

Hey there,

It has been a long time coming. We have taken some time in the kitchen cooking. We scratched our heads wondering how best to prepare and serve this meal. Now is the time, join us on the table for your new lifelong companion or as some might say, a forever thing. You're now "stuck with us."

We are thrilled to introduce to you our maiden issue of The SRHR Spotlight.

In this quarterly newsletter, we'll be shining a spotlight on a wide range of events, activities, and updates from the SRHR world.

In every issue we'll be recognising an outstanding civil society organisation, giving flowers to the most deserving ministry, department and agencies,

crowning our star young person, sharing events of interest, and keeping you informed about the notable work Reproductive Health Uganda is doing. Ladies and gentlemen, get ready for an exciting ride, a safe and enjoyable one. So, grab a cup of coffee, juice or whatever beverage you prefer, and let's dive into what we have prepared for you.

Enjoy the reading.

ALLOW THEM DO THEIR JOB

Who is protecting them from being finger pointed? Who is protecting them from false accusations? Who can protect them from being stigmatised? We are talking about the health cadres. With the coming in of the AHA, we have continued to witness stories of some community members openly pointing at and accusing health workers as promoters of homosexuality. They have accused them of entertaining "bad people" that include sex workers, in their communities. This has meant increased fear and some of them have been forced to withdraw their much-needed services.



Yes, the Ministry of Health circular on Provision of Services to all People Without Discrimination has been at least adequately disseminated amongst the different duty bearers and many of them have responded positively to it. However, we forgot the power of community members.

One, they don't have the correct information about the AHA, thus the threat they pose to health workers. They believe anyone suspected to be a homosexual, sex worker, etc., is supposed to be reported to the Police and should not be sheltered to access services.

Unfortunately, the attackers are not moved by truth, perception takes the day. In some communities, to them appearance is enough to conclude that one is a homosexual or a sex worker. This has forced many young people, especially the key populations to seek refuge in hiding, shunning health facilities and health services.

Surely, we need to ensure the safety of health workers. We need to protect them from zealous community members. We need to ensure the safety of clients at our health facilities. It's critical to invest in educating the masses about the law and MoH circular.

As we appreciate initiatives by MoH to reassure service providers to continue providing services to all people regardless of their sexual orientation; strengthening the capacity of health workers on the provision of KP-friendly services, orienting law enforcement officers, technical people, politicians, and religious leaders among others on the need for continuity of services, and to allow every person access to services, we need to do more with community members.

We must invest in sensitising them so that we are at the same wavelength of understanding the law. Access to services is everyone's right no matter their identity.

KUDOS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA!

Where do you spend most of your time! At work I presume. Well, RHU and FUE have been working overtime to make your working experience even better. This is a joyous moment for all workers and players because a safe environment at the world of work is what we have been labouring to achieve.

It's celebrations to the workers and players fight for a safe environment at the

world of work. Uganda has ratified Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the workplace. After a protracted and laborious procedure involving numerous stakeholders, the process yielded results.

With DFPA's assistance since 2017, FUE's participation in the ratification process has included policy advocacy, the creation of position papers and

presentation to the government (Parliament), tripartite meetings, policy dialogue meetings, campaigns, and presentations to various boards and bodies (ILO Conferences, National Disability Council, National Health Insurance Scheme, Uganda Industrial Court, Labour Advisory Board, and several Technical Working Groups), employer consultations, and ILO Conferences.

The convention covers all workers and defines “violence and harassment” as behaviours, actions, or threats that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm.

The Convention establishes an internationally recognized definition of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence, and obliges member states that ratify it to adopt, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organisations, a gender-responsive, inclusive, and all-inclusive strategy for its prevention. It also recognises the different and complementary roles and functions of governments, employers and workers and their respective organisations,

considering the varying nature and extent of their responsibilities.

Ratifying the Convention reiterates Uganda's commitment to creating a just and equitable society, encouraging a secure and respected workplace, and supporting the values of human rights and dignity at work.

Parliament of Uganda recently passed the Amended Employment Bill to include provisions of this convention. Emphasis is placed on the need to include all of the various behaviours and actors involved in violence and harassment within the instrument and the need of protecting employees in the informal economy.

Uganda now commits to implementing its provisions in the national laws and practices and are required to regularly report on the measures taken to comply

with the convention's requirements. As a key stakeholder in the world of work, FUE is dedicated to fostering a good working environment in private sector businesses, particularly through SRHR and Inclusion in Employment in Uganda, which specifically target the most vulnerable female employees.



YOU HAVE BEEN WITH US AND YOU HAVE WALKED THE TALK - DISTRICT LEADERS COMMEND RHU

Local government leaders from 14 districts applauded the contribution of civil society organisations on their efforts to complement Government initiatives towards addressing gaps in young people programming, curbing gender-based violence, the fight against teenage pregnancy, and generally provision of sexual reproductive health services.

In September when the RHU board members conducted a countrywide tour, district after district, it was all praises. RHU was particularly hailed for the many years of service, the close working relationship with the leaders, the evidence of accomplishments and the initiatives that have impacted the lives of young people.

“We thank RHU on all fronts. You have been with us and you have walked the talk, especially with the youth. You have championed sexuality education that has done us good, considering we have many people from different parts of the world and this has shaped them,” said the Hoima district deputy chief administrative officer, Harriet Katusiime when the RHU board members visited her

“And we thank RHU for the spirited fight to curb sexual gender-based violence and to curb teenage pregnancy. We thank you for the different initiatives,” she said.

“Men's day, is something that I found here and excited me. We cannot engage women alone, we have to involve men to have better results in the fight against GBV,” she added.

“You have a very strong and able team.... We get motivated when we get involved in activities from planning to the end,” added Dr Lawrence Baluku, the health subdistrict in-charge.

The RHU board members' tour was to enable them have a feel of what is happening at the clinics and to strengthen RHU relationships with district leaders.



The teams interacted with RHU staff at the different offices, they met with leaders of the cities and districts, as well as the RHU branch executives committee members and leaders of the Youth Action Movement.

The board members hailed the district leaders for the support to RHU and the good working relationship.

"We appreciate the support the district extends to RHU, without which many things would not go through," said Counsel Charles Jumba, a board member and the chair of the programmes and finance committee of the board speaking with Mbarara district leaders that included the chief administrative officer (CAO), the resident district commissioner, the district health officer among others.

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The Mbarara district CAO, John Nyakahuma pledged to continue giving technical support to RHU whenever needed. "We appreciate your services, especially the work you are doing to our young people. We shall always be at your service whenever called upon," he said.

From Japan, they visited Uganda. They interacted with the management of Reproductive Health Uganda in Kampala. Off they drove for more than 300km to midwestern Uganda to Fort Portal. They assessed the interventions they are funding through RHU. They interacted with Kabarole district local government leaders and beneficiaries of their support. They were excited to witness the impact of their support to the communities. They were touched and inspired by the stories from the beneficiaries.

Satisfied with what they heard and observed, they had no doubt RHU was a credible partner to continue working with. The Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP) and SARAYA- a Japanese manufacturing and sales of health and hygiene products and services company have committed to walking with RHU towards the future.

The eight people delegation, including, Hirotsugu Daishima, SARAYA's Director, Ai Tominaga, JOICFP's ambassador among others was headed by Michiyo Ono the JOICFP's Deputy Executive Director.

"We pledge to continue working and supporting RHU to ensure that Ugandan youth continue to receive these services," Michiyo Ono the Deputy Executive Director of JOICFP stated, expressing admiration of the work being done by RHU to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services, especially by young people.

"We are pleased to witness the tangible results of our partnership with RHU in improving the lives of Ugandans," added Ai Tominaga the JOICFP ambassador, who was thrilled by "the dedication and resilience of the beneficiaries that inspires us to continue supporting RHU's important work."

While in Fort Portal, Annet Kabahenda, the Assistant City Health Officer, commended the donors for their efforts in preventing and treating ovarian cancer, HIV prevention, and providing skills training to teenage mothers in the district.

"Testing for cervical cancer and HIV have been made easy, simplified, and accessible. Your support has made early diagnosis easy," said Kabahenda.

During their visit to Kabarole, the delegation met with teenage mothers who have benefited from RHU's livelihood skills program. "I am the sole provider for my children since all their fathers left. The money I make from beads, though not enough, enables me to buy medicine and clothes for my children," shared 19-year-old Topista Kahunde, one of the beneficiaries of the programme.

DONORS COMMIT TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING RHU TO ENSURE YOUNG PEOPLE THRIVE



Touched by Topista's story, the visiting mission decided to buy construction materials to help her build a shelter for her children. "This is the best thing that has happened to me. I will divert the money I was saving for iron sheets into my business. This will help me produce more products for my customers," expressed Topista with gratitude.

For his part, Jackson Chekweko, the Executive Director of RHU appreciated the two organisations for the long-standing partnership impacting the lives of Ugandans, especially, the young people.

"Through support from organisations like JOICFP and SARAYA, RHU is able to serve vulnerable communities in hard-to-reach areas," he said.

In conclusion, the JOICFP's ambassador, Ai Tominaga emphasised her commitment to mobilising the Japanese people to donate to the cause.

"My job is to continue showing the people of Japan the need to continue donating to support the people of Uganda," she declared.

MISSION TO BRIDGE THE SRHR GAPS IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Nkuringo-Bwindi with breath taking terrain nestled in the mountains of Kisoro, is a remote location where you are welcomed by more than 200 species of thick greenery trees. The moment you drop in Nkuringo you can't miss seeing thousands of mountain gorillas – in pictures on almost every house. The mountain gorilla sculptures too are paraded on the streets of Nkuringo.

The warm and cheerful people of Nkuringo will welcome you with the sound of their traditional drums and dances.

However, as much as it is rosy on the outside, the people of Nkuringo are faced with a number of challenges ranging from bumpy roads to ill equipped health facilities in terms of staffing, commodities and services.

Even with these challenges, the community of Nkuringo-Bwindi has shown incredible resilience and a strong desire to overcome these hurdles. Whatever the situation, the women of Nkuringo will do whatever it takes to meet their health needs.

Beatrice Nsaba a village team member in Nkuringo says that women have to trek the over 30 Km journey to Kisoro to access critical reproductive health services including long acting and permanent family planning methods, ultra sound scanning etc.

"To make the journey to Kisoro Hospital, one must plan in advance and arrange for a boda boda [motorcycle taxi] to transport them from Nkuringo to Kisoro. The cost of this trip amounts to Thirty thousand shillings [about \$8] which can be quite challenging to afford given the low income of the residents."



With this background, it was imperative for RHU to extend services to such remote communities to bridge the SRHR gap by through mobile health clinics.

"During our first outreach programme at Nteko Health Centre IV [in Nkuringo], we were thrilled by the overwhelming response from women seeking services. It was inspiring to see so many individuals seeking long-term family planning methods. These services are not typically provided at the health facility," Stella Atuhaire, RHU health service provider narrates.

RHU has not only provided these services in Nkuringo but other remote areas like Bidi Bidi refugee camp, Kyangwali refugee settlement, Nyumanzi Refugee Settlement among others reaching out to more than 4,192 people with over 9,478 SRHR services.

The mobile clinics, equipped with trained medical professionals, offer a range of services, including family planning, prenatal care, health education, cervical and breast cancer screening, HIV counseling and testing among others.

KABAROLE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER

Nine young people centred CSOs stormed Fort Portal City and Kabarole district. They bombarded schools. The city, district and the Tooro Kingdom leaderships were not spared. The young people reached out to them. Preaching the gospel of sexuality education. The chief advocate being the State Minister for Local Government, Hon Victoria Ruseke.

This was the Alliance Week 2023 in the second week of August. An annual event by the SRHR Alliance, part of the activities to commemorate the International Youth Day, that has been conducted for the last seven years.

As part of the five-day activities, young people reached out to more than 3,000 students in 10 schools dialoguing different SRHR topics, with a bias in sexuality education. The team facilitated health workers who offered more than 10,000 volume of SRHR services to more than 4,000 people in 15 different sites across the city/districts.

The visit to the Tooro Kingdom culminated into the kingdom leadership committing to promoting and advancing young people's SRHR through integrating such into their youth cultural activities including the Ekyooto (campfire). The district leadership hailed the initiative that would help to reduce the HIV infections that are still a challenge to the district. During this week, the SRHR Alliance partners jointly worked as one with a shared goal of bridging the SRHR knowledge gap and bringing youth friendly SRHR related services closer to the communities. The event gives young people an opportunity to air out their views among leaders that in turn make commitments which the alliance partners follow up on.

This year, the Alliance Week 2023 was celebrated in Kabarole district filled with activities ranging from demand recreation for SRHR services and

out-of-school information sessions, social activities and provision of SRHR and legal aid services.

"The unique thing about this week is that it is always a work and fun moment that we get to meet each other as young people from the entire SRHR Alliance," says Martha Mugabe, one of the young people participants.



STAR GOVERNMENT AGENCY

Drum rolls, drum rolls everybody...The crown for our maiden honour for the exceptional government agency goes to none other than the National Population Council (NPC)! The SRHR Spotlight is proud of you and proud of working with you. It's not only to us, but to the SRHR fraternity, you stand out amongst the MDAs.

When it comes to organising events, we give you a plus: the glamorous Ugandan side event at the UN, the colorful World Population Day 2023, the insightful State of Uganda's Population Report 2022 and its launch, accompanied with recognising outstanding media personality, etc., you have been nothing but great. Partnering with CSOs and coordinating the FP/SRH budget advocacy group, coordinating CSOs on population, health, environment, leading the East Africa reproductive Health Network Uganda Chapter- we applaud you.



Your zeal to ensure everyone plays their part towards the attainment of the Uganda Vision 2040, through the demographic dividend, etc, NPC, you have done Uganda proud. The unwavering commitment and infectious passion with which you conduct your business is truly commendable

We give you the flowers. And, like they do at weddings, throw them and we see who will catch them for they will be lined up for the next spotlight.

STAR DONOR OF THE QUARTER

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, don't go alone, so they say. We understand this very well. We are because of you- the donors- who have walked with us and held our hand on this journey, for the last 66 years. You have stood with us through it all. To many of our donors, it's no longer a donor-recipient relationship, we are partners.

At RHU, we value each one of you. With you, we are one step closer to seeing a Uganda where everyone's sexual reproductive health rights are fulfilled because of the journey you have walked with us. You are truly making a difference in the lives of many people in Uganda and we commend you!

However, even as we celebrate each one of you, we present the flowers for this quarter to the strategic partnership between the Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA), and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

We cannot applaud you enough for your great gesture towards making a difference to the lives of people in Uganda. The Danish MFA, DFPA has walked with us for more than 20 years because you have continued to extend a hand to them.

And this year, when you noticed things were getting tough, you swiftly came in. You extended a top up funding to us to ensure that the rights of every Ugandan are respected, honoured and fulfilled, thank you- Great partner.

We crown you the Star Donor of the Quarter



OUR STAR OF THE QUARTER

Probably, you may have heard her name or perhaps crossed paths with her in corridors of influence. She is a sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocate, a feminist champion and a creative gender transformer.

Olgah Daphynne Namukuza aka Auntie Olzz: at 29, she has received local and

international accolades in recognition of her invaluable contribution in championing SRHR of adolescents and young people.

Olgah, the current Country Director of the SRHR Alliance in Uganda, a position she assumed in September, is our star advocate of the quarter.



The remarkable journey that has led to this esteemed position has been nothing short of awe-inspiring, and her unwavering dedication has shone through every single step along the way. Until September, Olgah served as the programmes manager for a €500,000 COVID-19 response programme with the Aga Khan Foundation Uganda. She provided leadership over the two-year programme that was sub-granting funds to more than 20 CSOs and learning organisations to implement community-based programmes.

The programme she led impacted over 540,000 vulnerable people including autistic children, people living with HIV/AIDS, teenage mothers and fathers, victims and survivors of gender-based violence, refugees, people with disabilities, people with mental health challenges in the central and West Nile region of Uganda.

Our star advocate of the quarter has previously held a number of positions in various organisations: programmes manager at the Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV/AIDS (UNYPA) where she provided strategic

leadership and management, annually managing a budget of more than \$200,000.

Before then, she held the position of the Youth Coordinator of the SRHR Alliance in Uganda empowering young people with special focus girls, the marginalised, persons with disabilities and People living with HIV/AIDS to seek reproductive health services and make informed decisions about their sexuality.

The cornerstone of her remarkable journey can be traced back when she made the decision to join Youth Action Movement (YAM) where she crowned it up as YAM Africa Regional President.

Her YAM presidency served as a catalyst for her as she fearlessly led the youth arm of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) representing the voices of young people at the IPPF – Africa Regional Council in Nairobi and later the body's global Governing Council in London. In her current position, Olga vows to use her influence to continue "strengthening and maximising the impact of the young people's efforts to address SRHR challenges in Uganda by ensuring adoption of sustained mechanisms of meaningful youth participation and gender transformative approaches in all the programmes and

activities implemented by our partners; this shall guarantee sustainable youth empowerment"

The new SRHR Alliance Uganda Country Director believes her role presents her the "opportunity to become a true epitome of meaningful youth participation embracing youth strengths for the benefit of the SRHR landscape in Uganda, I am happy to be a living symbol on the benefits reaped when young people are empowered and supported to utilize their skills and expertise."

Madam Country Director, our Star of the Quarter, the SRHR Spotlight congratulates and wishes you the best in your new role.

STAR CSO OF THE QUARTER

Many have made a change, many have touched lives but to us, you are the star of this quarter. Your energy and resilience and the tedious process endured to address issues of violence and harassment in the world of work; to promote a safe and healthy working environment for all, in both the public and private sectors cannot pass unnoticed.

Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) for years, you have been a voice of and a strong support system for employees and employers on social and economic issues in Uganda. Your efforts to promote the interests and needs of employees and enhance their competitiveness through policy advocacy, fostering best employment relations and provision of business development services is well recognised. And in our inaugural issue of The SRHR Spotlight we couldn't resist the urge to convey our appreciation to you.

Most noticeable, is the recent efforts towards the ratification of Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work by the Government of Uganda in August 2023. Surely, it was a long and tedious process involving several stakeholders and you were at the centre stage in this process. The ratification process required having appropriate legislation in place, and again you have been instrumental in the labour law revisions especially the Employment Amended Bill 2022- we are astonished by your efforts!

Many companies and employers across the country can bear us witness when we talk of your passion and efforts to promote gender equality, zero tolerance policy against all forms of harassment and violence, equal pay for work of equal value, etc., through the regular dialogues with company supervisors and management. We cannot forget your hard work to promote access to sexual reproductive health services by employees of private sector companies.

FUE, you can count on us to partner with you on these efforts, including the current Yambala 4Me campaign where you are at the centre- especially the trainings of the regional campaign private sector ambassadors to roll it out, supported by MoH-Global Fund. Yambala is a Luganda word meaning "put on", thus, "wear it for my sake" (Yambala 4Me). Wear the seatbelt, wear the condom, wear the masks, wear the helmet while at work.

The training equipped the different selected participants with knowledge and information on HIV and AIDS, Covid19, gender-based violence, tuberculosis, road and industrial accidents. It influenced peers and community members to change their risky behaviours to free risk behaviours through Yambala 4me (masks, condoms, seatbelts and helmets).

FUE, accept our flowers as the Star CSO for our inaugural The SRHR Spotlight issue



BOOTS ON GROUND



Hopping from district to district. Starting from the cattle corridor of Kiruhura to stand in solidarity with women, to the flat endowed lands of Alebtong to focus attention on the urgency of prioritising population issues. From there we stopped to the scenic hills-decorated south western district of Kabale to celebrate the energy, potential, and aspirations of young people. And in September we joined the ministry of tourism to exalt the importance of tourism, in the Oil city of Hoima. Finally, we landed in one of King Oyo's districts- Kyenjojo to devise means to "break barriers" that hinder young people from accessing contraceptives.

RHU has had her boots on the ground, joining different government ministries, departments and authorities to commemorate the different international days held in different districts.

RHU has utilised these days as a platform to positively impact communities, engage decision makers and opinion leaders on key SRHR issues through conducting various activities.

We have always organised media related activities including twitter spaces, radio and TV talk shows. We have

discussed topics related to the themes of a particular day like Breaking the barriers: Embracing Contraception Choices for Youth; Diving deeper: How do we effectively invest in sexuality education; The art of consent; Promoting and protecting children's rights in this digital era etc.

RHU has conducted community outreaches in the districts where a particular day is commemorated to provide SRHR services that have included family planning, HIV testing and counselling, cervical and breast cancer screening, SGBV counselling and referral and health education. In addition, we have held and facilitated dialogues in schools and communities targeting parents, opinion makers, community leaders and young people.

RHU has been present at the national celebration grounds where we have always had a stall exhibiting different SRHR commodities and offering SRHR information.

Through these activities, RHU has served more than 1,348 number of people with about 9,436 volume of SRHR services of these efforts.

MAKING OUR PRESENCE IMPACTFUL IN GLOBAL SPACES

We are proud of our national presence, but not contented. In pursuit of partnership and networking efforts to have impact, we have to engage in the global advocacy spaces that matter. That's the reason why to us investing in being part of the UN forums such as CSW, CPD, COP, HLPF, etc., and other networking and partnership spaces, is not a luxury. And this year, RHU has been at the centre of a couple of regional and global spaces.

RHU PARTICIPATED in United Nations Foundation conference for actors in business and human rights of women at workplace in New York. The conference brought together business, government, donors, labour movements, researchers and NGOs to determine strategies to drive systematic changes in global and workplace practices, policies and programmes for women workers' rights. We collaborated and built collective actions to support the health and wellbeing of women workers in supply chains, showcased the existing research and evidence on the business case related to women's health and worker wellbeing, identify gaps in its current business case especially concerns on environmental, social and governance (ESG) engagement and advocacy.

IN ADDITION, RHU was part of the conference in India intended to provide input for the future IPPF direction related to corporate sector engagement. During this workshop, RHU shared experience and lessons learnt implementing interventions to improve health and gender equality in the world of work. RHU also utilised learnings from this conference to improve SRHR and inclusion in employment programming in Uganda where discussions with private companies on prioritising ESG compliance is underway hence strengthening peer driven north-south learnings as part of highly needed capacity development.

WE WERE PART of Government of Uganda delegation to the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD56) at the UN Headquarters- New York. We were part of the organising team for

the Ugandan side event at the UN Uganda Mission on giving the girl child another chance to enroll back to school after giving birth, convened by National Population Council with support from UNPFA Uganda country office.

WE HELD several meetings that included a meeting with the Danish secretary for Foreign Affairs at the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to update her on developments in Uganda; together with IPPF affiliates of Tunisia and Zambia had a meeting with the Norwegian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss affairs of SRHR in our countries.

WE WERE PART of the CSO meetings to strategise on how to influence the discussions on population and education, and discussed challenges and opportunities related to CSO-government engagement on UN engagements, among others.

HELLO BENIN! When called, RHU is right there in the exact moment. As a partner under the Right Here Right Now 2 (RHRNII) consortium, RHU participated in the annual project global meeting, this time round held in the west African Francophone country- Benin. The focus of this particular convening was on the mid-term review of the programme, after three years of implementation.

The meeting had participants from a dozen partner countries in Africa and Asia. The Rutgers executive director, Marieke van der Plas, who also doubles as a member of the steering committee was among the high-profile figures in attendance. The Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands was also represented, so was the Government of Benin.

During the meeting, we exchanged views, discovered more about different countries implementing the programme and appreciated initiatives taken by different countries to ensure that the programme is a success.

We are constantly learning and some of the best practices picked from Benin will be evident in our work.

FROM WEST AFRICA, we landed in the city of a thousand hills, Kigali Rwanda to participate in the Women Deliver Conference 2023. RHU was part of enriching sessions at the conference. These included: the importance of amplifying diverse voices and perspectives through digital media; influencing positive public discourse through the use of digital media; digital discrimination and censorship toward female health; partnerships and political will; among others. We also interacted with some of our donors to further strengthen our partnerships; in a number of spaces, we shared our experiences and lessons especially on how to advance gender equality, address various issues affecting women and girls while identifying evidence-based solutions to addressing the challenges.

ABYSSINIA! RHU was fully represented at the Power to Youth Annual Partnership Meeting 2023, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to empower young people and creating lasting change.

The annual meeting served as a platform for exchanging ideas, showcasing achievements, and charting future plans. At the heart of the meeting was the recognition that working with like-minded organisations is crucial in addressing the pressing issues faced by young people.

Representatives from different countries shared their experiences and challenges, highlighting the remarkable work being done.

The Uganda team shared their success with intergenerational dialogues and recommended digitising these dialogues to cater for young people's preferences. They also emphasised the involvement of cultural leaders in advancing the programme's agenda.

The Power to You(th) project consists of seven country management teams [Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Ghana, Senegal and Indonesia], four global partners [Amref Flying Doctors, Rutgers,

Sonke Gender Justice and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs], and two technical partners [Choice for Youth and Sexuality and KIT Royal Tropical Institute].

This is what transpired in the City of Street Coffee- Ethiopia aka Abyssinia, where we rubbed shoulders with our fellow change makers from Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, Ghana, Senegal and Indonesia.

LIFE ON THE WEB finally came to a pause when young people from all over the globe jetted in the Pearl of Africa to spur invaluable



learning experiences, strengthen networking opportunities, and build excellent collaborations amongst young people in cementing efforts towards crafting solutions to SRHR challenges affecting young people.

At the shores of the largest lake in Africa and chief reservoir of the Nile, Lake Victoria, Munyonyo Commonwealth, we embraced young people from diverse cultural backgrounds which provided them an opportunity to collaborate and unite around common themes surrounding SRHR.

The Global Youth Connect Meet Up Week was the reason for this union under the Global Youth Connect project (GYC). GYC is an innovative digital platform developed to provide young people across diverse backgrounds with the means to access accurate, age-appropriate information on all aspects of SRHR with support from the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

During this meet up week, young people created a Youth Declaration 2023, pledging to drive change for sexual reproductive health rights, enabling access to accurate and age-appropriate SRH information.

Reproductive Health Uganda, that hosts the project was the convener of event, that provided a conducive platform for young people to connect and explore ways of working collaboratively.

DON'T MISS!

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

It's time to connect: connecting with those who matter. The donors will be there. Researchers won't miss. CSO executives are ready to share their contributions. And the media is ready to tell the stories. It is the Ministry of Health, working with partners, convening us all for the Annual National Safe Motherhood Conference slated for October 23rd –25th, 2023, at Speke Resort Hotel in Munyonyo.

The conference seeks to raise awareness about safe motherhood and maternal health, exchange knowledge, ideas, and best practices. We shall also be able to identify challenges and

missed opportunities. It is an opportunity to hear from experts in the field; network with professionals from around the world; and gain valuable insights into the latest research for evidence-based policy making and programming. Taking part in the conference, is a step in the right direction. Your contribution to strategies to further eliminate preventable maternal mortality through an integrated approach that addresses the health system and social-economic deficits that continue to claim mothers is invaluable.

See you there



THE IUD OR THE IUD?



Young people are talking about it. The fun, the excitement, the craziness, the number of attendees and experiences. To them, it's a time to learn, unlearn and relearn. They are talking about the past IUD and previous IUDs.

"What do they mean by previous IUDs? Do these guys really know what IUD stands for? No, they are mistaken," you may think.

Ladies and gentlemen, that IUD is an abbreviation for Inter University Dialogue. Yes, it's an annual event that brings together young people from different higher education institutions. These are joined by CSOs, policymakers and decision-makers to freely deliberate on sexual reproductive health and rights issues affecting young people.

Kyambogo University is the host of this year's IUD. This is where we shall all be on Saturday, November 11, 2023. Mark and save this date.

Expect lots of funfair, catching up, eating, learning, unlearning and relearning, various services to be offered, etc., as we dissect sexuality. The theme! Dissecting the notion of sexuality to address missed opportunities for young people's sexual health."

I don't want to miss this for anything. You too, don't plan to miss this for anything.

ONE PLACE, ONE CONVERSATION, ONE VISION

Imagine a place where all like-minded people converge. They congregate because they have one vision. A vision where every girl, every woman never experiences any form of gender-based violence. To attain this vision, they must have a conversation. A conversation to reflect on their achievements, best practices and lessons learned.

They converge to have a conversation to strategise on how best to raise awareness on key issues amongst communities and duty bearers. And to strategise how best to network and engage the duty bearers to improve the policy environment.

A consortium of CSO's under the Power To Youth Project, collaborating with likeminded partners are storming the space. A mega conference is coming your way – it is the Annual Power To Youth Change Makers Conference. Critical SRHR issues affecting girls, women and young people in Uganda will be at the centre of the conversation.

Be there or be there: it is November 29 – 30. Government officials will be there, the donors will be there, the policy makers will be there and the academia won't miss.

See you there.

