



*“Strengthening the Partnership for Youth
Access to Life Skills Based on SRHR.”*

**Young Women’s Christian Association of Kenya
MOMBASA BRANCH**

YChampion Bulletin

Background

Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) Kenya is a women and youth membership based, non-governmental development organization founded in 1912.

It is affiliated to the World YWCA and its main purpose is to develop the collective power of girls and women in Kenya to achieve social, economic, political and cultural “emancipation.”

YWCA is built on a strong Christian foundation, whose emphasis is integrated in all its programming. The project is being implemented in Mombasa & Kisumu with specific focus of how the partnership can strengthen capacity for young people’s rights to information about SRHR and the SDGs, developing tools and mechanisms to reach more young people.

The program aims at influencing Sustainable Development Goal 3:

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

We work with young people whom we refer to as SRHR Champions to implement our activities. The project works towards two main outcomes:-

- a) **Enhanced application of life-skill based SRHR and mental health knowledge**
- b) **Reduced vulnerability of girl’s and young women to sexual exploitation & unplanned pregnancy.**

In this publication, you will find a summary of the activities we undertook in the month of May.



Editor’s Desk

MARTHA WANZA
SRHR Programme Officer
YWCA - Mombasa Branch

The month of May 28th is a global day for action to end period poverty and the stigma surrounding menstruation. This year theme was #WEARECOMMITTED.

Today, millions of women and girls around the world especially

the developing countries are stigmatised, excluded and discriminated against simply because they menstruate. It’s not acceptable that because of a natural bodily function women and girls continue to be prevented from getting an education, earning an income and fully and equally participating in everyday life.

Without feminine hygiene products, many girls skip school while on their periods. That means they miss up to a week of school every month, so girls start to fall behind and eventually drop out. Alternatively, some girls make their pads using products that can be unhygienic or even dangerous, such as newspaper, grass, hay, or cow dung like in the case Tana River in the coast region where girls were cited to be staying during their periods.

To help ensure periods don’t mark the end of a girl’s schooling or even affect their self-esteem. YWCA dedicates part of its Sexual and Reproductive health work to address this critical issue by ensuring part of the content of mentorship sessions include Menstrual health hygiene management not just for girls alone but boys as enablers in prevention of Period Stigma.

In the month of May, we did activities based on lifeskills based SRHR activities and joined other organizations in the social media in amplifying the voice on ending period poverty. Also find in some amazing heart to heart opinion pieces from our champions.
Enjoy!



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YWCA Kenya

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Y-Teens Formation and Mentorship

Y Teens Miritini

Champion Elizabeth has been having mentorship sessions with teens in Miritini. YWCA visited her and encouraged to have the kids registered as YWCA TEENS. 13 teens were registered with parents' consent and they now have ongoing sessions at the Miritini World bank led by the Champion.



South Sudan Exchange Participant Sharing Her Journey in the YWCA



Champion Elizabeth Magunda Taking the Teens Through Self Esteem Session

Amazing Teens Likoni

Amazing group of people with disabilities is located in Likoni whereby they are involved in different community projects such as sports for all that is targeted to involve children with disabilities in sports. They also involved in Advocacy programs. Champion Emily, Fatma & Joyce organized teens with disabilities and parents where able to provide consents for their children to be involved in continuous sessions. In the month of June they will be trained on not just life skills but also integration of practical skills such as bead making & mat making.



Champion Emily Taking the Parents Through Consent Signing



ICS Mental Health Awareness & Members' Drive

During the YWCA last visit the ICS College health club reported that there was need to be engaged on basics of mental health. One of the teacher reported that 2 of her students had suicidal thoughts. The champions who are trained on basics of counselling and mental health engaged their peers at ICS College on Statistics of mental disorders, types of mental disorders, signs and symptoms and also the coping mechanisms. They also got an opportunity to hear the situation analysis of mental disorders in South Sudan from Catherine (YWCA South Sudan Exchange Participant). Referrals services were shared to the students so that they can access.



Champion Doris Sharing on the Current Statistics of Mental Health Issues in Kenya



S/Sudan Exchange Participant, Catherine Giving a Situation Analysis of Mental Health Issues in S/Sudan

Likoni Remand Mentorship Sessions

Puberty Skills & Mat/Bag Making

The mentorship sessions are ongoing since the month of February. On the month of May there was an increase of the children in conflict with the law at the center. However that has not been a challenge because the ones that we have been walking with are able to train the news ones the skill that we teach them through the YWCA guidance. We divide them to smaller group where they are able to help each other learn easily.



From Left: Champion Daniel holding one of the complete bag, Champion Doris, Officer Incharge Irene and the SRHR Officer displaying some of the mats that the Likoni Remand Children have made.

Menstrual Health Day

Social Media Advocacy

28th May is the Menstrual Health Day. To commemorate the day, champions developed messages of action that were used to create awareness on Social Media based on Menstrual Health Management (MHM) Period Poverty, Period Stigmatization and Male Involvement.

Period Book Development

In the quest to promote Menstrual health hygiene YWCA lead champions with the guidance from the SRHR Officer & South Sudan Exchange Participant developed a period book that is yet to be released. The period book in the making is meant to help young girls acquire MHM knowledge and also inspire them to embrace periods as a process of growth and not an obstacle to their goals.

MHM Empowerment

Champions also attended an online training organized by Kenya Girl Guide Association on MHM. They were provided with manuals and advocacy skills.



From Left: Champions Fatma, Joel, SRHR Officer Martha Champion Elizabeth, Emelda & Vivian

#PERIOD EDUCATION FOR ALL



Period Book Review Meeting With the Lead Champions



Champion Emelda Distributing Sanitary Pads After a Menstrual Health Session

Menstrual Health Sensitisation Kaa Chonjo Mkuyuni

Champion Emelda leads a group of adolescents and young mothers at Kaa Chonjo. They share about issues that affect them in regards to SRHR and Mental Health. They also have a saving plan in their group. In the month of May, they had a session on Menstrual Health Awareness and a partner - KUZA Livelihood Improvement - supported them with Sanitary Pads, Pens, Wristbands and T-shirts.



Binti Spheres Empowered

Binti sphere is an organization that works with young women and girls by unleashing their full potential through swimming and parawing. The SRHR department through the lead officer Martha Wanza was engaged to offer SRHR training to the Bintis (a name the given to the girls in the organization) They are a group of young women and girls with disabilities.

The officer also featured in a blog on MHM advocacy and also interviewed by Radio Kaya regarding Menstrual Health Management and Parenting.



NikoSeti Meets Chap Chap

Nikoseti is a youth group based in Jomvu that has been doing Life skills based SRHR to Adolescents and leadership training. They also do virtual mental health awareness sessions bimonthly.

Chap Chap which is a 29 year old group that is registered to YWCA decided to mentor the NSYN by empowering them with saving and investments skills. This will enable them manage their income generating activities in a responsible way as well create savings for growth within themselves.



Ellen Mutemi, the YWCA Board Branch Treasurer (From the Chap Chap Group) Showing the Participants How To Calculate Loans & Interest

Opinion Pieces

My First Period Story

STELLA KIMANI
Communications Assistant
National Headquarter



First periods can be many things exciting, terrifying and awkward. There is no universal experience because a first period can mean something vastly different from person to person. When I first got my period, I was at school and I didn't tell anyone at first. I was freaked out because I didn't know what to expect and it made me uncomfortable walking around with a red stain on the back of my uniform. I went to the bathroom to clean up and then went home and told my mom because she had to help me buy pads. I was nervous to tell her, I'm not sure why.

The week of my first period, I had to go for a swimming lesson and the idea of a stain in the water while I swam was way too scary. Even though I didn't swim, I was able to find ways to work through being on my period. It just takes a little while to understand that it is something every girl goes through at some point. It is normal and there should be no reason to be worried about it. Having your first period is scary but it is something that you shouldn't let affect your life and what you do. Over time it gets better. Looking back on it, I wish I would have shared the experience with a close friend, it would have made it less scary.

Dear YWCA

The first time I heard about you (YWCA) was way back in 2018. In the back of my head I thought it was a church, and well, since I'm a Catholic I decided not to give it so much thought as I am already committed to my church. It took a while before I heard about YOU again, and well this time round from a friend who explained to me Your full MEANING, VISION and MISSION.



You then there and then caught my attention (2020). I then got a chance and was trained as one of the SRHR champions, Mental health advocate and early this year trained on the basic counseling skills, which thanks to you (YWCA), it awakened my urge of pursuing counselling Psychology as a course of which I'm now happily enrolled in.

You have made me realize so much potential in me that I could barely notice by myself. Due to your trust in me, I managed to form the Y-teens Miritini, which is more of a talents group under YWCA, helping the girls realize how much they are blessed.

I was recently elected in the YWCA board as the Member representative below 30years. I'm really humbled by this and more of the opportunities I get to serve in the community as a whole. A big thank you to the YWCA fraternity as it has helped me grow and impact not only my life positively, but others as well.

God Bless us all, God bless YWCA

ELIZABETH MAGUNDA
SRHR Champion
& Mental Health Advocate

Comprehensive SRHR Key in HIV/AIDS Fight

Over 1.4M people are living with HIV in Kenya, National AIDS Control Council (NACC) report shows. The disease is still a menace in developing countries till today. Newly infected youths are bitter, in denial, vengeful and praying for the next prey to infect because they don't want to die alone. To know your partner's sexual health status is one of the many sexual rights we have but unfortunately we are scared to discuss such a topic. It's time we rethink our approach in combating this disease, let's emphasize on the need for safer sex, the effects of irresponsible sexual behavior. It is only through creating awareness about SRHR, talking about the preventive measures and promoting healthy living to the ones already affected. Without awareness people will still be scared, and stigma will still be on the rise not forgetting the myths and misconceptions associated to it.



Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) only manages the virus in the body but doesn't cure HIV/AIDS. We are the most vulnerable people as youths because we are sexually active and the only way to save ourselves is effective use of the male and female condom. Anytime that you engage yourself in unprotected sex, you should go for a HIV test which you need to know it takes about 6 weeks to six months before it is detected.

However, being infected with the virus isn't a death sentence, ensure you adhere to the Anti-Retroviral drugs as prescribed by your doctor and watch your immune system increasing dramatically. Work against negative feelings of guilt and shame as this stops you from taking good care of yourself. Be like a pineapple: stand tall, wear a crown, and be sweet from inside. Live a positive life.

@kaddymngumi

BY KADDY MNGUMI
Sexual Reproductive Health
Youth Champion

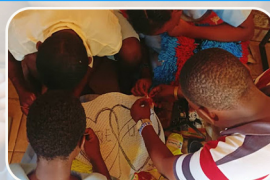
Matsangoni Youth Space Catch Up

This is a group in Kilifi that engages adolescents on Mentorship Sessions on Life Skills based SRHR.

The SRHR Department paid them a visit to see their progress.



May Photos



We welcome your feedback and comments to our newsletter. Please contact YWCA Mombasa at mombasa@ywcakenya.org if you have any comments or if there is anything that you think should be included in our newsletter.

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