



This Week!

SPOTLIGHTING MALAWI



1. YPE

In the reporting grant period, YPE supported 10 Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) champions to conduct a review meeting with community stakeholders to review SRH, HIV and SGBV community referral and support system progress by addressing challenges, providing solutions, and generating lessons learnt and best practices. This improved their knowledge and skills for effective community Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) monitoring, referral and strengthening systems in reporting cases. Furthermore, the project gained commitment from community duty bearers to support AGYW in the catchment area and be engaged in district decision-making structures. Commitments were also made to improve availability and service delivery at Area 25 health centre clinics and VSUs. The duty bearers included the police, the Ministry of Health through the District Health Office (DHO), Village heads, religious leaders and Child Protection Workers who participated in the review meeting. The impacts of the meeting has seen AGYWs increasingly voicing out their SRHR rights.

2. LICO



Life Concern (LICO) conducted a project introductory meeting with district youth technical working group members to provide an update on the continuation of our HER Voice-funded Governance for Health Investment Project targeting AGYWs. Duty bearers especially from the district youth office and the district hospital assured LICO of their support in the implementation of the project to achieve its goal and objectives.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF AGYW PROJECT CHAMPIONS IN DEMAND CREATION AND SRH ADVOCACY

The organization has built the capacity of 20 AGYWs as project champions. They have been equipped with comprehensive knowledge on SRH (PEP, PrEP, ART adherence, contraceptives, STIs, cervical cancer and GBV) services; peer education; and advocacy. In June, AGYWs reached out to 107 (58 boys and 49 girls) with education services on contraceptives, HIV prevention, treatment adherence and positive living; and gender. 11 young people were referred to Rumphu district hospital to access STIs service (7 girls) and HIV services (4 (2 boys and 2 girls)). Furthermore, the AGYWs have observed that more young people are keen to learn more about PEP and PrEP and their difference.

3. TOVWIRANE

Ten AGYW were oriented in Community-Led Monitoring in Blantyre, with participants coming from the districts of Thyolo, Mulanje, Blantyre, Chiradzulu, and Chikwawa. One of the organizations championing Community Led Monitoring (CLM) in Malawi, Malawi AIDS Service Network Organizations (MANASO), facilitated the three-day orientation. The orientation aimed at introducing the CLM concept to AGYW and orient them on advocacy and engagement. Many people are still unfamiliar with CLM, thus the AGYW were fortunate to receive this orientation. Quote from an AGYW: “Our organization has been receiving complaints about how health workers treat clients/AGYW at one of the health facilities, and I personally tried advocating for quality of services at that health facilities but to no avail as I were working in isolation, now with CLM we will be able to address these complaints more effectively as we will work in collaboration with other organizations and experts.

4. COWLHA

COWLHA in partnership with Just Associates (JASS) trained a total number of 20 AGYW in “FEMINIST MOVEMENT BUILDING” (FMB). This training empowered AGYW to recognize their own leadership potential, capacity to make change in their communities and they understood how power operates in their lives. Issues concerning knowing and owning one’s body, gender and sexuality were discussed opening the eyes of AGYW that they lack power over their own bodies.

The 20 AGYW appreciated the power that the patriarchal system has over women and girls thus giving them less liberty in all the spheres of life and making them subject to culture and traditional beliefs that have been worsened by education, religion, health, family and media systems. AGYW understood how gender roles and their biological make up makes them vulnerable to HIV infection. From this understanding, lessons were provided on benefits of having an understanding of treatment by examining how the body works in order to reduce the risk of HIV infection, the importance of neutralizing the patriarchal system so to reduce gender-based violence.