy because, through social accountability monitoring, our young trainees were able to effectively track child marriage cases, identify patterns and trends, and use this information to design better solutions."

Sandra Kamwendo
Youth leader, Malawi



"One of my most memorable moments was receiving a call from State House informing me that one of our youth had been selected to receive an award for their outstanding efforts in the fight against FGM. It was a proud and emotional reminder that our work is truly making a difference."

Dorcus Indalo, Programme Manager, Kenya



"Here we come together, to ponder, to reflect, to manifest, to celebrate, because celebration is methodology, because joy is data, when a girl triumphs over the treacherous intensity of a ruthless blade threatening to cut off her life, finds her voice in a classroom. Because a pad in a backpack is as revolutionary as a new constitution.

Celebration is methodology, because a boy who learns consent becomes a bridge we never have to rebuild later. No more FGM, say no to Child marriages."

Onyango Otieno "Rixpoet" Spoken Word Artist



7 KEY LESSONS LEARNED

The Learning Festival was a place to learn and reflect, looking at achievements and lessons from 5 years of implementation of Power to You(th).

Based on the End Term Evaluation and discussions during the festival, 7 key lessons learned from 5 years of Power to You(th) are:



03

GTA integration should have started earlier, but caught up.

Although GTA was embedded in the design of the programme, it was not fully prioritized in budgets and during the inception phase. Building on MTR recommendations, partners made several adaptations which prioritized GTA capacity strengthening and programming more in the second half of the programme. In the end, the ETE concluded that GTA was an effective strategy and PtY was able to embed gender equity into households, communities, schools and national policies.

04

Partnership management should be purposefully facilitated.

In a multi-country consortium, managing power dynamics and expectations across different partners proved challenging. Active facilitation of partnership spaces, consensus-building processes, and clear communication protocols was critical to ensure equitable participation and programme coherence.

01

Youth-led advocacy is more sustainable when linked to institutional mechanisms.

Youth voices had greater impact when linked to formal mechanisms such as county fiscal planning sessions, legislative assemblies, or national coalitions than when limited to community-level dialogues.

02

Funding youth long-term enhances effectiveness.

Flexible and long-term (multi-year) funding for youth-led organizations was more effective than short-term project-specific funding, as it enhanced sustainability and agency.





05

Continuous capacity strengthening and mentorship (not one-off training) are essential for youth and CSOs to effectively apply skills and sustain advocacy efforts.

06

Inclusion requires intentionality.

Intersectional barriers faced by marginalized groups (e.g. those with disabilities, from ethnic minorities or LGBTQIA+) must be actively identified and addressed through targeted strategies. It is recommended for future programmes to partner and co-create interventions with rights holder-led organizations to reflect lived experiences.

07

Religious and traditional leaders can be champions of change.

One of the key successes in PtY was the influence of religious and traditional leaders when actively engaged in norm-change interventions. However, engagement was not uniform across countries. To strengthen community ownership and shift entrenched beliefs, it works best when norm-change strategies are co-created with gatekeepers from the outset.





Our Winning Approaches!

A highlight of the learning festival was a reflection on the methods & approaches that we used in the last 5 years, which steered the programme to success. What came out clearly was that throughout the Power to You(th) programme, these six approaches shaped design, implementation and outcomes across the seven countries. Here is an overview!



I. Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP)

This principle is the backbone of the PtY programme, and it defined the way youth were engaged and empowered throughout all the pathways. Youth took leadership roles in governance structures, technical working groups and country management teams, directly shaping the programme agendas. We invested in cross-country collaboration and peer learning among youth.

We saw how different mechanisms in-country like youth parliaments, Youth-talks, youth-led councils and intergenerational dialogues were effective in enabling the youth voice in conversations with decision makers. Some key outcomes are the many youth across the countries who now have confidence and leadership skills, the developed youth accountability tools like MIYP checklists that aided in reporting and institutionalised youth participation in decision-making processes.



“Because of PtY, I feel like I am a role model in the country because first I am the change that I wanted to see in the community, I am a leader, I lead young people, I show them the way to engage with leaders and show them how to engage them using write-ups, papers, memoranda etc.”

Maroa Peter Gire
Youth Researcher, Kenya



“When youth are meaningfully involved in programming, knowledge does not just breathe, it flows endlessly like water from a tap, every idea, lesson, and experience keeps filling the basin of change.”

Awa Niasse
Regional Manager, PtY Senegal



II. Gender Transformative Approach (GTA)

GTA served as the programme’s core methodology for shifting social norms and promoting equality. The PtY partner organizations inspired gender transformation in community interventions and institutional cultures, which encouraged critical review of existing power dynamics and engaged men, boys and community leaders as allies.

WE STAND AGAINST SGBV & HARMFUL PRACTICES!

Challenges

ORGANISATIONS DO NOT ALWAYS PRIORITIZE GTA IN BUDGETS

OPPOSITION FROM COMMUNITIES

CONTRACEPTIVES WERE PERCEIVED TO ENCOURAGE GIRLS TO BE PROMISCUOUS

PATRIARCHAL NORMS & STEREOTYPES

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH (GTA)

Our Approach

GTA TRAININGS FOR OUR PARTNERS

INCLUDING & MAINSTREAMING GTA IN PROCESSES

GTA EXPERTS TO SUPPORT PROGRAMMING

TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

INCLUSION OF GTA & MIYP FROM THE PLANNING PHASE TO EVALUATION

GENDER TRANSFORMATION IS STARTING AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

Our Wins

- RADIO SHOWS WERE EFFECTIVE IN SOCIAL NORM CHANGE
- YOUNG PEOPLE WERE INFORMED ABOUT REPORTING AVENUES & JUSTICE REFERRAL SYSTEMS

PEOPLE INITIALLY OPPOSED HAVE NOW BECOME CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

INTEGRATING CSE WHEN TEACHING IN SCHOOLS RESPECTING RELIGIOUS VALUES

ENGAGING RELIGIOUS LEADERS

ADAPT INITIATIVES TO LOCAL SETTINGS

CHANGE OF MENTALITY IN COMMUNITIES

ENGAGING MEN

FUNDING FOR INTERVENTIONS BY SMALL YOUTH GROUPS

THE GLOBAL POWER TO YOUTH LEARNING & CELEBRATION FESTIVAL 2025 EMBEDDING CHANGE BEYOND 2025 #learningforlegacy 29TH SEPTEMBER - 3RD OCTOBER 2025 DESIGNED BY: KEEKE ART



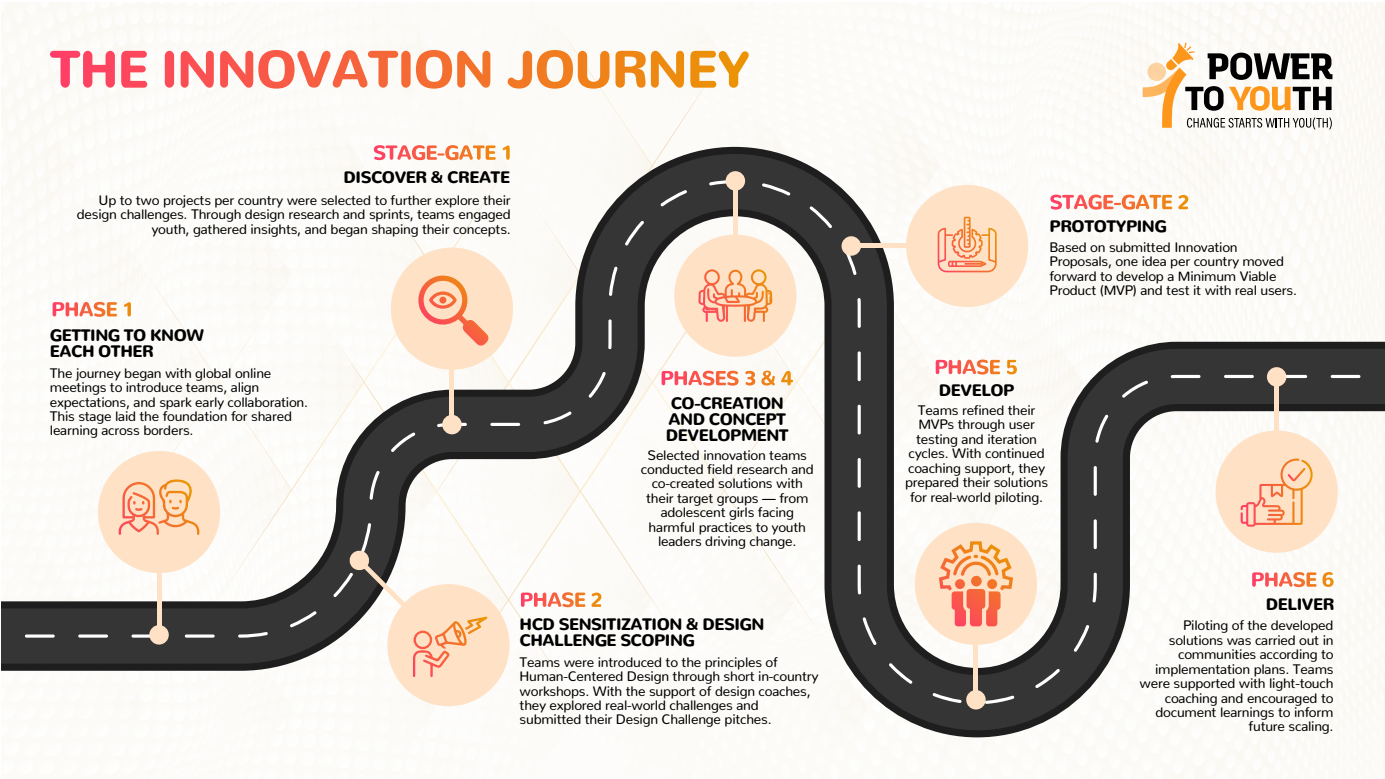
“We made our own digital game that gives you a chance to play six different change maker roles ranging from teachers, doctors, parents, etc, where you collaborate with other players to support children against child marriage.”

Revian Putra Jaya Pratama Project Manager 2030 Youth Force, Indonesia

III. Human-Centred Design (HCD)

To enhance innovation, Power to You(th) worked with Human-Centred Design (HCD) as a creative approach to problem solving and co-creation. In Kenya, co-designed positive masculinity sessions with boys and men helped shift community perceptions on gender-based violence, fostering healthier relationships. In Uganda, sports events and savings groups became more than social activities; they doubled as platforms for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocacy, reaching communities in engaging ways.

Equally inspiring innovations emerged elsewhere. In Indonesia, traditional art forms such as puppet shows and religious poetry (nadzam) opened up space for reproductive health conversations in conservative communities. Meanwhile, in Malawi, young people themselves led the redesign of initiation curricula, replacing harmful rites with safe and empowering content that protects and uplifts girls. These diverse strategies showcase how youth-driven solutions can meaningfully address complex social challenges.



The HCD pilots proved what we knew all along, that when people design the solutions, they own the change!

IV. Advocacy at Community, National and Global Level

To achieve systemic change, Power to You(th) strengthened the capacity of youth advocates and CSOs to dialogue with (local and national) decision makers, influence policy and hold leaders accountable. This was backed by building partnerships and using evidence to engage state and social actors. Next to this, the connection between movements on national level and advocates at the global level, enriched advocacy during AU and UN processes in Addis Ababa and New York, and supported in-country advocates to hold their governments accountable on global commitments.

This has had remarkable results, such as influencing key national and regional policies, for example, the East African Anti-FGM Bill and Malawi's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) shadow report, amplifying youth-led campaigns, for instance, Ghana's "Don't Tax My Pad" initiative and Kenya's budget tracking on SGBV, and embedding youth voices in governance.

V. Research and Learning

Transformative change must be rooted in evidence and lived experience. That's why research, learning, and documentation are central to Power to You(th). An element of this is the Central Operational Research (COR) journey: a bold, youth-powered exploration of what's working, what's shifting, and how change truly happens. With national teams and young researchers at the lead, it was explored how key PtY approaches are sparking real change. Research topics included:

- Engaging Religious and Community Leaders in Sexual and Gender Based Violence Programming
- Technology Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)
- Barriers and facilitators to SRHR policy implementation
- Social Accountability and Community Engagement
- Cross Border Dialogue Interventions to End FGM
- Social Norms Surrounding Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and their Influence on Care and Support
- Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation and Youth leadership



“Due to the efforts of PtY in Ghana, we were able to meet stakeholders, members of the parliament and other relevant ministers to table the issue of menstrual hygiene. It has led to the reduction of prices for locally manufactured sanitary pads.”

Najat Seidu
Youth Representative, PtY Global Management Team



“A big part of advocacy is not just working on policy or with government, it is also about creating a youth movement. I would say the biggest achievement for CHOICE was creating this sustainable movement that is inspiring and powerful.”

Poppy Stanbury
Advocacy and Communications Coordinator, CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality

VI. Intergenerational dialogues

These dialogues between young people and societal actors like religious leaders, traditional leaders, healthcare professionals and parents have proven to be effective in changing harmful social norms. Intergenerational dialogues have been a key approach in Power to You(th) to address taboo SRHR topics across generations in a culturally safe way, to challenge myths and misconceptions on child marriage, FGM/C, SGBV and unintended pregnancies, to increase acceptance of youth participation in governance, to improve trust and communication between young people and adults and to co-create solutions and commitments that adults agree to enforce and support.



The Four Pathways In our Journey and Impact



1. YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Youth-led advocacy and leadership have proven to be powerful forces for change. The End-Term Evaluation concludes that across seven countries, the programme successfully created platforms and opportunities for youth engagement and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) stepped into leadership roles in community dialogues, research, and policy advocacy to address Harmful Practices, SGBV and Unintended Pregnancies.

36K
YOUNG PEOPLE
EMPOWERED

ETHIOPIA



In 14 implementation districts trained and mentored in life skills, SRHR themes, lobby & advocacy, club leadership and management. As a result, youth agency and leadership expanded, girls and young women had more confidence to discuss sensitive issues with peers, parents and decision makers. As a result, youth representatives now sit on district councils in PtY intervention areas, voicing youth issues directly, and several districts have even allocated budgets for youth clubs to implement youth activities.

GHANA



1,291 YOUTH
ADVOCATES
Meaningfully participated
in decision making spaces.

The End Term Evaluation concludes that these youth have gained confidence, and were able to influence community by-laws and local policies. For example in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba, where the Assembly adopted a by-law prohibiting child marriage and school dropout due to pregnancy, with sanctions for offenders.

INDONESIA



10,000+ in Reproductive
YOUNG PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED **Health and Sexuality
Education.**

The ETE concludes that RHSE results in greater self-confidence to discuss sexuality, bodily rights, and reproductive health openly with peers and even parents.



"I reported the case of my friend, who was about to be forced into early marriage. I was able to find the right support from Power to You(th), where I learned where to seek help, who to talk to, and how to take action. In the end, through collaboration, we successfully prevented the marriage. That experience was life-changing. Now, I am equipped to educate my friends, families, and the community, working to eliminate these harmful practices from our society."

Zahara Ahmed Youth activist, Ethiopia

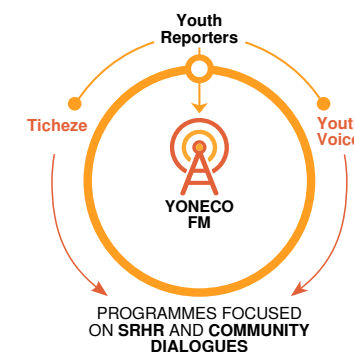


2. CSO STRENGTHENING

Power to You(th) strengthened and supported Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), especially youth and women-led groups, which played a key role in driving and sustaining change. In all countries, CSOs acted as bridges between youth and policymakers, turning grassroots advocacy into formal engagement.

539
CIVIL
SOCIETY
ORGANISATIONS

MALAWI



Partnerships are set up between CSOs, youth groups and media actors. As a result, local radio stations became a key player in creating public awareness on HP, SGBV and UP.

For example YONECO FM, that started to work with youth reporters and radio listening clubs, broadcasting "Youth Voices" and "Ticheze" programmes focused on SRHR and community dialogues, and airing interviews with traditional leaders, district officials, and youth advocates to promote accountability.

40 'MOVEMENTS OF
YOUTH' (MoY)



EMPOWERED TO LEAD CHANGE
IN THEIR COMMUNITY

GHANA

The End Term Evaluation concludes that these MoYs are safe spaces for youth to build confidence and engage their peers through advocacy, dialogues, and creative approaches like drama and role play.

Next to this, regional MoYs mentored smaller groups, while the National MoY linked these structures to national policy platforms, amplifying youth perspectives and leading advocacy campaigns.

UGANDA

Capacity building and strengthening investments matured 169 Community Based Organizations. For example in Bukwo, where a group of CSOs developed a referral pathway for SGBV victims, improving access to health and legal services.

169
COMMUNITY
BASED
ORGANIZATIONS



"Collaboration among youth-led and adult CSOs has improved; they now approach the government as a bloc, which increases their influence."

County official,
Kisumu, Kenya



3. SOCIAL NORM CHANGE

The Power to You(th) programme has shown that it is possible to change social norms around harmful practices, gender-based violence, and unintended pregnancies. In all countries, youth groups, CSOs, and traditional leaders worked together to challenge practices like FGM and child marriage. Their efforts led to public declarations, supportive by-laws, and actual change in attitudes and behaviours. Across countries, multi-pronged strategies, combining dialogue, media,

intergenerational engagement, and community mobilization, proved especially effective.

Resistance from conservative groups showed that attitude change alone isn't enough; lasting transformation needs legal support, accountability, and shared ownership. When community leaders became active co-advocates, outcomes were stronger and more sustainable.

ETHIOPIA



Religious leaders joined hands with young people to stop 50 child marriages, and dialogues with families and communities resulted in changed attitudes on this topic.

SENEGAL

The 'Grandmother Project approach' led to breaking of taboos and changing social norms on FGM.

MALAWI



In Machinga region, intergenerational dialogues resulted in the 'chief forum' enacting a by-law against child marriages and returning 91 married girls to school.

UGANDA



35 FAITH & CULTURAL LEADERS

In Kampala, partners co-authored an inter-faith commitment to end teenage pregnancy and child marriage, codifying messages and concrete roles for their institutions.



"One of the grantees managed to urge the traditional council to initiate and institutionalise youth Queen Mothers into their traditional councils, therefore having the voice of young people, especially adolescent and young women, more included in traditional decision-making platforms."

Mathilda A. Ayamga
Country Representative, Ghana.



4. LAW & POLICY CHANGE AND IMPLEMENTATION

OVERALL PATHWAY 4 OUTCOMES:



Outcomes under Pathway 4 confirmed that engaging state actors can lead to real institutional change when advocacy is strategic, evidence-based, and sustained. Participatory tools such as social audits, community scorecards, and policy dialogues helped ground advocacy in evidence, resulting in law and policy changes and improved implementation.

KENYA

Youth-led coalitions influenced policy reviews and budget allocations, including the launch of the Homa Bay SGBV Policy, which strengthened survivor-centred services.

SENEGAL

Radio campaigns and policy dialogues catalysed new government support for youth programming & increased budgetary allocations to youth-friendly services integrated into local government budgets.

ETHIOPIA

PtY advocacy led to adoption of the 'Family Law' in Afar Region, a landmark reform addressing child marriage, FGM, and inheritance rights.



77 LAWS & POLICIES CHANGED



4,561 YOUTH ADVOCATES are meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes and platforms



"What stuck with me is that when the president asked for a delegation from Migori County, some of the young people from our organisation were selected to go discuss matters of development in Migori County."

Maroa Peter Gire,
Youth Researcher, Kenya



Looking Forward: Beyond PtY

As the Power to You(th) programme period comes to an end by 2025, it is important to note that more needs to be done. The research and evaluations demonstrated the effectiveness of the programme, motivating us to extend beyond 2025. Given the rapidly evolving global landscape characterized by the rise of conservative forces and anti-rights movements, there is an urgent need to further invest in empowering adolescent girls and young women to assert their rights. The Power to You(th) global consortium & technical partners, and in-country partners aim to scale the programme by expanding and deepening our successful models, and extending the reach. We invite partners, governments, donors, and communities to collaborate with us and continue the work.



Thank you & Acknowledgements

This legacy belongs to all who made Power to You(th) possible: the youth leaders, CSOs, communities, state partners, and global allies who believed that **young people are not the leaders of tomorrow; they are leaders today.**

We thank every partner who trusted youth voices, every community that opened its doors, and every young person who stood up for change.



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