

# E-NEWSLETTER

## MAY- JULY 2020



## EDITORIAL

Dear friends and colleagues:

We kept afloat in the previous quarter despite disruptions due to COVID 19 and we'll continue to be on top of our game as we deliver integrated youth development programs in the communities that we serve. COVID-19 is more than an extraordinary health crisis. It has disrupted education and food systems, shattered livelihoods, as well as Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services and commodity delivery in many of our communities. The social and economic aftershocks will be with us for years to come.

Bearing this in mind, we are working with our partners to facilitate COVID-19 behavior change communications to promote adherence to Ministry of Health (MOH) guidelines and regulations. This includes Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) with key messaging on proper hand washing and sensitization to support country-wide COVID-19 prevention and response.

We are also developing COVID 19 edutainment messages using videography to deliver appropriate content. These are just few of the ways we are working to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and lessen its impact. We continue to empower young people so as to build resilience and prepare them to get back into the workforce healthy and alive.

**Keep safe!**

Olive Nazziwa  
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## Our Response to COVID-19

Youth Alive Uganda has continued to reinforce MOH measures to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. We have put in place strict COVID-19 measures at our workplace including

- Full-time wearing of masks within office premise shared space
- Masks were procured and distributed to all staff
- Installed hand-washing facility at the entrance of offices
- Distributed hand sanitizers to all staff.
- Flexible working hours to allow staff respect curfew measures



James Byarugaba  
Executive Director



*Stakeholders and YAU staff addressing issues on GBV, HIV and mental health in relation to the covid-19 pandemic.*

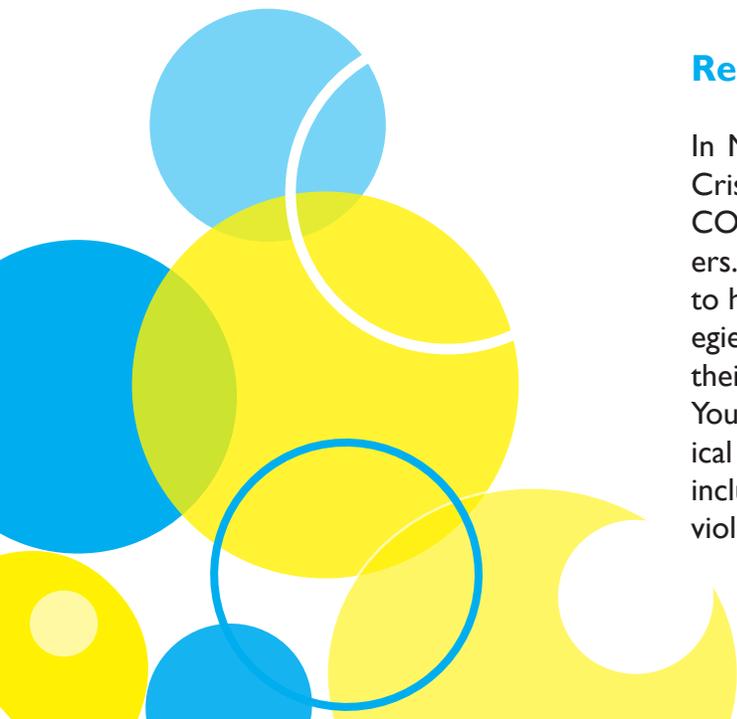
### Youth Health:

In greater Gulu District, the AHF Uganda Cares funded COVID-19 Emergency Response Program supported 78 HIV clients to continue their treatment through lock-down period through door-to-door delivery of ARVs. The program also facilitated delivery of other health commodities to 426 youth, purchase and distribution of 100 boxes of hand gloves, 382 face masks and 100 hand sanitizers to health facilities, peer educators, expert clients and VHTs who used them during their work in the community; production of COVID-19 awareness audio and video messages that emphasized prevention and management of the pandemic; and COVID-19 awareness campaigns on five radio stations and through mega-phones.

### Research:

In Mubende district, the Frontline AIDS Partnership COVID-19 Crisis Fund is currently facilitating research on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of Frontline Health workers. The outcome of this research will guide Youth Alive response to healthcare workers' needs, and consequently implement strategies to improve mental health of frontline health workers and their wellbeing.

Youth Alive will continue to align her programs to respond to critical emerging issues among young people as a result of COVID-19, including job loss and business closures, sexual and gender based violence interventions and sexual and reproductive health.



## Collaboration: Government representation at Youth Alive Agri-Business Contest

Together with our partner, Heifer International through the generous support of MasterCard Foundation, we held an agri-business pitching competition in Wakiso District this quarter after the lock down had been eased. Young people were required to sale their business ideas and products to potential customers and investors for start-up capital. This event was graced by Mr. Segonja Lwanga, the Wakiso District Agricultural Officer and Mr. Derrick Kajumba the District Youth Chairperson.

In his remarks Mr. Kajumba noted, “Such competitions are very rare opportunities for growth, I urge all the youth here to tap into government interventions such as Youth Livelihood Program so as to expand your businesses.”

The highly competitive pitching fest attracted six contestants from Wakiso District who exhibited value added agricultural products including improved maize growing techniques and processing, baking, yoghurt processing as well as vegetable growing.

These are just a few of the agricultural methods they have been nurtured on under the East African Youth Inclusion Program (EAYIP) a project aimed improving livelihoods of 25,000 youth in Uganda and Tanzania by increasing their income through youth employment and enterprise development. Youth Alive coordinates this project in Luweero, Wakiso, Kiboga, Amuria, Ngora and Bugiri Districts.

The contest was climaxed by awarding to certificates of participation to all participants and the winner, Gloria Mukisa, received a certificate of recognition and a non cash prize of 100,000ugx. Gloria’s line of business was vegetable growing which is a group owned venture by members of Together as One Youth Development Group.



*The Youth Chairperson gives out a certificate to the winner during the award ceremony*



*The Agriculture Officer tours the Youth exhibition stall*

## East African Youth Inclusion Program (EAYIP) 2016-2021

- Formed 18 Self Help groups (HG) with membership of 490 youth (males 263 and females 227), making a cumulative total of 137 SHGs have been formed representing 91% of the annual target.
- Trained 30 SHGs in Education for Life and Cornerstone with a membership of 755 youth (341 males, 324 females).
- Trained 41 SHGs on Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) methodologies with membership of 922 youth (males 504, females 418).
- A total of 1181 youth (males 593 and females 588) conducted communal activities aimed at promoting social capital among the youth by keeping them together but also act as role models within the communities.
- Trained 2 SHGs with 48 youth (males 26; females 22) in entrepreneurship and empowered with business skills

for sustainable management of their enterprises.

- Conducted 29 community dialogues between youth councils and local government leaders on issues related to youth inclusion at sub county level.
- Conducted 3 community campaigns with participation of 310 participants

## Best practices

- The number of participants for group based trainings were reduced to 10 maximum from 25 in adherence to COVID 19 guidelines of social distancing
- Use of motor cycles and bicycles were adopted as means of transport for field office staff to ensure continuation of activity implementation.
- Effective field monitoring and support supervision at all levels including routine spot checks to training sites.

## USAID's Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services – East Central Uganda (USAID/RHITES-EC) project

USAID RHITES-EC programing focused on providing technical assistance to facility, community and CSO teams to respond to the unique needs and challenges posed by COVID-19 for children and adolescent youth (6-24 years) access and utilization of integrated health services.

- Supported 10 CSOs to implement Stepping Stones methodology to address adolescent pregnancy and GBV/HIV Prevention in 34 sub counties.
- Scaled up adolescent youth peer support interventions e.g., YAPS, Peer buddies, Stepping stones, Dreams Lite, GANC, DSDM to address gaps in adherence, retention and VL suppression.
- The project has supported eight (8) CSOs to implement integrated health services packages for AGYW and their spouses. The focus of the stepping-stone sessions is HIV, pregnancy and GBV prevention through life skills development of AGYW and their spouses.
- The project continued to support adolescent clinics for young mothers at 35 sites. These young mothers were motivated to stay in care and peer leaders trained on how to virtually support their peers during the COVID-19 restrictions.
- During the quarter, the project continued to strengthen youth peer to peer support models and modified them to sustain adolescent access to integrated health services at facility and community level. The project continued to implement the peer buddy approach at 20 facilities and replicated it to the 35 facilities implementing adolescent clinics for young positives.
- Provided technical assistance to the District Health Team (DHT) to follow up on action plans to increase access to family planning among the AGYW. The project specifically followed up the seven (7) sub counties of Kagulu, Buyende rural and Bugaya in Buyende district, Gadumire in Kaliro, Ikumbya in Luuka, Bulidha in Bugiri and Magada in Namutumba districts



AGYW stepping stones session at Kiwete HCII –Namungalwe subcounty Iganga District



A team makes parcels to aid in delivering ARVS to clients in the community

## Best Practices

- Engagement with cultural leaders in Identification and tackling of Social Cultural Barriers to Teenage Pregnancy Prevention and Service uptake. This is because they are critical gate openers and keepers for program success.
- Targeting Males through Men-Only Seminars and small group “life and health” engagements with adolescent boys and young men to address negative social and cultural barriers to access in accessing health services.
- Integrating livelihoods in peer support groups for AYPLHIV and AGYW. Economic strengthening for AYPLHIV and AGYW facilitates adherence to treatment and reduces risks of infection and re-infection.

## Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Umbrella Project (SRHR U)

- Reached a total number of 21,496 beneficiaries with integrated SRH services. These included beneficiaries reached with HIV/AIDS and family planning services through health facilities, static outreaches and peer educators.
- A total of 57 static integrated outreaches were conducted reaching 7,773 beneficiaries of which 47 were positives. All clients who tested positive were linked to care and treatment services.
- A total of five 3-day VMMC camps were conducted in Nakaseke district reaching 205 clients. Integrated SRH services were provided during these camps including STI screening, HCT and family planning.
- Provided tailored ANC+ sessions with male involvement to expectant young mothers reaching 3,564 females and 204 males.
- Conducted a total of 4 radio talk shows integrated with COVID-19 messages.
- Conducted one district based quarterly review meeting with District Officials, Health Workers and peer Educators. Meeting aimed at seeking feedback from stakeholders on how project implementation could be carried out amidst the pandemic.



*ANC+ Session at Kalonga HC III in Mubende district*



*A teenager receiving SRH services at an outreach in Bidabuja-Nakaseke District*

## Best practices and Lessons Learnt

- Peer to peer approach ensured that activities including distribution of health commodities continued even during COVID-19 induced lockdown since these were reaching out to their peers by foot and during their routine peer activities.
- Change of implementation strategies to accommodate standard operating procedures put in place by Ugandan government and ministry of health in response to COVID-19 pandemic. These included turning sports gala and moonlight outreaches into static outreaches at Health Facilities.
- Use of technology to hold meetings with peers and staff. This enabled continued staff meetings and peer leader review meetings and knowledge sharing within implementing structures.
- Joint implementation with District officials is very important because they really offer technical expertise to the project, share guidelines by line ministries and offer further opportunities.



*A pregnant mother and her 4yr daughter who are both on ART receive their refill*

## Scaling up HIV/AIDS responses in Hard to reach areas of Northern

- Delivered ARVs to 56 clients in Gulu and Oyam
- Tested 278 clients at our PITC centre.
- Participated in health messaging for covid-19, SRH and neglected health services.
- Supported the district system to provide health services, life skills training and counseling for 87 street connected children in the district.
- Continued distribution of health commodities by VHTs and peer educators.



*A health worker counsels a teenager*

## Best Practices and lessons learnt

- Reprogramming HIV activities to include door to door, integrated health messaging, delivery of health commodities.
- Developing contacts with peers in the community for continued support and easy access.
- Partnering with health facilities to provide SRHR services and follow up.

## Technical and Foundational Skills Enhancement Program (TAFSEP) For Youth in Imvepi Refugee Settlement and Host Communities in Arua

- With the closure of learning institutions as a measure to curb COVID-19 pandemic, the technical trainings were suspended as they were to be conducted in a classroom setting.
- The project has initiated discussions with Vocational Training Institutions (VTIs) for the possibilities of engaging them in the training of our beneficiaries. Regam, Flamino and St. Josephs VTIs have been reached and discussions are ongoing.
- The project has proposed change of training strategy from classroom to work based learning so that we achieve both theory and practice and this would take a shorter time of 3 months at most compared to the 5 months.

### Best Practices and Lessons learned

- Partnering with other implementers in the settlement for sharing of experiences and notes and also leveraging on the expertise of those partners some of whom are lead partners in certain sectors.
- Reaching out to the leadership of the camp settlement and involving them in planning gives support to the project.
- Making provisions for young mothers to attend training with their babies, provisions were made to have the babies attend away from their mothers. This enabled the mothers to settle and learn with minimum disruptions.

## Integrating SRH and work force Development for teenage mothers

- Due to the closure of schools caused by COVID 19 all school programs were suspended.
- 15 teenage mothers of Kamwokya graduated in hair dressing.
- 25 teenage mothers were trained in EFL at Kajjansi health centre.
- The project is proposing to conduct its school program on radio station until schools are open.
- The project is looking forward to mobilise 5th cohort of teenage mothers from Kamwokya zones and its neighborhood while adhering to the government guidelines.
- Due to Covid 19 pandemic; skilling of teenage mothers from Kajjansi in hair dressing was disrupted so the project is looking forward to start off in August 2020.
- 11 teenage mothers saved this month in their club VSLA.



*Babrah Akankwasa sews customers' clothes at her home. She acquired the sewing machine from YAU club savings.*

### Best Practices and Lessons Learnt

- Graduating girls with certificates.
- Reducing number of girls to be trained in hair dressing per day
- Working closely with VHTS and local councils to mobilise 5th cohort of teenage mother.

# OUR TEAM



*Joy and Irene pose with their accolades*

Farewell to our staff Mrs Joy Edith Angulo, Youth and Gender Advisor RHITES EC and Ms Irene Nabanooba, a visiting staff from Ashinaga-Japan.



*A photo with some of YAU staff*

We welcome our new team members on board. Allan Otim, Anthony Nyende, Ketty Nemwa, Michael Nimanyanta and Emmanuel Kimutai. We are very eager to tap from your expertise and knowledge that you bring to the YAU family.



*Anthony*



*Michael & Ketty*



*Emma*



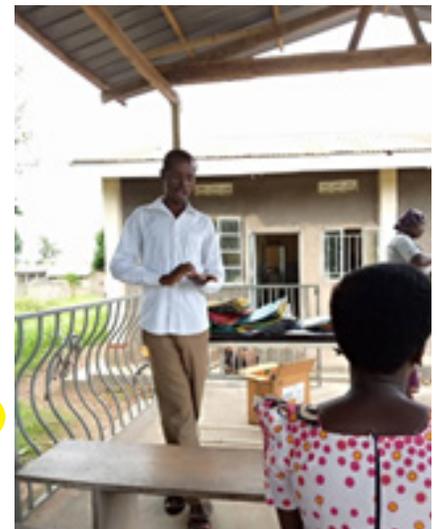
*Allan*

## Voices from the field



My name is Deng Matem and I am a peer leader in Gulu. In the picture above I was appealing to young people to continue taking their ARVs religiously. I was also sensitizing them about the availability of free HIV testing and counselling services at Youth Alive Offices.

My name is Mukama Samuel a peer leader in Bugiri District. I have really enjoyed talking to and listening to fellow young people during the lock down. I urged them to continue going to health facilities to seek SRH services.



My name is Mathew Tsubira, a project officer under the SRHR U innovation fund. I was very pleased during the radio talk show when in school children called in to know more about SRH and COVID 19



# AMAZING STORIES OF IMPACT

## Shared responsibility a yardstick to prosperity

Sharon Nansamba and Fred Luyombi are a couple both aged 27 and members of Nkongwe Youth Development Group in Luweero District Katikamu Sub County Nkongwe Village. Amon Kalule, a community facilitator formed this 28-member group comprised of four females and 24 males on 15th March 2018. During this formation, he introduced the couple to the East African Youth Inclusion Program (EAYIP) which they resonated with since they were only involved in subsistence farming and needed skills on how to adopt commercial farming.

Together with other youths from the community, Amon introduced the couple to various trainings such as foundational skills where they learnt about Education For Life (EFL), a Youth Alive signature program which among other topics talks about visioning, a session which Fred and Sharon developed special liking for.

‘Our dream has always been farming since we know that’s where money is. Whenever we look at our vision we tick off what we have accomplished as we plan to achieve more’ notes Sharon

The group was later equipped with skills on tomato farming by model farmers and that revived the couple’s desire for tomato farming. They were mentored on planting seedlings, transplanting, spraying, mulching among others.

The couple needed a startup capital of 400,000ugx for tomato growing however they had saved up 250,000ugx but needed an additional 150,000ugx. Having received trainings on Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), they knew the benefits of savings and borrowing. They therefore borrowed 150,000ugx from the group VSLA to top up their capital. After harvesting the tomatoes, by April 2019, they realized a profit of 950,000ugx having sold in measurements of an improvised cut jerry can (endebe) at 20,000ugx. This season the couple expects to make atleast 1,500,000ugx from their garden which occupies two and half acres of land which was offered by

Fred’s boss since he is a very disciplined and committed worker.

Their vision is to own three acres of tomatoes and rear 25 pigs in the next three years since they currently have four hybrid ones. Working together has enabled them not only grow financially but also fend for their family and all their children have access to good education from good schools.

Amidst all this, the farmers are faced with limited market, expensive pesticides and unfriendly weather conditions. Their appeal to the program is to provide them superior seedlings, pesticides, watering vessels and routine veterinary checks.

*Dollar rate: 1 dollar equivalent to 3701ugx*



*Fred relates with the pigs at the piggery*



*The couple engages in harvesting of ready tomatoes from their garden*

## Young people at the frontline of COVID 19

As a youth led organization implementing integrated youth development programs, Youth Alive Uganda has empowered and equipped young people with necessary skills on how to tackle arising issues around the novel COVID 19 pandemic.

These are able to approach their community members with more confidence when faced with questions as well as demystify myths and misconceptions on COVID 19. In Mayuge District for instance Doreen Naigaga, a District Based Trainer interacts with an average of ten households carrying out sensitization on proper hand washing, social distancing, reporting to a health facility incase faced with symptoms like fever, coughing, sneezing among others. These foot soldiers, as we prefer to call them also disseminate information through pinning up posters on COVID 19 that were provided by the Ministry of Health (MOH). This kind of awareness creation helps to always ring a reminder to communities to adhere to the MOH set rules and guidelines.



*Doreen and a colleague pin up a COVID 19 poster on a chapati stall*



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