



MALAWI x KENYA

EXCHANGE LEARNING REPORT

2022

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INTRODUCTION

The Power to You(th) partnership contributes to more adolescent girls and young women from underserved communities being meaningfully included in decision-making processes regarding harmful practices, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and unintended pregnancies. The programme has partners in Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Uganda, South Africa and The Netherlands. The partnership aims to raise public support, advocate for improved policies and laws, and strengthen civil society to amplify young people's voices to claim, protect and expand civic space.

The Power to You(th) was conceived in 2020, with implementation kicking off in 2021. Due to several factors including challenges related to COVID-19 restrictions and restrictive government policies regarding SRHR issues; the different countries are at different levels of implementation. Some PTY countries have piloted some good practices which if replicated in other PTY countries would have a ripple effect in creating an enabling environment for adolescent girls and young women to amplify their voices and claim the civic space. During the face-to-face annual reflection event held in March 2022, the different countries were able to showcase some of the models they were piloting or upscaling in their different contexts. More to that, during the Global coordinators' group meetings, national coordinators usually share their best practices which enable countries to learn from each other. One of the mandates of the Power to You(th) Coordination Lab is to promote cross-country communication, collaboration and learning. The Coordination Lab invests in exchange and learning between countries and partners.

SUPER SUPER BRIEF SUMMARY

In September 2022, the Power to You(th) Coordination Lab facilitated an exchange learning session between two implementation countries within the partnership; Malawi and Kenya. A call for proposals was sent out with each CMT submitting their proposed learning area and country of choice. The highest scoring proposals brought together representatives from Kenya to Malawi for intensive knowledge exchange and learning sessions based on impactful advocacy and MIYP models such as SASA, YLA, youth parliaments, and the motion tracker.

Once in Malawi, the team set expectations for the meeting and the key expectations were:

1. Learning key strategies from each other and creating a learning network beyond the exchange learning activity.
2. Understanding the community engagement and implementation process of each partner, and presenting lessons learnt.
3. Dissecting the various innovative methodologies of frameworks of interest (SASA, YLA, youth parliaments, etc)

Outside the intensive informative and sharing sessions, the Kenyan team had an opportunity to visit the implementation sites in Malawi first-hand and speak directly to 5 state actors in Machinga District on the prevalent issues in the area such as child marriage and sexual and gender-based violence. Especially the menace surrounding cross-border FGM tactics and the various strategies Malawi has deployed to mitigate this recurrent trend. Now it's time for the juicy part. Let's dive in, shall we?

POWER TO YOU(TH) KENYA CONTEXT

The PTY Kenya CMT consists of Amref Health Africa Kenya, NAYA, Tunaweza Empowerment CBO, Naret Ntoiye, Wanawake Wavuvi and Siaya Muungano Network. Implementation is focused on four counties: Siaya, Kajiado, Homabay and Migori. PTY Kenya addresses issues regarding SGBV, early child marriage, SRHR, and issues surrounding young people on health and unintended pregnancies. They employ a community-intensive approach by engaging religious leaders and community elders. The project also includes policymakers, i.e in the creation of anti-FGM laws in Kajiado county. In Migori PTY focuses on reducing FGM and unintended pregnancies in the regions of Kuria East and Kuria West. The most affected tribe is Kuria which is a minority community in the area where women are subjected to FGM/C. In these cases, PTY works closely with church elders and community leaders. The project also is working closely with the national and county legislative to champion resource allocation to address these prevalent issues. Homabay is keen on SGBV and creating inclusive youth spaces to openly discuss and address unintended pregnancies in the community.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. Are the policies creating a conducive environment for PtY implementation?

Yes, at the moment there are two favourable policies supporting our implementation activities:

- A. FGM Act
- B. Policies in SHRHR

2. What is being done to address the inter-border crossing on FGM activities?

This has been an emerging trend of perpetrators smuggling girls across the Kenyan border to neighbouring countries such as Tanzania in order to perform FGM. Advocacy leads have taken action by co-working with young activists, media, creating a good relationship with state actors across borders, identifying areas they can make a difference, giving young people information on SHRHR, and involvement of cultural elders who are men in a bid to reduce FGM activities in the area.

3. How are policies on SHRHR made and followed up?

In Kajiado, the team work closely with teachers, religious leaders and women to discuss these issues, and this feeds into creating policies that have the cultural and community context in mind.

SUSTAINABILITY

The project works as a linkage with key stakeholders to address the sexual reproductive health issues around FGM, unintended pregnancies and child marriage hence giving the community the power to address and curb harmful cultures. The advocacy structures and youth models in place within the community provide a platform for their voices to be amplified directly to community leaders and policymakers.

POWER TO YOU(TH) MALAWI CONTEXT

The PTY Malawi CMT consists of Amref Health Africa Malawi, CYECE, SRHR Alliance, CHRR, Youth Wave and MHRRC. The project evolves around policy, programme and financing, youth participation and service delivery. Malawi 2063 is a blueprint plan that envisions the future of Malawi and has areas that surround youth SHR issues. It is unfortunate that the country has limited resources to fund matters surroundings SHRHR. PTY has played an important role in linking underserved communities with state actors.

The project also works with youth networks in addressing SGBV issues and child marriage within the district level namely Magochi and Dedza. Given the cultural context, there are high teen pregnancies and child marriages and PtY Malawi is working with communities to address these issues. It is unfortunate that the communities are doing things underground i.e South African men who have immigrated to Malawi to marry underaged girls from Malawi and because of the economic condition the girls are married for the economic benefit of the family.

PTY is training community leaders to give age-appropriate lessons during the transition ceremonies to adulthood i.e. menstrual health, hygiene etc. Malawi is both matriarchal and patriarchal and still, the men hold power and make most key decisions in the community it is important to sensitize them on the effects of SGBV and early child marriage.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. How is the policy implementation structured?

The TWG work on matters on a case-by-case basis and identify how each case should be handled. They work with the police and law enforcement in addressing issues such as SGBV and child marriages

2. What is the re-admission policy?

Re-admission policy is for young girls who got babies while still in school and are given an opportunity to go back to school. The policy addresses how young girls can balance school and motherhood.

3. How is service delivery done and is it working?

The education system provides safe spaces for young girls through advocacy activities that are done by local media and now PTY has joined the advocacy implementation to amplify their voices.

Progress

- The Malawi government has passed laws that removed VAT on hygiene products.
- As a way of holding the policymakers accountable for promises made to the community, the team managed to garner written commitments to support the promises.
- Sports and youth-led activities have played an important role in creating an avenue for information sharing on challenges faced by young people in the community.
- The Malawi 2023 strategy has included strengthening the CHEWS that will feed into INFMIS hence a way of monitoring and evaluation.

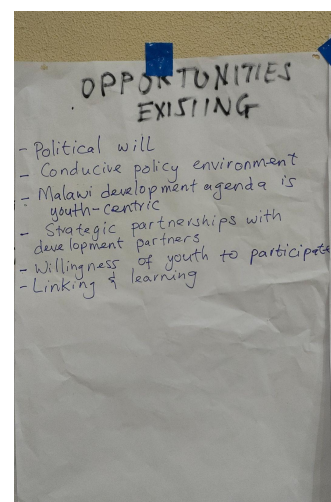
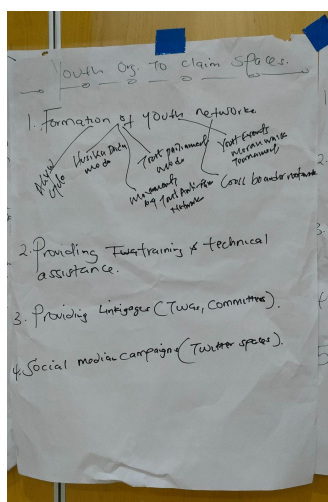
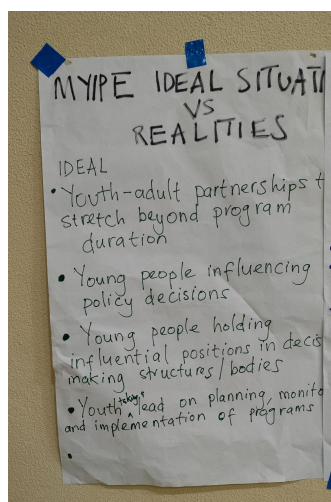
Challenges

- Sexuality education is not comprehensive within the communities. In addition, the use of contraceptives has not been adopted because the culture and religion are not receptive to messaging on this front.
- The Youth friendly services are not active or tended to. This limits the safe avenues for youth in the community to speak up about their challenges or access safe SRHR services.
- The extended families have more power when it comes to making decisions for the girl child. This has birthed the need for even more sensitization within a community and from different levels/perspectives.
- There is no harmonization of the education and youth law vs the pinnacle code laws. This has created a gap in allowing harmful practices to continue uninterrupted in the communities.

MIYP IDEAL SITUATIONS VS REALITIES

The Malawi team facilitated a session that focused on diving deeper into the core of Meaningful Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP) at the community level. The country representatives took turns in creating a clear perspective on what a MIYP situation looks like in their specific communities versus what the current reality is. This comparison helped to map out the contrast between both scenarios and clearly showcase what needs to be done to meet the ideal MIYP reality they hope to see.

KENYA CONTEXT	MALAWI CONTEXT
<i>Ideal MIYP Scenario</i>	<i>Ideal MIYP Scenario</i>
- National and sub-national committees should have youth representation - Effective involvement of young people in decision making - Pro-youth policies - Existence of government-driven youth participation	- Youth adult partnerships that stretch beyond program duration - Young people influencing policy decisions - Young people holding influential positions in decision-making bodies/structures - Youth taking lead in planning, monitoring and implementation of programs
<i>MIYP Reality</i>	<i>MIYP Reality</i>
- The majority of the committees at the national and county levels are represented by adult people - Limited involvement of your people - Limited implementation of pro-youth policies. - The majority of the projects are partner-led and when they pull out this affects implementation	- Tokenism - Manipulation - The rigidity of adults to change - Young people do not have a voice on policies and decisions that affect them - Conducive policy environment
Which opportunities exist for young people in our different contexts (Malawi and Kenya)?	
- Pro-youth policies/ legislation - Existing networks at the national and sub-national levels within government - Existence of CSO movements from the grassroots to the national government - Government goodwill/youth affirmative action - Development of partner programs on youth issues	



MODEL EXCHANGE

During the model and methodologies exchange session, the two countries ran an in-depth dissecting session where the various advocacy and youth-led models being implemented were brought to the table. This intensive session gave room for open learning and charged discussions. The models:

MALAWI: YOUTH LED ADVOCACY MODEL (YLA)

YLA starts by Identification of youth advocates and creating terms of references(TOR) for them. The model looks at the diversity of the youth to ensure inclusivity i.e people living with disability, youth from underserved communities and youth living with HIV and AIDS. After the identification stage, they do a capacity assessment to identify the gaps and capacity strengthening on those gaps is later conducted via capacity-building tools and mentorship. The empowered youth then act as consistent and informed advocates who have an insider advantage within the communities.

Advocacy tools used in the model:

- Advocacy intervention
- The use of youth-friendly methods and tactics for Youth Safe Space
- Ensuring continuity in the youth Leadership process.
- Petitions, lobby meetings, stay away strikes, big walks etc.

Monitoring is conducted by:

1. Development of tools based on specific advocacy tools.
2. Working with the police for reporting.
3. Training young people to follow up on commitments as a monitoring tool (social accountability)

Evaluation is done by;

- Use of Youth centric indicators in evaluating the outcome
- Youth leadership in evaluation
- Knowledge management for learning and further advocacy
- Identifying the rationale for Youth law Empowerment to young people by engagement of state actors.

Sustainability

- Young people can consistently address issues they are facing or concerns through the use of existing youth stakeholders
- Clearly outlining the role of each partner or ally within the YLA chain creates clear accountability and a sense of ownership
- There is power in number and the youth are the majority
- Fostering and championing more youth-adult partnerships in the community

Challenges

- Unfortunately, young people move to the cities in search for a better life and the project has to hold refresher courses for new youth coming onboard
- The youth in Machinga and Dedza were not included in the gender element of decision making which poses a challenge in trying to persuade inclusion with the elders.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES QUESTIONS 🧐

1. How do you communicate and disseminate information to young people?

The team have modules to address the key issues and are revised when a gap has been identified. Additionally, the approach can also be tailored based on the goal in mind and the gaps identified.

2. How are you managing opposition?

- It depends on the type of opposition, but the team does a review process and brings in different ideas that are debated to critically identify the best approach to tackling the opposition.
- Use of youth-adult partnership provides a stronger support system for our advocacy work.
- It is important for the Youth to have information on the specific issues they are presenting. Thus we prioritize sensitization, training and capacity building for the youth and providing support.

3. How do the youth contribute to other issues and change the community?

The approach gave the youth advocates confidence to be involved in non-SHRH issues such as being involved in public expenditure.

4. Which model is the best for the youth?

SASA model would work best because they work on existing structures:

- It uses stories of significant changes
- It collects both qualitative and quantitative data.
- It provides the voices to support the reports.
- Use of outcome harvesting approach makes it more impactful
- Areas that the youth have taken that they did not take before
- Engagement of young people in all levels of management and understanding that with Youth there is power through Youth-Adult participation.

MALAWI: SASA APPROACH MODEL

SASA, which stands for **Start Awareness Support Action**, is a community-based approach, whereby the youth and community leaders first understand the dynamics of the community and the key issues that surround SRHR existing in the community that needs to be addressed. Awareness is key in this model and it is done by training community members on issues surrounding SGBV and the effect it has on an individual using SASA facilitators. During the awareness, they also discuss HIV and AIDS which have contributed to SGBV, especially among women. Action is another pillar of this model and is done by involving proper structures in addressing these issues i.e victims, community leaders and law enforcement. **Monitoring:** During the mentorship camp of young people, they take time to monitor the activities and understand how the community is using the model. There are 4 manuals the tool has that are used and the tools target different groups who can champion specific issues. The model can be scaled up and the information can be disseminated down to an individual.

KENYA: YOUTH PARLIAMENT MODEL

The Youth Parliament constitutes of young people (18-35 years) and is purely based on advocacy, devoid of any political agenda or affiliation. The young people voluntarily meet to discuss matters within the community. The model depends on evidence; presenting the issue for a motion in the county parliament. The rapport for this initiative has different stakeholders who come voluntary, thus nobody is paid to attend the sessions. This parliament created a reliable platform for young people's issues to be consistently heard and addressed. The parliament has a speaker to enable an easy flow of young people's agenda. There are customized standing orders that can be shared and can be scaled up. All the issues are documented and they create a memorandum and submit it to the clerks of the county government of Kenya.

KENYA: MOTION TRACKER

The model is popularly used in Kenya and Uganda to track commitments made within the development space, especially in the reproductive health sector. The Kenya team shed light on this innovation; how monitoring and tracking of SRHR commitments in Kenya is conducted in other programs via motion tracker.

How the Motion Tracker Works:

It is a customizable tracker and can be adopted, It enables accountability and ownership. It follows the following steps:

- Documents review
- Online database searches
- Classification of commitments.
- Identify documents that are easily understandable
- Deconstructions of commitments
- Understanding the document's background and the spirit and the thoughts behind it by conducting stakeholder interviews
- Categorizing of commitments.
- Classifying them based on WHO HSS building blocks finance, service delivery
- Development of commitments process indicators.
- Develop process indicators to measure progress on achievement of commitments.
- Continuous Partner Engagement.
- Ensure all stakeholders are using their expertise and resources to achieve the fulfilment of the commitments.

Benefits of the Motion Tracker:

- It is adaptable.
- Tracks both financial and non-financial commitments.
- Tracks actions of the stakeholder and partners A tool for transparency
- Recognizes the voices of the champion



MEETING WITH MALAWI STATE ACTORS

The state actors who attended our meeting were under the gender, health and education docket in the region. They are working closely with Youth TWGs and youth Advocates to address key SHRH issues in the community especially; early child marriage and SGBV. So far they have had pieces of training in Mizinga, Sare and Kapoloma, engagement of men in matters that involve women empowerment. The state actors are now addressing teen pregnancies by having dialogues with teachers and parents. They are also working closely with the community victim support committee to assist teen mothers to get back to school through the re-admission policy. The state actors emphasized that It is important for the youth to hold leaders accountable said one state actor, and another said that the youth are the leaders of today. The state actors inquired about the innovative approaches being used in Kenya and shared a few tactics with the Kenyan

representatives on how to tackle cross-border child marriages in collaboration with activist groups in neighbouring countries.

Challenges the state actors are currently facing:

- Delayed funding because of existing bureaucracy hence derailing the implementation.
- Community victim support committee did not include the Youth.
- Limited resources in addressing SHRH issues.
- Limited information on how to deal with SHRH challenges.
- Young people were not aware of their rights, especially on SHRH and Youth Policies.
- High number of STIs registered in the clinic especially vaginal fistula because of complicated teen births.
- The available data from the community but there is a need for data from the community.

Steps taken:

- There is a budget to facilitate teen mothers to go back to school.
- There is a youth-friendly service available in the Machinga subdivision.
- PTY has provided information on SHRH and access to services such as contraceptives etc.
- PTY has also given a platform to enlighten young people on their rights and social accountability.
- Existence of safe spaces created by the government for the victims of harmful cultural practices.
- PTY is sustainable because they work with the existing systems within the community.



BEHIND-THE-SCENES QUESTIONS 🗣️

1. What is the Re-admission policy from a state actor's point of view?

It is the returning girls who are victims of child marriage and unintended pregnancies who go to school through bursaries from the national government. We are also creating a safe space for them to continue with school and conduct support groups for victims of child marriage.

2. How have the community leaders taken the training?

It was hard at first because it is breaking the cultural norms and what they have been doing for years. So far we are working with them to address the harmful cultural practice and providing evidence of the impact it has on the victims.

3. How do you give feedback after monitoring?

The use of TEVET and NEEF for formal and informal support and informal support for Youth economic empowerment

MEETING WITH YOUTH ADVOCATES

The most awaited activity was the one-on-one meeting with the Youth Advocates in underserved areas of the Machinga district. It was unfortunate that the team was unable to visit because of the fuel crisis in the country. Our amazing drivers communicated difficulty in securing fuel and were concerned there might not be enough supply to execute both activities; visit the advocates and complete the 4.5-hour drive back to Lilongwe from Machinga. These are the moments that remind us that advocacy is not immune to an economic crisis. The team had to cut the field visit short and prioritize the safe arrival of all participants back to Lilongwe city.



Malawi's president has ordered the Reserve Bank of Malawi to prioritize buying fuel in any foreign currency the country can secure to deal with a fuel shortage. The shortage has forced Malawi's drivers to wait hours in line, or to buy fuel smuggled in from neighboring Mozambique.



Henry Kachaje

The fuel crisis which Malawi is experiencing is hitting various projects hard, one of them being the \$14 million Nkhuzi Bay Water Treatment Project in Mangochi District.

Southern Region Water Board (SRWB) is implementing the project aiming to supply potable water to over 90,000 households in the lakeshore district.

According to the contractors, against their daily requirement of 800 litres of diesel per day, they are able to secure only 200 litres, which puts the project at risk of failing to meet completion deadlines.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- State actors and religious leaders in our communities are powerful allies who can hold the advocacy baton high in favour of our implementation activities.
- SASA model is a unique model that other countries can adapt as it can be upscaled and structured to suit the need of a particular community that needs to be addressed.
- Outside of Power to You(th), there is quite a lot to learn from other programs implementing similar thematic agendas in our communities i.e motion tracker.
- Youth advocacy and community engagement models are sustainable if the model used works with the existing structures or marries into the existing structures.
- Media and inter-border relationships play a major role in addressing harmful cultural practices.
- Monitoring and evaluation are crucial as they document the progress and steps taken in addressing key issues in the community and are instrumental in holding policymakers accountable for commitments made.
- Involving men in addressing issues that women are undergoing and vice versa is key in eradicating harmful cultural practices from the community level.
- Power to You(th) has brought an awakening for policymakers in accounting for commitments made in SRHR issues.
- The youths are the leaders of today and we must make haste in giving them the power to voice, address and engage in policies that surround their wellbeing.
- The PtY team did a great job of cross-learning and it should be emulated in other countries given the project addresses the same issues in different contexts and country teams can learn from each other.



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