

Flourish

**A Toolbox for Girls and Young Women Leaders
on the Frontlines of Gender Justice in Health**



Acknowledgements

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Part I.

A basic primer for young women
and girl leaders in health and rights

A sea of terms, and conventions are presented and discussed in the strategic dialogues and advocacy on the rights, health and well-being of young women and girls. Often, these abbreviations, acronyms and terms are used without any explanation, or may have more than one definition.

Below is a list of some of the more common or potentially confusing acronyms, abbreviations, and concepts. Definitions or explanations are adopted from credible and validated sources.

Commonly used acronyms and abbreviations

ART	antiretroviral therapy (for HIV treatment)	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
CBO	community-based organization	SRH	sexual and reproductive health
CSO	civil society organization	SRHR	sexual and reproductive health and rights
GBV	gender-based violence	SRMNCAH	sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health
HPV	human papillomavirus	SW	sex work(er)
HTC	HIV testing and counselling	UN	United Nations
IDU	injecting drug user	UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual transgender, non-binary, queer, intersex	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
NGO	non-governmental organization	VAGW	violence against women
PLHIV	people living with HIV	WHO	World Health Organization

Terms-Terminologies-Concepts

Child marriage refers to any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child. Child marriage is often the result of entrenched gender inequality, making girls disproportionately affected by the practice. (UNICEF¹)

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives. (UNESCO²)

Gender-based violence (sometimes referred to by the acronym 'GBV') refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted. The term is also sometimes used to describe targeted violence against LGBTQI+ populations, when referencing violence related to norms of masculinity/femininity and/or gender norms. (UN Women³)

Health advocacy refers to a combination of individual and social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health goal or programme. (WHO⁴)

Intimate partner violence (sometimes referred to by the acronym 'IPV') is a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It is sometimes referred to as 'domestic violence'. The abuse and control can include physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. (United Nations)

Key populations are defined as groups of people who, due to specific higher-risk behaviours, are at increased risk of HIV in every country, regardless of the epidemic type or local context. They include men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, people in prisons and other closed settings, sex workers and transgender people. (UNAIDS⁵)

Meaningful adolescent and youth engagement refers to an inclusive, intentional, mutually respectful partnership between adolescents, youth, and adults whereby power is shared, respective contributions are valued, and young people's ideas, perspectives, skills, and strengths are integrated into the design and delivery of programmes, strategies, policies, funding mechanisms, and organizations that affect their lives and their communities, countries, and world. (Global Consensus Statement on Meaningful Adolescent & Youth Engagement⁶)

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Sexual health is an integral part of overall health, well-being, and quality of life. It is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality, and not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all people must be respected, protected and fulfilled. (WHO⁷)

Violence against women and girls (sometimes referred to by the acronym 'VAWG') is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women and girls includes, but is not limited to physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring in the family or within the general community, and perpetrated or condoned by the State. (UN Women⁸)

Key bodies and conventions that govern health rights

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** is an international legal instrument adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Nearly every country has signed and ratified the convention; these governments have formally committed to achieving its goals and objectives. (United Nations⁹)

The **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, unanimously adopted by United Nations Member States in 1995, flagged 12 key areas where urgent action was needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women and men, girls, and boys. It also laid out concrete ways for countries to bring about change. These include women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision and making; institutional mechanisms; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. (UN Women¹⁰)

The **African Youth Charter**, launched in May 2006, provides a strategic framework for youth empowerment and development activities at the continental, regional and national levels across Africa. It addresses key issues affecting youth, including employment, sustainable livelihoods, education, skills development, health, youth participation, national youth policy, peace and security, law enforcement, youth in the Diaspora and youth with disabilities. The charter provides an avenue for effective youth participation in the development process. It defines youths as people between the ages of 15 and 35 years (African Union¹¹)

The **Greater Involvement of People living with AIDS (GIPA)** is a principle that aims to realize the rights and responsibilities of people living with HIV, including their right to self-determination and participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives. In these efforts, GIPA also aims to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the AIDS response. (UNAIDS¹²)

The **African Charter of Human and People's Rights** and its Protocol on the Rights of Women (referred to as the **Maputo Protocol**) was adopted in 2013. This women's human rights instrument details wide-ranging and substantive human rights for women covering the entire spectrum of civil and political, economic, social, and cultural as well as environmental rights. It is sometimes referred to informally as the African Bill of Rights on Women's Human Rights. (African Union¹³)

The **United Nations Economic and Social Council** (often referred to by the acronym 'ECOSOC') is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental. It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking. ECOSOC is a gateway for UN partnership and participation by the rest of the world. It offers a unique global meeting point for productive dialogues among policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, foundations, businesses, youth and 3,200+ registered non-governmental organizations. (United Nations¹⁴)

The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The 17 SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which set out a 15-year plan to achieve them. (United Nations¹⁵)

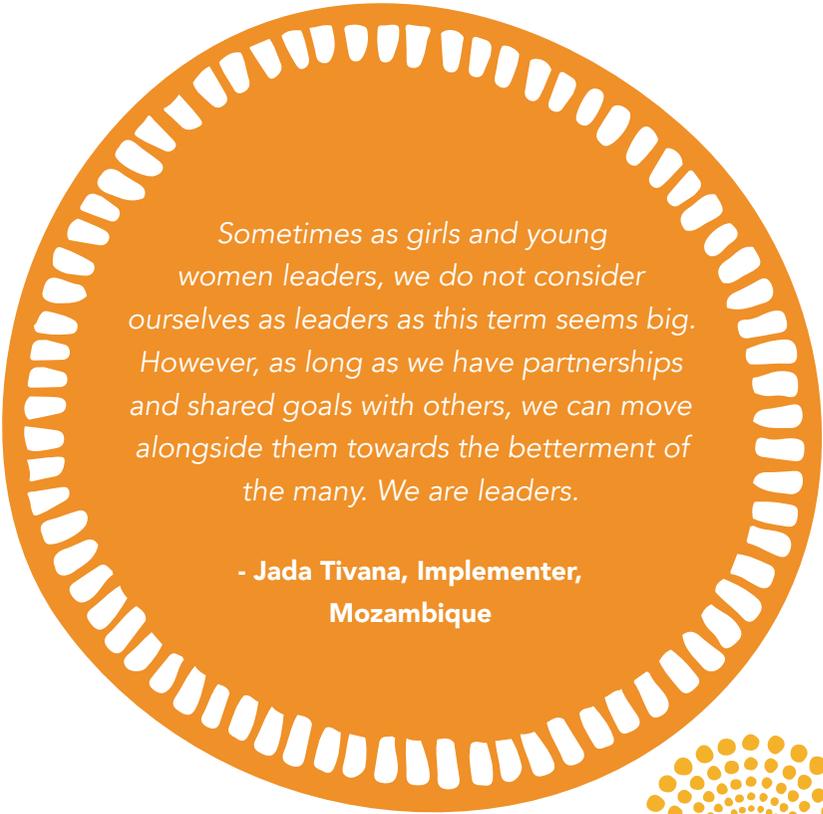
The left side of the slide features four decorative circular patterns. From left to right: a small white dotted circle, a red dotted circle, a yellow circle with a white dotted border, and a large red circle with a white dotted border. The text 'Part II.' is centered within this largest red circle.

Part II.

Purpose of this toolbox

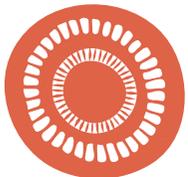
We present here **FLOURISH**, a toolbox developed by and for girls and young women leaders pursuing gender justice in health and well-being for girls and young women like ourselves. It includes information and resources that we, as young women and girls, can use to strengthen our advocacy and target our service provision across multiple domains of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework, including in HIV prevention and treatment, human rights, and sexual and reproductive health.

This toolbox identifies the distinct leadership roles that many of us are already heavily involved in, and where more leaders are needed to make further progress in the future. Young women and girls who are **programme implementers, national and global advocates, digital advocates, leaders of accountability work, mentors,** and **human rights defenders and activists,** and more will find its content useful.



Sometimes as girls and young women leaders, we do not consider ourselves as leaders as this term seems big. However, as long as we have partnerships and shared goals with others, we can move alongside them towards the betterment of the many. We are leaders.

**- Jada Tivana, Implementer,
Mozambique**



The context

The importance and value of building and nurturing young women's leadership is clearly evident, yet remains critically under-resourced. To achieve real change, including for HIV prevention, gender equality, and full rights attainment, we need a drastic increase to the flow of resources for community-led organizations, groups and networks of girls and women in all their diversities. By becoming even stronger leaders, we can use our knowledge and power to drive this increase in resources while also expanding our numbers and impact.

Affirming girls and young women through rights-based principles

As leaders in our communities and among our peers, we have a responsibility to have and promote core principles that express our values, aspirations, and desires for a transformed world in which girls and young women in all their diversities are supported to achieve the full measure of their capabilities. These principles include:



Investments must go directly to young women and girl-led organizations and networks that work to confront marginalization, stigma, and discrimination; advocate and promote access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services; and enhance gender equality and equity.



Girl- and young women-led organizations and networks must ensure fair compensation in all aspects of our work to safeguard its legitimacy. This includes ensuring a living wage and equitable pay.



Girl- and young women-led organizations and networks must ensure personal security of all staff and participants.



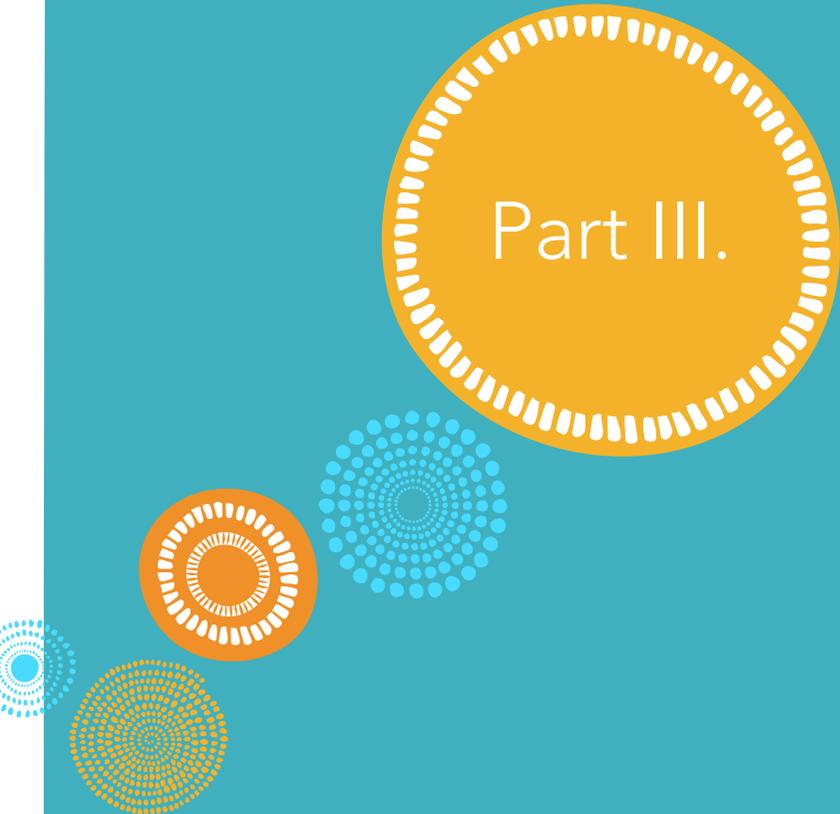
Girl- and young-women led organizations and networks must eliminate all forms of tokenism and must be committed to taking systematic action to enhance the skills, leadership and professional growth of staff, participants, and volunteers.



Girl- and young women-led organizations and networks must be committed to systematically enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of their work and in their leadership.



Girl- and young women-led organizations must integrate policies and practices that ensure the holistic well-being of all staff, participants and volunteers.



Part III.

Resources to support leaders
in key roles and responsibilities



Women and girls are uniquely vulnerable to intimidation, threats, violence, and other harms – particularly when we confront entrenched power structures and systems. Yet the work of ensuring safety, fairness, and justice for advocates is poorly resourced. As we seek to influence and direct change, we as individuals and collective entities need to ensure we put in place the right tools, protocols, and safeguards to ensure we are safe, protected, and resilient.



Self-care and self-defence

Sara Levavi-Eilat, 2021. The empowering Internet safety guide for women (English).

www.vpnmentor.com/blog/the-empowering-internet-safety-guide-for-women/

This guide was written with the intention of empowering women to navigate the Internet without fear. It discusses common cases in which women are subject to harassment in their daily lives – on social media, at work, while dating, and more – and gives tips and advice on how to take control.

COFEM, 2019. COFEM feminist pocketbook (English, French).

<https://cofemsocialchange.org/feminist-pocketbook/>

This resource, developed from a feminist perspective, consists of short ‘tip sheets’ on key topics related to addressing violence against women and girls.

Amnesty International, 2020. Staying resilient while trying to save the world: A well-being workbook for youth activists (English).

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act10/3231/2020/en/

This resource was created by youth activists around the world based on their experiences. The workbook aims to support youth activists in their journey to strengthen their self-care and make us all recognize the need to look after each other as we stand up for human rights.



Good communication skills are essential to allow you and others to understand information more accurately and quickly. In contrast, poor communication skills lead to frequent misunderstandings and frustration. These tools can be used across the board to build better leadership.

Witness, 2013. Resources for advocacy video creation (English).

<https://library.witness.org/product-category/video/>

This online library has free resources for video activists, trainers, and their allies. It includes numerous video examples and guides on how to create videos that can help achieve the changes needed at the heart of advocacy work.



Communication tools

Malala Fund, 2017. Raise your voice with Malala: A guide to taking action for girls' education (English).

www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/Raise-Your-Voice-With-Malala-2018-eng.pdf

This guide offers the tools many of us need to help us raise our voices and make change happen in our communities around girls' education. It includes real stories about girls around the world working to make sure all of us have the opportunity to go to school.

World Association of Girl Guides and Girls Scouts (WAGGGS), 2019. Speak out for her world: A guide for girls and young women to start their own advocacy campaigns (English).

https://duz92c7qaoni3.cloudfront.net/documents/Advocacy_Toolkit_v3.pdf

This toolkit is intended to help us improve our advocacy skills, be active and influential in our communities, and help our organizations or groups to start a campaign, among other important priorities. It includes real examples of girl-led advocacy initiatives from around the world.



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girls in programme implementation

What we do

Many girls and young women demonstrate leadership as implementers, providing clinical, psychological, and support services in their own capacity, and some have managerial roles. Our leadership drives projects working for and with the community. This ranges from direct services – such as condom distribution, supplying HIV prevention methods, assisting our peers to navigate health services and offering counselling – to organizing local talks, lectures and coordinating outreach.

Where we operate

Young women- and girl-led networks, organizations and groups often operate and are influential in both private and public spheres, including hospital settings, at marketplaces, and in digital spaces, among many others. We are a particularly critical link in the HIV response in communities, where we are often at the forefront and the centre, helping to link underserved girls and young women with formal systems.

How we make change happen

As implementers, we turn ideas and concepts into practical plans with timelines and targets. We work in teams and use standardized, efficient tools to achieve goals and objectives. We build our peers' and clients' capacities, and track results and impact using validated tools and principles.

My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

I had always wanted to give back to my community and I knew empowering adolescent girls and young women was it. That is how I founded WoMandla Foundation, and has it been easy? No, but I would do it all over again because I have seen the impact on my community. We advocate for gender equality and the rights of girls and women; we have implemented different projects and are vibrant on social media.

**– Tadiwanashe Burukai, Executive Director,
WoMandla Foundation, Zimbabwe**



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girls in programme implementation

Recommended resources

Below are some resources that might be useful for young women and girl leaders who are implementing projects:



Access to evidence

MPACT, 2021. Simple methods of monitoring and evaluating for LGBTIQ advocates everywhere (English).

https://mpactglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/MPact-Evaluation_Toolkit_6_spreads.pdf

The toolkit is intended for LGBTIQ+-led organizations advocating for high-quality, accessible, and rights-based sexual health programmes, practices, and policies. It also provides information on useful techniques for those who are new to monitoring and evaluating advocacy.



Institutional strengthening

Amplify Girls, 2020. Organizational development resources (English).

www.amplifygirls.org/resources

This website's 'Resources' page offers tools to create the strategies, documents, and skills needed to mobilize funding to implement and strengthen activities, projects and missions. Its content focuses on the needs of East African CSOs that work with adolescent girls.



Project management competence

FRIDA | The Young Feminist Fund, 2017. Resource mobilization toolkit for girls, young women and trans youth (English).

www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Resource-Mobilization-Toolkit-Girls-Young-Women-Trans-Youth-2017-eng.pdf

This toolkit supports and promotes creative and practical thinking on resource mobilization for girls, young women and trans youth. It can be used by organizations as well as individuals with different levels of skills and experience.

Moving Together Forward, 2020. Practice guide: Behaviour change communication during crisis (English).

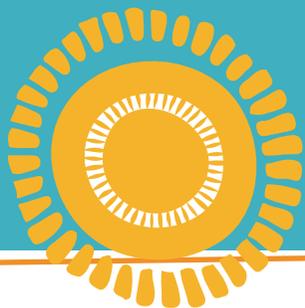
<https://cc.euprostrir.org.ua/eng>

A collection of practical tools, ideas and tips for organizations and individuals involved in behaviour change, including how to communicate during crises, prepare a crisis communication plan, build an internal communication strategy, and mobilize resources.

Frontline AIDS, 2019. Sexuality and life-skills toolkit (English).

<https://frontlineaids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Sexuality-and-Life-skills-Toolkit.pdf>

This toolkit is intended for anyone with a platform to offer adolescents and young people the knowledge, positive attitudes and skills to grow up and enjoy sexual and reproductive health and well-being.



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl advocates on the national stage

What we do

Our work as advocates centres on agitating for – or sometimes against – an idea, policy, campaign, petition or cause related to the health and rights of girls and young women. We usually do this in partnership with those who support us and share the same beliefs. In some cases, our advocacy focuses on maintaining gains that have been made, or on ensuring that improvements are made.

Where we operate

Health advocacy at the national level is broad and includes work at the grassroots, household and village levels in our country as well as at higher levels such as regions, provinces and in national capitals.

How we make change happen

We initiate and influence agendas to improve the health and safety of our peers. We engage in dialogues with vulnerable girls, and assess the root causes of health issues, using this evidence to ensure countries move closer toward attaining health and development goals. Some of us serve as representatives on oversight bodies such as Global Fund country coordinating mechanisms (CCMs), influencing policy, guidance, and funding decisions.

My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

I grew up in a family guided by traditional beliefs that saw my voice not being heard because I am a girl. Advocacy is personal to me and I heal as I work to ensure other girls and young women can speak up. My best time is when I work in the community, and advocating for pregnant girls to go back to school in my country is my best experience so far.

– Hazel Jojo, Member, Nerve Center of the Education and Empowerment Initiative for Girls in sub-Saharan Africa, Zimbabwe



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl advocates on the national stage

Recommended resources

Below are some resources that might be useful for young women and girl leaders who are national advocates:

Partnership for Maternal Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) and Women Deliver, 2018. Advocating for change for adolescents! A practical toolkit for young people to advocate for improved adolescent health and well-being (English).

www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/advocacy_toolkit.pdf

The purpose of this toolkit is to guide the design, implementation and monitoring of an effective national advocacy action roadmap to bring about positive policy-specific changes to improve adolescent health and well-being. It was developed by young people, for young people, as it is intended to be used by networks of youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

Global Network of Young People Living with HIV (Y+ Global), 2020. Ready to advocate: A guide for young people living with HIV (English).

<https://frontlineaids.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/READY-to-advocate-A-guide-for-young-people-living-with-HIV.pdf>

This booklet is for young people living with HIV who want to be involved in advocacy. It offers suggestions for ways to get involved, tips for our work in this area, and some words of inspiration from famous people.

A World at School, 2013. Youth advocacy toolkit: The education we want (English).

https://issuu.com/planinternational/docs/english_toolkitlores

This toolkit was developed to help children and young people advocate for their right to an education. It includes ideas, tools, and inspiring stories to encourage action and is meant for “anyone who believes passionately in... the right for all children to get a good quality education, no matter where they are and what the circumstances.”

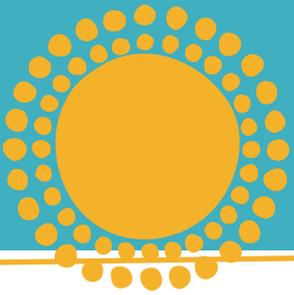
International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC), 2016. Advocacy for community treatment (ACT) toolkit 2.0 (English).

<https://itpcglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ACT-Toolkit-2.0.pdf>

This toolkit can be used to support and train community activists to advocate effectively and passionately on access to treatment for people living with HIV, including those from key populations.



Advocacy planning
and strategy



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl advocates on the global stage

What we do

Global advocacy has the singular potential to influence global conventions and norm-setting processes, including within multilateral bodies. Policy tools emerging at the global level may then be ratified, adopted and implemented at national level. As such, global advocacy sets the stage for country-level change that benefits us, potentially influencing the lives of millions of hidden and invisible individuals.

Where we operate

We build alliances with our peers, and across the generations. We may work in or with a wide spectrum of partners, including multilateral entities, regional political and economic bodies, civil society organizations, foundations, and donor governments. Therefore, our advocacy work often requires broad and deep consultation and collaboration, to ensure that the voices and priorities of all who need the changes are heard.

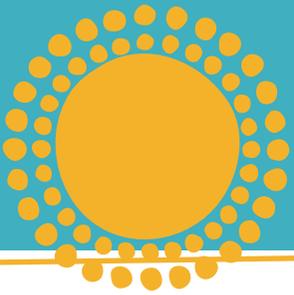
How we make change happen

As global advocates, we are part of strategic dialogues, multinational campaigns, global commissions, and truth-finding missions. Our actions include speaking about what is important to us at global convenings; writing in blogs, opinion editorials, or social media posts that have wide reach; developing journal articles to reach formal audiences; and seeking support and resources to expand and improve our efforts.

My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

I have always been uncomfortable with women and girls being controlled by the social constructs of society and I always knew we can do more to overcome this injustice, and I had to do something to voice my opinion. As feminist leaders we should keep going and change the status quo to ensure that those coming after us do not have to go through the same systems that have oppressed us, so keep going.

– Fatima Gomez, Member, Nerve Center of the Education and Empowerment Initiative for Girls in sub-Saharan Africa, Gambia



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl advocates on the global stage

Recommended resources

Global advocates would equally benefit from many of the resources developed to respond to the needs of national advocates. Below are additional resources that might be useful for global advocates working to advance the rights and well-being of women and girls:



Advocacy planning
and strategy

Women Engage for a Common Future, 2020. Young feminists want system change: Global advocacy toolkit for the Beijing+25 process and beyond (English).

www.wecf.org/young-feminists-want-system-change/

This manual aims to motivate and support young feminists to participate in international policymaking and push for system change in the Generation Equality Forum (Beijing+25) process and policy spaces related to women's rights and gender equality.

Feminist Action Lab, 2021. Advocacy and action: Why do we need feminist advocacy?

<https://feministactionlab.restlessdevelopment.org/advocacy/>

This advocacy guide focuses on how you, as a young feminist, can get involved in the broader movement for gender equality with a special focus on the Generation Equality Forum.

What we do

The power of digital advocacy is undeniable, and young women leaders and our organizations are increasingly taking advantage of the space to speak our minds on key issues. We can highlight our own priority goals, needs and objectives in our own words (with authenticity); provide an outlet and platform for our allies' advocacy efforts; and gather and organize insights and feedback.

Where we operate

We use a range of digital tools and outlets, and have different messages and voices depending on our audience. We deploy established and novel social media tools for grassroots advocacy. We host live interactions, watch parties, hosted salons, podcasts, virtual huddles, learning channels, and digital petitions. However, it takes time to gain traction in expanding reach and influence on new platforms, and our work may be restricted by low Internet penetration, access and reliability in some communities.

How we make change happen

As digital platforms mature, they have proven their potential to democratize access to the highest levels of power and information. Elected officials are increasingly sensitive to public sentiments about their effectiveness, which means that they and their staff often pay close attention. The digital space is a powerful advocacy outlet because many people are not only willing to listen, but are also seeking worthy causes to support.



My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

If they do not want to meet us in boardrooms, we will meet them on Twitter.

– Lucy Wanjiku Njenga, Positive Young Women's Voices, Kenya

My experience as a HIV social media advocate has been one of growth. The fact that I get to inspire and empower more young people in different countries of the world gives me the satisfaction that one day we shall have a HIV stigma-free society, and that keeps me going. At the end of the day, we are all greater than HIV and we are beautiful stories.

– Doreen Moraa Moracha, Founder, I Am a Beautiful Story, Kenya



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girls leading digital advocacy

Recommended resources

Below are other resources that young digital advocates might find useful:

Francess Cowan, 2020. Social media plan (English).

www.francesscowan.com/free-1

This resource can assist us in producing and managing valuable content on social media. It includes a template aimed at helping us use the right tools and techniques to create relevant and quality content that will increase traffic and influence.

Girl Effect, 2020. Girl focus toolkit: Design guide (English).

https://girlfocustoolkit.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Girl_Focused_Toolkit_DesignGuide.pdf

The toolkit has downloadable designs and templates to build and improve our online and social media inputs. One example highlighted is creating awareness on the HPV vaccine and a campaign for more people to get access to it.

Community Toolbox, 2021. Using social media for digital advocacy.

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/electronic-advocacy/main>

Section 19 of Chapter 33 of this toolbox offers an overview and examples of ways non-profit organizations and community movements can use the Internet to not only get their message out, but to use social media to unify and mobilize.



**Advocacy planning
and strategy**

What we do

Social accountability has been defined as “citizens’ efforts at ongoing meaningful collective engagement with public institutions for accountability in the provision of public goods”.¹⁶ Led by young women and girls, this takes the form of support to enable users and affected communities to voice their needs, claim their rights and entitlements, and hold those responsible for the provision of quality services to account.

Where we operate

We can do accountability work at all levels – local, national, regional and global – and we can collaborate with partners in many areas. The most important priority is for us to gather reliable evidence.

How we make change happen

We use a variety of tools and approaches to gather evidence, including interviews, focus group discussions, scorecards, online surveys, budgets, and policy analyses. We decide how to best use our findings for advocacy purposes, including by highlighting shortcomings and making demands.

My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

I wanted to understand how we can...hold those in leadership position accountable to their words and deeds. I have so far engaged in Global Fund processes in the community – in the country dialogues, grant application and community-led monitoring of the projects. I urge all young women to keep asking hard questions and demanding their space as this will not be given to them and those in power rarely just share information until demanded.

**– Tebi Honourine, Executive Director,
Sustainable Women Organization,
Cameroon**

Recommended resources

Below are some resources that might be useful for young women and girl leaders who are leading accountability work:

Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP), 2017. Social accountability resources and tools (English).

<https://coregroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SocialAccountabilityTools.pdf>

This document is intended to assist CSOs, including community-based groups, and government health programme planners, managers, and staff to identify and adapt existing guides and tools for effective social accountability strategies.

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), 2019. A guide to using community score cards for youth-led social accountability (English).

<https://bit.ly/3u6wVXz>

This guide aims to provide step-by-step guidance for youth-led social accountability using the community score card (CSC) approach as a tool to effectively engage youth to understand and demand their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Restless Development, 2020. Social accountability tools to enhance community engagement (English).

www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1736919823150039&ref=watch_permalink

This video resource explores how social accountability enhances community engagement, discusses tools to make social accountability effective with a focus on young people, dives into the social accountability process and the 'do's and don't's.

United Nations Children's Fund, U-Report (multiple languages).

<https://ureport.in/>

U-Report is a free tool for participation that is designed to document the issues that the youth demographic cares about. Real-time responses to polls and alerts, open to anyone, are collected and mapped on the website, with results shared back with the community.



Capacity building opportunities, including evidence-based tools and approaches



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl mentors

What we do

When we serve as mentors to our peers and those younger than ourselves, we are helping them gain the knowledge, experience, and confidence to become leaders themselves or to actively support and promote health and well-being in their households and communities. As mentors, we serve as role models, sounding boards and confidants – and this might push our partners to be better and emerge stronger, including by increasing their self-esteem and resilience to overcome life challenges.

Where we operate

We can be working with young people as mentors in almost any context where we meet and interact, including schools, church, places of work, health clinics, in the community and online. Mentorship can be cross-generational, with young leaders mentoring older people and vice versa.

How we make change happen

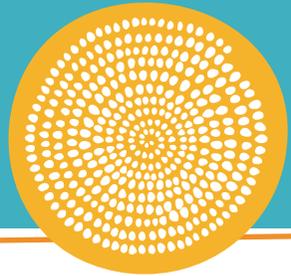
One proven key to mentorship success is to build trust so that the people we are mentoring can share their thoughts, beliefs, and ideas without feeling judged. This means we should listen actively, and show we are interested in their lives and what is happening. We are also more effective as mentors and leaders when we demonstrate good leadership skills and treat all others with empathy and respect.



My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

I grew up in the village where my voice was not encouraged, especially outside of our home. I knew my voice was important and I had something to say that needed to be heard. I made a vow to myself that I would ensure others younger than me would have their voices heard and that is how I started to mentor others.

– Helena Nangombe, Founder, Young Women Empowerment Network, Namibia



RESOURCES FOR

Young women and girl mentors

Recommended resources

Below are some resources that might be useful for young women and girl leaders who are mentors:



Mentorship and skills-building tools

Population Council, 2019. Making the most of mentors: Recruitment, training, and support of mentors for adolescent girl programming (English).

www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2019PGY_MentorToolkit.pdf

This toolkit provides information and observations about what mentorship is and how to set up a mentorship programme for adolescent girls and young women. It includes case studies, lessons, tips, and specific tools that can be adapted and used by programme planners and practitioners to find, train, monitor, support, and evaluate mentors.

Frontline AIDS, 2016. Step up, link up, speak up: Mentoring toolkit (English).

<https://frontlineaids.org/resources/step-up-link-up-speak-up-mentoring-toolkit/>

This toolkit aims to support mentoring work for youth advocacy, including by providing guidance and real-life experience to young people interested in developing their advocacy skills (as mentor–mentee pairs or larger groups).

Young women and girls working as human rights defenders and activists

What we do

'Human rights defender' describes those who, individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights through peaceful means. These include civil and political rights as well as the promotion, protection and realization of economic, social and cultural rights.¹⁷ We and other rights defenders play diverse roles including as mobilizers, peace builders, negotiators, legislators, reporters and journalists, paralegals and lawyers.

Where we operate

Our work as human rights defenders and activists can take place at all levels, from global to local. Often, our most important and difficult work is at the national level because that is where many of the laws, policies and customs that directly affect our rights must be addressed and changed.

How we make change happen

We speak and intervene on issues as varied as social and gender inequalities, land rights, social and cultural structures that violate the rights of women and girls, extrajudicial killings, female genital mutilation, and inadequate healthcare or drug stock-outs. We use all options possible to raise seek change, including the courts, media, legislature, government institutions, research institutes, and global or regional pressure.



My leadership journey – perspectives of young women leaders at the forefront

Traumatic sexual violence experiences in my childhood and not being heard and believed, when I told those I trusted, was one of the reasons I got into the work that I do as a human rights defender and activist, especially for women who sell sex. Some of the challenges include being arrested, your life being in danger as sex work is criminalised, convincing State actors why what you are saying matters, pressure from people I work with – and for. Policy work can take a long time before change is achieved.

– Maria Okwoli, Executive Director, Global Women's Health Rights and Empowerment Initiative, Nigeria

Young women and girls working as human rights defenders and activists

Recommended resources

Below are some resources that young women and girl leaders who are human rights defenders and activists might find useful:

Protection International, 2014. Protecting your life, my life, our lives: A guide to women human rights defenders in Kenya (English).

www.protectioninternational.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Online-NO4A-GUIDE-TO-WHRDS-IN-KENYA-010915.pdf

This booklet offers guidance on how to recognize and reduce risks associated with possible threats and challenges for women human rights defenders.

Protection International, 2014. Human rights defenders at high risk: Security considerations for their families and personal lives (English).

<https://bit.ly/39mCiYM>

This handbook contains suggestions on personal security measures for human rights defenders at high risk, include tools and advice for their protection against events, threats or aggression in their private lives.

Protection International, 2014. Surveillance and counter-surveillance: For human rights defenders and their organisation (English).

<https://bit.ly/3nOUldq>

This booklet aims to provide human rights defenders and their organizations with tools to identify and deflect practices such as aggression and persecution, including surveillance to keep them under control.

International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, 2017. SOGIESC UPR advocacy toolkit: A guide for defenders working on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristic (English).

https://ilga.org/downloads/SOGIESC_UPR_Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf

This toolkit is designed for advocates working on, or who want to start engaging in, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a United Nations process to review Member States' human rights records. It is a step-by-step guide to build an effective strategy for the process. It includes graphics, key facts and tips from other organizations that have already worked on the UPR.



Self-care and self-defence



Capacity building opportunities, including evidence-based

Endnotes

- 1 www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage
- 2 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770/PDF/260770eng.pdf.multi>
- 3 www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence
- 4 www.who.int/healthpromotion/about/HPR%20Glossary%201998.pdf
- 5 www.unaids.org/en/topic/key-populations
- 6 www.who.int/pmnh/mye-statement.pdf. Additional information on the history of the statement and signatories is available at www.who.int/pmnh/media/news/2018/meaningful-adolescent-and-youth/en/
- 7 www.who.int/teams/sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-research/key-areas-of-work/sexual-health/defining-sexual-health
- 8 www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence
- 9 www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/
- 10 www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw59/feature-stories
- 11 https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf
- 12 https://data.unaids.org/pub/briefingnote/2007/jc1299_policy_brief_gipa.pdf
- 13 <https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights-rights-women-africa>
- 14 www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-us
- 15 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- 16 Boydell et al., Boydell, V., McMullen, H., Cordero, J. et al. Studying social accountability in the context of health system strengthening innovations and considerations for future work. *Health Res Policy Sys* 17, 34 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0438-x>
- 17 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): www.ohchr.org/en/issues/srhrdefenders/pages/defender.aspx

We should engage our young women to realize that they already have superpowers they can invoke to solve problems and lead – locally, nationally, and internationally. They should trust in these superpowers, ones of observing, listening and learning; empathizing with others; experimenting and persevering when doing what's hard; and crystallizing lessons into actions that bring systemic change. But most importantly, we should encourage them to not be afraid to dream big or to start small, as seeking solutions to the day-to-day problems facing us and our communities can lead to broader change in the world.

- Dr. Frannie Léautier, Senior Partner and CEO, SouthBridge Investments, Tanzania

