



HER VOICE FUND

REPORT 2022



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ACRONYMS

AGYW:	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
ASRH:	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
HIV:	Human immunodeficiency Virus
AIDs:	Acquired immunodeficiency Syndrome
FP:	Family Planning
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
BaNgaAfayo:	BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda
RH:	Reproductive Health
SRH:	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR:	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
YFS:	Youth Friendly Services



global
children



GLOBAL NETWORK OF
YOUNG PEOPLE
LIVING WITH HIV



Community level training workshop

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a report of the 3 day's training workshop of AGYW that took place in Kayunga district from 12th – 14th October 2022.

AGYW have excellent potential to advocate and promote good sexual and reproductive health outcomes but often fail. This is usually attributed in part due to, their lack of knowledge and understanding of SRHR issues and sometimes weak capacity and motivation to challenge negative cultural and social norms that hinder them from engaging in in planning and decision making processes. But we believe that young people play a crucial role in advocating for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, as only they are able to voice their realities and the numerous SRHR challenges they face.

Under the Her Voice fund, BaNgaAfayo is implementing a six months project to Challenge negative social norms and practices that affect SRHR outcomes amongst AGYW by providing them with leadership skills to instigate them to demand their local and national Government for accountability especially by proactively involving them in planning for their health needs and making sure that SRHR issues are prioritized in the district health budget. The project focuses on empowering AGYW, especially those living with HIV with the correct knowledge, attitude, and skills for reducing HIV infections, gender-based violence (GBV) and improving their SRHR outcomes

2. TRAINING GOAL

The goal of the training was to educate and sensitize young people especially adolescent girls and young women to demand for their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and instigate them to hold their local and national Government accountable.

3. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

1. Equip participants with knowledge in ASRH and build skills to transfer such knowledge to fellow young people.
2. Equip AGYW with leadership skills to effectively amplify advocacy on their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights needs
3. To enable participants appreciate the role of peer education as a strategy for addressing sexual and reproductive health issues that affect young people.

4. Eliminate or reduce participant's attitudes and practices that negatively impact on ASRH.
5. Increase participant's understanding and ability to help their peers address SRH problems and issues that affect them.
6. To help participants understand their roles and responsibilities as Peer Educators.
7. Help participants appreciate the special needs of adolescents and the fact that they are different from adults.

4. PARTICIPANTS

The total number of AGYW trained was 36 from 3 different Villages

Nature of participants:

Out of the 36 AGYW that were trained, 16 were HIV positive, 5 were young mothers and the 15 were HIV negative aged 10-17years from 3 villages; Nakaziba, Wankyairaki and Nalumuli.

5. TRAINING CONTENT

The following topics were covered during the training;

1. Overview of BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda
2. Overview of the Her Voice Fund/Project
3. Situation of ASRH issues in Uganda
4. Advocacy and Lobbying
5. Evidence-Informed Advocacy
6. Understanding HIV
7. Life Planning Skills and Development
8. Reproductive Health Rights of Adolescents
9. Youth Friendly Service.
10. Communication Techniques in Advocacy



5. PROCEEDINGS

DAY 1:

1. ARRIVAL

The program started with arrival and registration of participants and trainers.

6. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

By Maria Rinah Namatovu- Project Coordinator
Mrs. Rinah welcomed participants to the training. Thanked them for responding to the invitation and making it to this training.

She gave a brief background about Her Voice Fund and why they have been invited to this training. Rinah went ahead and gave a brief background about BaNgaAfayo, what they do, the districts of operation and the thematic areas. she mentioned that one of the reasons as to why AGYW were invited is because BaNgaAfayo believes young people play a crucial role in advocating for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, as only they are able to voice their realities and the numerous SRHR challenges they face.

She concluded by wishing all the participants the best and invited the Programmes Manager to officially open the training workshop.

7. OPENING REMARKS

By Christine Aketch Jangwen- Programs Manager

The training was officially opened by Mrs. Christine Aketch Jangwen- Programs Manager -BaNgaAfayo. She thanked everyone who has contributed to the organization of the training.

By way of conclusion, she encouraged the participants to pay attention and endeavor to learn whatever that is going to be taught by the trainers and wished them good luck. Then invited the trainer to take the flow.

Self-introductions and expectations

The trainer welcomed participants and called for members introductions. So, every participant introduced themselves; mentioned her expectation(s); and setting ground rules.

Some of the Participants' expectations were; (summary);

1. Acquire leadership skills
2. Understand Advocacy and become change makers
3. To become peer educators and be able to support fellow peers
4. Acquire age appropriate knowledge on SRHR
5. Acquire correct knowledge on HIV/AIDS

6. Get information on ASRH
7. Acquire counselling skills and techniques
8. Understand the roles of a peer educator in the community.
9. To get information about youth friendly services

The set ground rules were;

1. Keeping time (arrive early, use session apportioned time well)
2. Active participation by all
3. Avoid unnecessary movements in and out
4. Raising your hand before speaking your answer

From there they selected their leaders for the training. These included the chairperson and her assistant, mobiliser and the time keeper.

The participants were given a 30 minutes Pre-Knowledge Assessment Test to test their knowledge on Advocacy and SRHR before introducing the sessions of the day.

AGYW were taken through different sessions all working towards our goal to Challenge negative social norms and practices that affect SRHR outcomes amongst AGYW by providing them with leadership skills to instigate them to demand their local and national Government for accountability.

At the end of every training session, participants were divided in 4 groups to discuss questions given by the trainer to test whether they have understood before moving to the next session or topic learnt and then present later to fellow participants.

By the end of the day;

1. Participants were able to learn and understand key SRHR concepts and issues in the community. This was well demonstrated at the end of the training when peer educators were asked what they had learnt, they were able to recall the knowledge the training was intended to impart
2. Participants became resilient and also gained self-esteem whereby they were able to express themselves than before the training commenced.
3. Participants also gained communication skills. This was also demonstrated in the way they were articulating issues.



DAY 2:

Training sessions

- Session 1: Recap of Day 2
- Session 2: Understanding HIV/AIDS
- Session 2: Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
- Session 2: Youth Friendly Services

We started off day two with a recap of day one as presented by the chairperson. She led the class through all the sessions they learned on day one and seemed most participants had not forgotten what they had learnt since they were very active during this exercise.

The opening session was about HIV Prevention which was to empower and support AGYW with the skills and information they need to become agents of change for HIV prevention, youth friendly services and uptake in their communities.

During this session, Mr. Serubiri Timothy the trainer also defined youth friendly services and the key principles of youth friendly services. The participants had a group exercise to discuss; what makes a service provider youth friendly, what makes a health facility youth friendly, How HIV is transmitted, the symptoms and prevention measures, which also marked the end of the topic.

The session also covered SRHR issues of young people and addressed the qualities peer educators are supposed to exhibit and their roles as peer educators in the community. The facilitator also taught the participants about referral services both effective and non-effective and the reasons for effective referral of a client.

He closed off the day by informing participants that they must know their limits in communities especially when teaching practical topics like family planning and emphasized that for a service to be youth friendly one has to focus on the service provider, facility and program. By the end of the day Adolescent girls and Young women were empowered with the skills and information they needed to become agents of change for HIV prevention, youth friendly services and uptake in their communities.

DAY 3:

Training sessions

- Session 1: Recap of Day 2
- Session 2: Enhancing Skills and Capacities in Lobbying
- Session 3: Evidence Informed Advocacy
- Session 4: Post training knowledge assessment

Day three kick started with a recap of day two which was conducted by the project coordinator to test whether the participants had grasped what is being taught by the facilitator. Then she invited the facilitator to proceed with the sessions of the day.

The AGYW were introduced to an interesting topic that is advocacy. The session started with Introduction to policy advocacy. He began by defining the word Persuasion were by one has to find means of getting things without really forcing for example a child talks to the mother to talk to the father to get things. He told them to learn how to negotiate with power in order to yield from it. He said advocacy is about change of conduct for different reasons, because we are after change one has to know they are in a struggle between power, influence and authority. One of the learners mentioned that an "influencer has the right to make decisions" and another learner argued that "when there is no influencer there is no power." The facilitator then mentioned that as an advocate you have to know the things concerning adolescents and young people.

You have to follow power/influence/authority. Power lies in different places, sometimes in advocacy it doesn't matter how big you are as long as you have identified the person who can help you.

He continued by saying there are things that you cannot change in advocacy because of the people's beliefs. Sometimes we want to do advocacy but you have not studied the values of people. Advocacy takes a contracted period of time slowly and surely. A time comes where you must change your skill to fit in every group and not forgetting your target should always be who has the greatest influence.

He concluded his session by emphasizing that major target in advocacy is the primary audience of decision makers. Influence those who hold decision making power

By the end of the sessions;

1. Participants developed an action plan regarding advocacy activities they would carry out as peer educators in the communities.
2. GYW created advocacy strategies to improve adolescent girls' health and wellbeing.

8. METHODOLOGY

The training was delivered using the following participatory learning methods to enable participants learn well;

1. Brainstorming,
2. Interactive power point presentations,
3. Group tasks and discussions,
4. Question and Answer sessions, as well as sharing of experiences.

9. OBSERVATIONS/LESSONS LEARNT

9.1 PARTICIPANTS'

1. A good number of them said that some information and terminologies was new to them; e.g. Meaning of advocacy, SRHR; HIV, among others.
2. A good number of them expressed having less knowledge and experience on how to counsel fellow peers in case they needed help from them.
3. The training was informative and they learned principles and practices in advocacy
4. 9.2 FACILITATOR/ TRAINER
5. Several participants were receptive and cooperative and exhibited high interest and eagerness to learn new knowledge in Advocacy, HIV and sexual reproductive health issues affecting them.
6. Some information and terminologies were new to them; e.g. Meaning of advocacy, SRHR; HIV, among others.
7. Many expressed that they face challenges in accessing health services or local government points – however this was addressed during the training in the sessions of Enhancing Skills and Capacities in Lobbying

10. WAYFORWARD/ RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Championing health issues, policies and direction among young people, stakeholders thru raising awareness and engaging decision makers.
2. Seek and have continuous literacy opportunities amongst themselves or with experts in their communities to build on their ideas
3. Create peer groups for continuous engagements and holding link and learning sessions.
4. Recommendations for betterment include:
5. Future trainings should be given more time such that facilitators and their sessions are given ample time for interaction with learners,
6. Offer more / additional/ successive workshops to support AGYW put into practice what they have learned.
7. Ensure there's more engagements and involvement of AGYW as peer educators in more health programs to build their capacities.
8. Braking down technical concepts in the local languages that these girls and communities can fully understand.



11. CLOSING REMARKS

Joseph Ddiba - Team Leader BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda

The training was officially closed by The Team Leader who thanked everyone who put it there effort to see that the training is a success. He went ahead to thank the participants for turning up in a big number and encouraged them be proactive, be valuable and contributors to the communities in which they serve.

The team leader informed the AGYW that BaNgaAfayo is committing to support them to demand their local and national Government for accountability and making sure that their SRHR issues are prioritized in the district health budget. He encouraged the participants to consistently

advocate and sensitize a bigger population about ASRHR, HIV awareness and prevention.

We then closed off with a certificate recognition Ceremony where all the participants shared their different experiences of the training.

12. CONCLUSION

The training workshop was successfully conducted and it is assumed that participants;

1. Now have basic knowledge about HIV and SRHR
2. Now can effectively amplify advocacy on their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights needs



Facilitator/trainer:

NAMES	SEX	POSITION	TEL CONTACT	EMAIL
SSELUBIRI TIMONTHY	M	TRAINER	0754962174	selubiritimo@yahoo.com

13. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Training Timetable

Date: 12th- 14 /10/2022

Time	Activity	Responsible person
DAY 1		
Time	Topic/Activity	Facilitator
9:00 – 9: 15am	Opening prayer and self-introductions	BaNgaAfayo
9:0:15 - 9:30am	About BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda(BaNgaAfayo) & Her Voice Project	BaNgaAfayo
9:30 – 10:00am	Workshop Goal, Objectives and introduction of course content	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
10:00-10:15am	Pre-Knowledge Assessment Test	Trainer
10:15 – 10:35am	Break tea	Service Provider
10:35 -12:30pm	Life Planning Skills Development	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
12:30-1:00pm	Introduction-Overview of ASRH Issues in Uganda. (GBV, Teenage pregnancy, HIV, service delivery, Alcohol & drug Use, etc.	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
1:00pm	Lunch	
2:00-3:40pm	Overview of ASRH Issues in Uganda. (GBV, Teenage pregnancy, HIV, service delivery, Alcohol & drug Use, etc.)	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)

3:40pm-4:30 pm	Group work Exercise
4:45pm	Logistics and Departure

DAY 2

Time	Topic/Activity	Facilitator
8:30 -9:15am	Recap from day 1	
9:15-10:30am	Understanding HIV/AIDS	
	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)	
10:45–11:00am	Break tea	Service Provider
11:00-1:00pm	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights	
	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)	
1:00-2:00pm	Lunch	Service Provider
2:00-3:30pm	Youth Friendly Services	
	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)	
3:30:4:30pm	Group Work	
4:30pm	Logistics and Departure	All

DAY 3

Time	Topic/Activity	Facilitator
8:30 -9:15am	Recap from day 2	
9:15-10:30am	Enhancing Skills and Capacities in Lobbying	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
10:45–11:00am	Break tea	Service Provider
11:00-12:30pm	Evidence Informed Advocacy	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
1:00-2:00pm	Lunch	Service Provider
2:00-2:40pm	Group work	Timothy Serubili (Trainer)
2:40-3:00pm	Post training knowledge assessment	Trainer
3:00:30pm	Final wrap up and way forward	BaNgaAfayo
3:30-4:00pm	Closing remarks	BaNgaAfayo
4:00pm	Logistics and Departure	All



Link & Learn

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda in partnership with Kayunga district local government organised a 3 days training workshop at BaNgaAfayo's Community Center in Nakaziba Village from 12th- 14th/10/2022 for 20 Adolescent Girls and young women (AGYW) as peer educators to support other AGYW and amplify advocacy on the SRHR needs for AGYW especially those living with HIV. They were empowered with the correct knowledge, attitude, and skills for reducing HIV infections, gender-based violence (GBV) and improving their SRHR outcomes.

It's upon this background that BaNgaAfayo organized a Link and Learn session to reorient and develop the capacity of Adolescent girls and Young Women (AGYW) who were trained as peer educators on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), HIV and Advocacy as a way of preparing them so that they can effectively engage in the forthcoming organized community dialogue.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. To re-equip participants with SRHR concepts, relevant laws and policies and key issues surrounding SRHR in the target communities.
2. Re-equip participants with communication and advocacy skills that will enable them to effectively engage in the forth coming community dialogue and also advocate for SRHR&HIV services for young people at the district level.
3. provide knowledge and develop skills of AGYW to counsel and support their fellow peers in seeking SRHR&HIV services.
4. To build the capacity of participants to effectively engage communities to advocate for and address SRHR issues and National Health Insurance Scheme.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

Over the course of the one day link and learn session, 31 AGYW/ peer educators were re- equipped with knowledge and skills through presentations, group activities, videos, and guided discussions. The following key themes were covered:

1. Key SRHR & HIV definitions and concepts
2. Relevant laws, policies, and referral systems for SRHR violations in Kayunga district
3. Peer counselling and outreach skills for addressing SRHR violations and issues related to HIV and AIDS.
4. Communication and advocacy on issues of SRHR and HIV services

Following initial introductory remarks, during the morning session, participants were given the opportunity to voice their hopes and fears in doing the peer educators roles and their expectations for the workshop. After this exercise, participants were re-equipped with basic SRHR and HIV concepts and terminology through a range of activities.

In order to facilitate the process of understanding gender, culture, and sexuality in relation to SRHR, a body mapping exercise was conducted. This exercise entailed engaging participants in group work to map out the body and discuss how each part of the body's functions are controlled by society—through culture, religion, family, friends, community members and other aspects that shape expected behavior. To further reinforce understanding of SRHR violations and highlight key violations that were revealed.



THE AFTERNOON SESSION

kicked off with a presentation on communication and advocacy skills. This session began with discussing key SRHR violations in their community and their own ideas for how to carry out activities and advocacy to address these challenges. This exercise was carried out in four groups.

They were given another group task that is; community mapping activity where participants were made to identify places to go when coming across an SRHR violation. In four groups, participants drew a map of their community. The home of the peer educators was identified on

the map and where important institutions were situated relative to themselves. The location of traditional leaders, the police victim support unit and/or police facilities, the court, the church, religious leaders, the health facilities, and other relevant institutions were drawn onto the maps. Following the presentation of their maps, the facilitator filled the gaps in terms of institutions the groups did not mention. Adolescent girls and Young Women (AGYW) were also equipped with counselling skills and techniques needed to help counsel fellow peers who have faced an SRHR violation. Furthermore, the trainers worked with the AGYW/ peer educators to develop advocacy plans to promote their advocacy initiatives for the SRHR of adolescents and young people in their communities.

The day was wrapped up with An Action Plan outlining how peer educators would carry out SRHR related activities in their communities and advocacy activities were developed. This action plan can be found below in the 'Action Items' section of this report.

TRAINING OUT COMES

1. Participants were able to learn and understand better key SRHR concepts and issues in the community. This was well demonstrated at the end of the training when AGYW/peer educators, where asked what they had learnt, they were able to recall the knowledge the training was intended to impart.
2. Participants learnt about the purpose of and how to undertake social mobilization and advocacy initiatives. Through this session, participants also identified key factors driving SRHR violations in their communities. This included poverty, fear that taking action would terminate marriage, cultural and religious beliefs, lack of economic autonomy, cultural beliefs and practices and limited knowledge surrounding the SRHR of Adolescents and young people. From there, participants began proposing strategies they could engage in order to address

these issues as peer educators.

3. Participants developed an action plan regarding the counselling and advocacy activities they would carry out as peer educators and SRHR promoters in the communities.
4. 4. Participants were provided with knowledge on strategies and techniques for counselling fellow peers who have faced SRHR violations.
5. Participants appointed a president for themselves as peer educators who will serve to voice concerns that arise as they begin implementing their activities as peer educators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is a need to plan for the follow up and support to the trained peers.
2. Provision of peer educator t-shirts and any form of identification was requested by participants.
3. There is need to allocate some funds to support AGYW/Peer educators to support them in their work, for instance airtime, transport among others.

OTHER COMMENTS:

1. All sessions were conducted fully in a mixture of Luganda & English for better understanding and all material provided had been translated to their local language that is Luganda.
2. Participants were extremely positive, active, and eager to learn throughout the link and learn session. Through discussions, it was made clear that participants were taking in and truly understanding the information being provided.





APPENDIXES

1. Participants work plan

Action (to be followed up on)	Responsible Party
Approach community leaders to encourage them to address SRHR issues occurring in the community.	AGYW/Peer Educators
Conduct meetings at support groups to discuss SRHR issues and how to address the issues, as a group, in the community.	Peer Educators
Establish support groups to areas where there are currently none existing.	Peer Educators/ District
Collection of reports and follow-up on activities being conducted by the peer educators	Project Coordinator
Reporting on the SRHR and Advocacy training content to the support groups and community members at meetings. This includes notifying the community that they are available to assist those who have faced SRHR violations.	Peer Educators

Community Dialogue



1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE ACTIVITY

BaNgaAfayo Initiative Uganda as an implementing partner under Her Voice Fund, is implementing a project that aims to empower Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW), especially those living with HIV in Kayunga District with the correct knowledge, attitude, and skills for reducing HIV infections, gender-based violence (GBV) and improving their SRHR outcomes. BaNgaAfayo challenge negative social norms and practices that affect SRHR outcomes amongst Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) by providing them with leadership skills to instigate them to demand their local and national Government for accountability especially by proactively involving them in planning for their health needs and making sure that SRHR issues are prioritized in the district health budget.

1. It's upon this background that BaNgaAfayo organised a community dialogue for AGYW organized to discuss the importance of increasing empowerment and participation of AGYW in decision making processes concerning their health needs at the district and community level. The event also aimed to bring together district & community leaders, religious and traditional leaders, health service providers and other key stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities for improving the lives of AGYW in the community and to develop a collective action plan for achieving this goal.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY

1. To raise awareness among AGYW about their SRHR and HIV prevention needs and the services available to them.
2. To identify and discuss the barriers AGYW face in accessing SRHR and HIV prevention services, and to develop strategies to overcome these barriers.
3. To advocate for AGYW involvement in the decision-making process related to their SRHR and HIV prevention needs, by providing them with opportunities for participation and leadership.
4. To involve decision makers, religious and traditional leaders in the dialogue, in order to address cultural and religious barriers that may negatively impact AGYW's SRHR and HIV prevention needs.
5. To provide a platform for AGYW to share their experiences and perspectives on SRHR and HIV prevention, and to encourage open and honest discussions on these topics.
6. Increase the knowledge on Sexual reproductive health, HIV prevention and the effects of negative socio-cultural practices and negative peer pressure among young people.

3.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Increased representation of AGYW in leadership and decision-making positions
2. Increased access to education and economic opportunities for AGYW
3. Reduction in gender-based violence and discrimination against AGYW
4. Improved self-esteem, self-efficacy, and decision-making abilities among AGYW
5. Increased participation of AGYW in community development and leadership roles
6. Improved overall health, well-being, and empowerment of AGYW.



4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

On Wednesday, 18th January 2023, Ba Nga Afayo Initiative Uganda (BaNgaAfayo) held a community dialogue with key decision makers in the Kayunga District in Nakaziba village to discuss the importance of HIV/AIDS services and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). This event was part of the Her Voice Fund project, which aims to empower AGYW, particularly those living with HIV, by providing them with the knowledge, attitude, and skills they need to reduce HIV infections, gender-based violence (GBV), and improve their SRHR outcomes.

The dialogue is an important step towards ensuring that AGYW have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and that their health needs are given the attention and resources they deserve.

The dialogue was attended by a cross-section of 100 participants, among these, we had representatives from Kayunga district local government headed by the district health officer (DHO), community leaders, religious and traditional leaders, AGYW, health service providers, head teachers & teachers, parents among other key stakeholders.

Below are excerpts of the discussion.

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Opening Pray & Self Introductions,
3. Opening remarks and from the Executive director BaNgaAfayo,
4. About Her Voice Project
5. Entertainment(skit by AGYW on SRHR & HIV issues)
6. Discussions
7. Way forward
8. Concluding remarks

4.1.1 INTRO

Mr. Serubili Timothy the moderator welcomed and thanked everyone for accepting the invitation to the dialogue. He then invited Mr. Ddiba Joseph the executive director to give opening remarks. He appreciated the Kayunga district local government for accepting to work with Ba Nga Afayo Initiative Uganda (BaNgaAfayo) and for supporting the project "Her Voice" within the district. He was also grateful to all the other stakeholders for accepting the invitation to the dialogue as well as supporting our presence and work. He gave an over view/ brief background of Ba Nga Afayo Initiative Uganda (BaNgaAfayo) and what it does, what has been done & achieved and concluded by introducing the organization staff to the audience.

The moderator then, invited the project coordinator to

give her remarks as well as give a brief about Her voice project. She broke down the HER Voice Project in a local language that most participants understand, objectives & goal, the activities that have been implemented including their outcomes, the strategic plan of the Her Voice project and concluded by thanking everyone for honoring the invitations to the dialogue.

Next on the agenda was a 10minutes skit by AGYW about the gaps in health service delivery (especially regarding SRHR & HIV services to AGYW) & barriers that limit them from accessing these services, lack of correct Knowledge about SRHR & HIV by AGYW & the community and gaps in leadership. This skit was the basis for the first discussion

4.1.2 DISCUSSION SESSION 1

Theme: The gaps in SRHR & HIV service delivery for AGYW & barriers that limit them from accessing these services
Key points noted/Reactions from the participants

1. There is limited access to these services due to various barriers. These barriers can include lack of transportation to health facilities. One of the AGYW said that; these facilities are located in the town yet there in the village, they need to use a car or motorcycles to get there which they can't afford.
2. Lack of financial resources; the participants said they are required to pay a little some of money to get these services which they don't have yet these services are supposed to be free.
3. Lack of understanding or awareness about these services. Most AGYW and the
4. community members don't know about these services and they don't even know that they have all the rights to access them.
5. Lack of correct knowledge about SRHR and HIV among AGYW and their communities. This can lead to misconceptions and misunderstandings about these issues, which can further limit access to services.
6. Gaps in leadership can also play a role in limiting access to SRHR and HIV services for AGYW.
7. This can include lack of political will to prioritize these issues and lack of funding for programs and services.
8. One of the AGYW said "the negative attitude of health service providers limit us from accessing health services. Some of them are rude and there is no privacy" said Hakima.
9. Another AGYW talked about the rigid cultures and negative perception from the community members about family planning. She continued by saying that they believe it's only for the marrieds which limits them from accessing these services.



WAY FORWARD

1. To address these gaps, there needs to be a multifaceted approach that includes;
2. Increasing access to services
3. Addressing cultural and religious barriers
4. Increasing education and awareness about SRHR and HIV,
5. Ensuring political and financial support for programs and services.
6. Collaboration between the district local government and community-based organizations
7. Involvement of AGYW in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services to ensure they are meeting their specific needs and wants.

4.1.3 DISCUSSION SESSION 2

Theme: Adolescent Girls and Young Women's (AGYW) Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Services and HIV Prevention

Key points noted/Reactions from the participants

1. The importance of comprehensive SRHR services for AGYW was highlighted as a key factor in ensuring their overall well-being.
2. Participants discussed strategies for improving access to SRHR services for AGYW, including sexuality education, family planning, and counseling services.
3. The role of religious and traditional leaders in

- addressing SRHR and HIV prevention was also discussed. Participants emphasized the need for religious and traditional leaders to be more involved in education and awareness campaigns targeting AGYW, as well as in efforts to reduce harmful cultural practices that negatively impact AGYW's SRHR.
4. Participants discussed the importance of involving AGYW in decision-making processes that affect their SRHR and HIV prevention needs. They identified the need for more opportunities for AGYW to participate in community meetings and committees, as well as training and mentoring programs to help AGYW develop leadership skills.
5. The importance of providing accessible and confidential HIV testing and counseling services for AGYW was also discussed. Participants emphasized the need for HIV prevention and treatment services to be youth-friendly and tailored to the specific needs of AGYW.
6. The role of the media in shaping perceptions of AGYW's SRHR and HIV prevention needs was discussed. Participants identified the need for more positive representation of AGYW in the media, as well as media literacy programs to help AGYW critically evaluate the information they consume.

WAY FORWARD

The discussion was productive were Participants identified a range of strategies for achieving this goal including;

1. Improving access to SRHR services

2. Involving religious and traditional leaders in discussion meetings regarding the SRHR & HIV issues that concern AGYW
3. Providing opportunities for AGYW to participate in decision-making processes concerning their health issues.
4. A collective action plan was developed to implement these strategies, with the aim of creating a more inclusive and equitable community for AGYW.
5. Decision makers actively advocating for SRHR issues of AGYW at the district, regional and national level
6. Re-orienting health services providers on youth friendly services so that they are able to attend to young people most especially AGYW without having a problem with it.

WAY FORWARD

There were several strategies discussed that can be implemented to increase empowerment and participation of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) which include;

1. Providing access to quality education is one of the most effective ways to empower AGYW. Education can help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to participate fully in society.
2. Providing AGYW with access to economic opportunities, such as skills training, can help them become financially independent and participate in the workforce especially for the young mothers.
3. Providing AGYW with access to sexual and reproductive health services, as well as information and education about their health and well-being, can help them make informed decisions about their bodies and lives.
4. Creating safe spaces for AGYW, such as shelters and support groups, can provide a protective environment where they can feel safe and supported, and can help them build the confidence and self-esteem they need to participate in society.
5. Advocating for policies and laws that promote the rights and empowerment of AGYW, such as laws that protect them from gender-based violence, can help create an environment that is more conducive to their participation and empowerment.
6. Community engagement and empowerment: Empowering AGYW to be active agents of change in their communities and provide them with opportunities to take leadership roles in community development programs.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

1. There is need to hold capacity building trainings to equip decision makers, community leaders, religious and traditional leaders and the community at large with knowledge on SRHR of Young people especially AGYW
2. There is need to strengthen monitoring and follow up channels for sexual violence and gender based violence against AGYW.
3. AGYW most especially young mothers should be given technical skills and taught how they can use them for better living in other words business skills
4. The SRHR information passed on to the AGYW and other young people should be correct and age appropriate to avoid misunderstanding
5. There is need to take SRH education in schools in Nakaziba village

4.1.4 DISCUSSION THEME 3

Increase Empowerment and Participation of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW)

Key points noted/Reactions from the participants

1. The importance of education for AGYW was highlighted as a key factor in empowering them and increasing their participation in the community. Participants discussed strategies for improving access to education for AGYW, including scholarships, mentoring programs, and community-based education initiatives.
2. The role of health services in empowering AGYW was also discussed. The DHO emphasized the need for accessible and comprehensive health services for AGYW, including sexual and reproductive health services, as well as mental health support.
3. The Her Voice project ambassador aired out her concern on the importance of involving AGYW in decision-making processes that affect their lives. She identified the need for more opportunities for AGYW to participate in community meetings and committees, as well as training and mentoring programs to help AGYW develop leadership skills.
4. The importance of involving religious leaders in efforts to empower AGYW was also discussed. Participants identified the need for religious leaders to be more involved in education and health campaigns targeting AGYW, as well as in efforts to reduce harmful cultural practices that negatively impact AGYW.
5. The role of the media in shaping perceptions of AGYW was discussed. Participants identified the need for more positive representation of AGYW in the media, as well as media literacy programs to help AGYW critically evaluate the information they consume.





Commitments from some district leaders/decision makers during the discussions.

- I. **IDHO (District health officer)** Committed to Support the AGYW at all levels to see that their voices are heard and their SRHR needs are prioritized in the budget. She also promised to give our peer educators platforms which they can use to advocate for their SRHR needs. She committed to have a meeting with the health service providers to address the issue of their negative attitude towards AGYW when they come to seek health services. She committed to work with BaNgaAfayo to see that SRH education is embraced in schools and taught.
- II. **The Probation Officer** She committed to solve all cases of violence affecting the AGYW and directed them where her office is located. She also committed to work BaNgaAfayo as a referral organization and they are willing to conduct a follow up on all cases of sexual and gender based violence cases reported.
- III. **District Youth Coordinator** He committed to stand with the AGYW towards achieving their advocacy agenda. Promised to give them support in carrying out their duties as peer educators. Committed to support AGYW to receive quality youth friendly services since his the youth focal person in Kayunga government Referral hospital.
- IV. **As a YAPS(Young adolescent program support)**

- leader he promised to link the AGYW to the skills development centre so that they can learn how to make bags, shoes and earn a living to support their babies.
- V. **District education officer (DEO)** He committed to work with the schools to see that SRHR is taught in order to help these girls and other young people to make informed decisions. Committed to support BaNgaAfayo in carrying out school outreaches and see that SRHR needs of young people are prioritized at the district and national level.
- VI. **Community development officer(CDO)** He committed to support AGYW through various programs like youth livelihood programs at the district that are meant to support them with a minimal funds to start small businesses to see that they make a living and support their children.
- VII. **Religious leaders** Committed to embrace SRH education in schools and community and to work hand in hand with the organization to see that AGYW voices are heard by decision makers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Programs that aim at building young people's ability: Such programs would help to fill some of the knowledge gaps among young people and raise awareness on specific issues affecting them in their day to day life, like on SRHR among others

- 2. Programs to expand economic opportunities for the young people: Coming up with Interventions that combine an emphasis on empowering girls, often through safe spaces, with a focus on providing livelihood opportunities and increasing earnings for AGYW especially young mothers.
- 3. Programs to keep girls in school or delay marriage: Strategies to promote education, especially by reducing the opportunity and out of pocket cost of schooling, are among the most likely Ending child marriage
- 4. Programs to provide life skills and reproductive health knowledge to out of school AGYW: These interventions often rely on safe space programs empowering girls through life skills training, better knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, and other skills. These programs have achieved important benefits for girls, not only in terms of knowledge acquired, but also through gains in self-esteem and confidence, among others.
- 5. BaNgaAfayo should create more partnerships with schools in the community in order to conduct productive school outreaches and create a bigger impact in the lives of these who are still in school.
- 6. BaNgaAfayo should look forward coming up with programs that target all genders. Both male and female.

FACILITATORS/MODERATORS

The dialogue was moderated by Serubili Timothy

CLOSING REMARKS

The closing remarks were given by the DHO. She thanked all the district leaders and every person present for attending this engagement. She extended her gratitude towards BaNgaAfayo's efforts towards supporting the young people in Kayunga district. She then appreciated the great work done under Her Voice Project and called upon all the duty bearers to give the organization all the support needed to work in the district because they are doing a great job, and officially closed the meeting the meeting.





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