



Spotlighting **BOTSWANA**

HER Voice Fund Ambassador Represents Botswana at the 9th International SRHR & HIV Workshop

Earlier this month, Botswana proudly hosted the 9th International Workshop on Adolescence, SRHR & HIV in Gaborone. Among the delegates was HER Voice Fund Ambassador for Botswana, Victoria Wose Makosha, who not only attended but also played a key role in facilitating a Youth-Led Media Advocacy skills-building session.

The session, organised by Botswana's country lead, Sentebale BW, brought together young advocates to strengthen their capacity to use media as a powerful tool to advance Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). The workshop saw diverse representation from young people, implementers, advocates, and development partners, including UNICEF, MTV Foundation, and LEGABIBO, all coming together to share experiences and ideas on how to enhance adolescent health and rights programming.

During the discussion, participants reflected on the importance of how stories and experiences of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) are shared, emphasising that these narratives should not be seen as mere stories or statistics, but as lived realities that represent real lives, voices, and aspirations.



Through her facilitation, Victoria highlighted the power of youth-led engagement and reminded all present that authentic storytelling is key to driving empathy, awareness, and meaningful change in SRHR advocacy.

HER Voice Fund Site Visit: Empowering and Uplifting Young Women in Northern Botswana

HER Voice Fund Botswana Country Focal Point and Advocacy Lead Olerato Keegope and Victoria travelled to northern Botswana for a site visit to connect with local grantees, Nothing Without Us (NWU) and Skillshare Botswana. The visit provided an opportunity to engage directly with AGYW and hear how HER Voice Fund-supported initiatives are shaping their lives.

During the engagement with Nothing Without Us, the team interacted with AGYW, who shared how the program has empowered them to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and to practice safe sexual behaviours. Their stories reflected the program's impact in promoting knowledge, confidence, and agency among young women.



Northern Botswana





Dukwi Ref. Camp

With Skillshare Botswana, the team had the opportunity to participate in a session held at the Dukwi Refugee Camp, which also included AGYW from surrounding villages and farms. The session focused on mental health and well-being, creating a safe space for girls to discuss how they manage stress and anxiety caused by social pressures. Participants shared different forms of self-care, from taking walks and exercising to journaling and listening to music, highlighting the importance of nurturing mental wellness as part of overall empowerment.

These site visits reinforced the commitment of HER Voice Fund and its partners to ensuring that AGYW across all communities, including those in underserved and marginalised areas, are supported holistically in both their sexual health and emotional well-being.

Understanding Social Pressures Faced by AGYW in Botswana

AGYW continue to face various social pressures that influence their confidence, decision-making, and well-being. These include peer influence, economic challenges, family expectations, and stigma around sexuality and mental health. Recognising these realities is essential to creating supportive spaces, such as those fostered through the HER Voice Fund, that help AGYW build resilience, self-awareness, and strength in their SRHR journeys.

A Fond Farewell to Olerato Keegope



This month, the HER Voice Fund Botswana team bids a heartfelt farewell to Olerato Keegope, who has officially transitioned from her role at Sentebale and as the Country Focal Point for the HER Voice Fund.

Olerato has been an integral part of the HER Voice Fund journey in Botswana, a dedicated advocate, tireless leader, and inspiring mentor to many, including the current HER Voice Fund Ambassador. Her passion for amplifying the voices of AGYW, her commitment to youth empowerment, and her leadership in advocacy have left a lasting impact on the program and the communities she served.

The team and partners extend their deepest gratitude to Olerato for her guidance, compassion, and unwavering dedication to advancing SRHR for young women. She will be greatly missed, but her legacy of mentorship, excellence, and empowerment will continue to inspire the HER Voice Fund family in Botswana and beyond.

We wish her every success in her next chapter!