

ALAMA

Realizing the Potential of Every Young Person

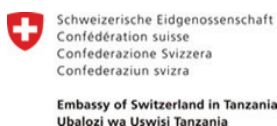
Fourth Edition | Aug 2024

Empowering Adolescents and Youth for a Brighter Future

Stories of Change: Improving young people's access to sexual reproductive health services in Tanzania



Program
Highlights in
Tanzania

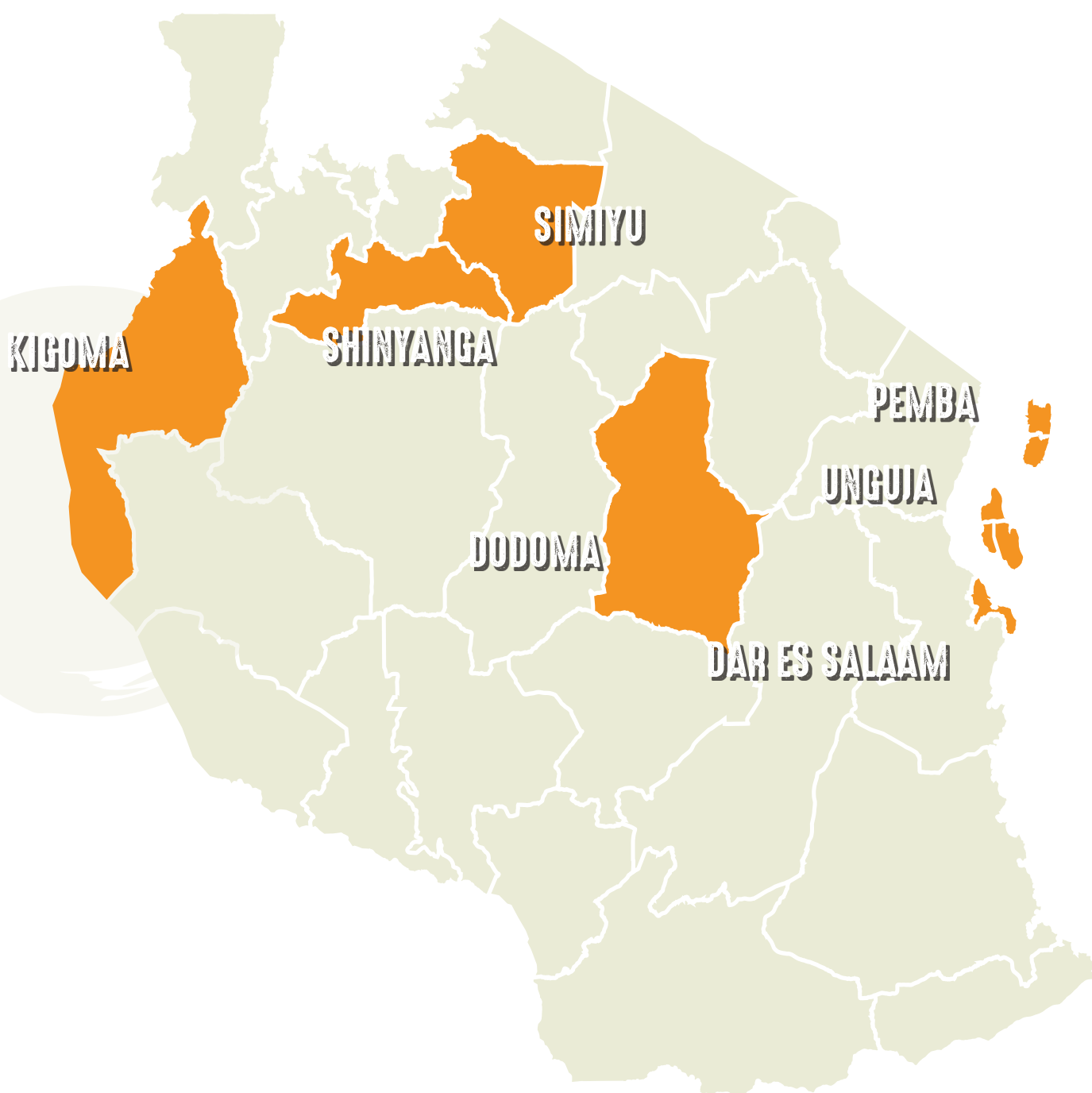


“Ask many of us who are disabled what we would like in life and you would be surprised how few would say, ‘Not to be disabled.’ We accept our limitations.”

Raphael



Selected regions for SYP Program in Tanzania





112

SYP
Safeguard Young People
PROGRAMME

**Kuimarisha sera nasheria ili kuhakikisha
sauti za vijana zinasikilizwa
kitaifa na kimataifa.**

UNFPA

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TANZANIA**

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**Kuimarisha u
kwa vijana n
ili kudumisha
ya vijana na**

UNFPA



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As we embark on the second phase of the Safeguard Young People (SYP) Programme (2024-2026), launched in April 2024, our focus is on addressing critical issues like adolescent pregnancy, HIV, child marriage, and gender-based inequalities across Tanzania. By 2026, we aim for young people in Tanzania to be healthy and empowered to realize their full potential and participate in decisions affecting their lives. This phase reaffirms our commitment to advancing adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and creating an environment where youth can thrive, ensuring every young person's potential is fulfilled.

During the launch, the official SYP Music Video titled "Kijana Acha Alama", which was composed by Tanzanian Musician Ben Pol featuring Tommy Flavor and Phina was officially introduced. These musicians are also the United Nations Champions for the Sustainable Development Goals (Global Goals). The upbeat and empowering track was a powerful way of kicking off the Phase II of the program: it left the audience with a renewed sense of purpose to come together to celebrate and empower the youth.

In the period of January to June 2024, we focused on capacity building and empowerment of youth networks, strengthening of coordination mechanisms, and institutions to deliver quality sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. Training programs and partnerships have equipped young people with the skills and knowledge to overcome challenges and contribute to their communities. These efforts highlight our dedication to creating a supportive environment where youth are empowered to lead and make a lasting impact.

This fourth edition of the Alama Newsletter features the inspiring stories of young people who have benefited from the SYP Programme. Together, we are building a future where every young person can thrive, lead, and make a difference. Let us continue working together to safeguard their well-being and build a brighter tomorrow for Tanzania.

Mark Bryan Schreiner,
UNFPA Representative, United Republic of Tanzania.



Overview of the Safeguard Young People (SYP) Programme Phase II

The Safeguard Young People (SYP) Programme is a vital regional initiative, launched in 2013, with the mission to improve the health and wellbeing of adolescents and young people aged 10-24 years. Initially focused on Southern Africa, the programme expanded to include Rwanda and Tanzania. In Tanzania, SYP officially launched in April 2022, and Phase II began in 2024, continuing through to 2026.

This programme, co-funded by the Embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is supported by a strong governance structure that ensures its effective implementation and impact. The programme benefits from strong leadership by the Government of Tanzania and is bolstered by robust partnerships with civil society, academia, higher learning institutions, and, most importantly, young people themselves.

Core Objectives of the SYP Programme in Tanzania



Enabling Environment:

Supporting the creation and expansion of policies that protect and promote adolescents' rights.



Demand Creation:

Raising awareness among adolescents to empower them to make informed decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).



Supply:

Enhancing access to quality, youth-friendly SRHR, gender-based violence (GBV), and HIV services.

Strategic Alignments

The SYP Programme is closely aligned with Tanzania's national policies and strategies, including the National Youth Development Policies, National Accelerated Investment Agenda for Adolescent Health and Wellbeing (NAIA-AHW) and other relevant strategies. This alignment ensures that the programme complements ongoing government efforts to improve adolescent health, prevent teenage pregnancies, and address gender-based violence.

Additionally, SYP supports Tanzania's commitments to international frameworks such as the African Youth Charter, UN Youth Agenda 2030, and Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment. Globally, the programme adheres to initiatives and frameworks that uphold international standards and best practices, including the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent Health (2016-2030) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Reflecting on Phase I: Achievements and Lessons



Advocacy and Policy:

Successful development and review of key policies and strategies/guidelines.



Youth Engagement:

Improved youth engagement and participation in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.



Research and Assessments:

Adolescent-friendly Reproductive Health Services Assessment and Mapping of youth-led organizations that helped to identify gaps and guide future support in Phase II.



Strengthening Services:

Disseminated HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act (HAPCA), training of health care providers, refurbished health facilities to provide youth-friendly services, and integrated SRHR into vocational training.

Programme Achievements January - June 2024

Improved inclusive policies, legislation and accountability mechanisms for the promotion and protection of adolescents and young people's rights at regional (SADC), national and sub-national levels with a focus on sexual and reproductive health rights



Endorsement of the National Youth Development Policy 2007, 2024 Edition in Tanzania Mainland

Enhanced effective coordination, partnerships, knowledge management, strategic information and monitoring and evaluation of the SYP programme



Supported the NAIA Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting conducted and documented annual progress reports from key Ministries and Government Institutions to identify best practices for the 2023/2024 NAIA implementation.



Supported young people to engage in international and national development processes that advance youth health and wellbeing including their participation in the ICPD30 Global Youth Dialogue in Cotonou, Benin, and Vision 2050 initiatives, where their voices are shaping future policies and frameworks.



National SYP stakeholders including representative from PMO-LYED, AfriYAN, MIYCS, MoH mainland, CSO, UNFPA and Embassy of Switzerland engaged in the 10th Regional Programme Steering Committee meeting in Botswana to leverage synergies between national and regional efforts. This collaboration allowed them to review the 2023 programme progress, endorse the 2024 work plans, and celebrate a decade of the SYP programme



Quarter one and two SYP Programme Technical Committee meetings were conducted to revise the TORs of SYP Technical, Steering **Committees**, and **the work plan** to support the launch of new National Youth Policies in Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.



The SYP Phase II was launched celebrating Phase I achievements highlighting youth leadership, partnerships, and empowerment in Tanzania and Zanzibar, with a video and media report shared with partners.



“Being together has unlocked our collective potential; together, we’ve transformed into champions of change.”

Strengthened capacity of institutions to design and implement integrated, quality comprehensive sexuality education in schools



Seventy five youth (30F:45M) from 35 youth organizations were trained on civic education to promote leadership and participation in Tanzania mainland.



Forty six youth from 15 youth organizations from Unguja and Pemba were reached with leadership capacities to build their skills and competencies in governance issues and become aware of their rights to lead and participate in decision making processes and structures at different levels.



Thirty six (19F:17M) youth have been trained on leadership and local government authority election procedures in SYP regions in Tanzania mainland.



Eighty one (47F:34M) young people from Unguja and Pemba representing various member organizations, received comprehensive understanding of the essential elements of effective leadership, the significance of youth participation in the political process, and youth responsibilities associated with the electoral system in Unguja and Pemba. The workshop also resulted in the formulation of draft resolutions and recommendations outlining strategic pathways for the effective participation of youth in elections and decision-making bodies.

Strengthened capacity of institutions to deliver proven and tailored quality social behavior change communication interventions to generate adolescents and young people's demand for integrated SRHR, GBV and HIV information and services, with a focus on HIV and substance abuse prevention



Fifty three (15F:38M) Folk Development College (FDC) principals and 54 Life skills teachers (12F:42M) were trained on comprehensive sexuality education from 54 FDCs. The training was extended to **1,138 female students** in the Elimu Haina Mwisho program who have been trained in Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) and SRHR in their Life skills subject.



A total of 200 in-school adolescent girls from 8 schools in four councils of Kasulu Town Council, Kasulu District Council, Kibondo District Council, and Kakonko District Council were trained on menstrual health and hygiene. This training was conducted at school level using national trainers at the regional and district level.



National Systems strengthened to respond, expand and deliver quality integrated SRHR, GBV and HIV services, which are sustainable and adolescents and young people's friendly within the Universal Health Coverage, Education and Social Protection frameworks



Fifty Eight health care workers (41F:17M), were trained on comprehensive post-abortion care (cPAC) to meet the needs of adolescents and young people with appropriate services in Zanzibar.



A total of 5600 young mothers (3000 at camps and 2,600 at host communities) were reached with Uhuru pack sanitary pads that were produced and distributed in Kasulu, Kigoma (16 wards in Kasulu).



A total of 2,008 dignity kits have been distributed to 2351 adolescents girls from 19 schools in the four councils of Kigoma region as follows: Kakonko District Council (275), Kasulu District Council (423), Kasulu Town Council (596), Kibondo District Council (540), and Buhigwe District Council (174).



SYP PHASE II Launch: Celebrating SYP phase I Achievements in Ensuring Every Young Person's Potential is Fulfilled

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the Embassy of Switzerland and key partners, marked a significant milestone in support to youth development by launching Phase II of the Safeguarding Young People (SYP) Programme. The event, held in April, celebrated the remarkable achievements of Phase I and set the stage for continued progress in advancing the health and well-being of young people in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. The launch emphasized the SYP Programme's alignment with national priorities and its successful implementation under Government ownership and leadership.

The event showcased the diverse partnerships formed among Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs), Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, and youth networks across mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. A key highlight of the event was the focus on youth leadership, empowerment, and engagement, particularly the inclusion of young people with disabilities in the program's initiatives. A video clip showcasing the achievements of Phase I was presented, illustrating the positive impact the program has had on the lives of young people.



"Know me for my abilities, not my disability. Accessibility allows us to tap into everyone's potential. Disability cannot stop me from becoming a complete personality."

Aisha

The Tailoring Triumph of Aisha Mohammed Ally

Aisha Mohamed ally (26 years of age) was born with a rare genetic condition that affected her mobility and fine motor skills. Growing up, she faced many challenges, but her love for creativity and fashion shone brightly. Aisha's family supported her passion for design, even as she navigated the difficulties of her condition.

Aisha's condition made it difficult for her to engage in traditional activities and schooling, but she found solace and joy in sewing. With the help of adaptive tools like specially designed sewing machines and ergonomic aids, she was able to develop her skills in tailoring and design.

While in secondary school, Aisha enrolled in a vocational program that offered courses in fashion design and tailoring. Despite her physical challenges, she excelled due to her keen eye for detail and innovative approach to design. Her teachers recognized her potential and provided additional support, including personalized lessons and accessible technology.

Aisha's breakthrough came when she started creating her own clothing line, which she showcased at a college fashion event. Her designs, known for their unique blend of elegance and practicality, were well-received. She caught the attention of a local fashion entrepreneur who offered her mentorship and resources to help launch her own tailoring boutique.

Starting a boutique presented logistical challenges for Aisha, from managing the physical demands of running a business to dealing with the complexities of entrepreneurship. She faced these obstacles head-on with creativity and determination. Aisha adapted her workspace to be more accessible, used technology to streamline operations, and built a supportive team that shared her vision.

Aisha's boutique, "Elegance by Aisha," quickly gained a reputation for high-quality, custom-made clothing that catered to diverse needs and styles. Her designs were celebrated not only for their beauty but also for their inclusivity, often incorporating adaptive features for individuals with disabilities. Her boutique became a symbol of empowerment and innovation. Aisha's success extended beyond her boutique. She became an advocate for inclusivity in fashion and design, speaking at conferences and working with organizations to promote accessible fashion. Her story inspired many young people with disabilities to pursue their passions and showed the world that with determination and the right support, incredible achievements are possible.

Aisha Mohammed Ally's journey highlights the power of pursuing one's passions despite physical limitations. By leveraging her skills and the support of a community, Aisha turned her love for tailoring into a successful boutique that also champions inclusivity. Her story is a testament to the potential within every young person, particularly those with disabilities, and demonstrates how innovation and perseverance can lead to remarkable accomplishments.

"My disability exists not because I use a wheelchair, but because the broader environment isn't accessible."

Mbalwa



The Welding Wonders of Mbalwa Julius Kazimoto

Mbalwa Julius Kazimoto was born with a condition called spina bifida, which affects the spinal cord and can lead to varying degrees of mobility challenges. Despite his condition, Mbalwa had a keen interest in mechanics and engineering from a young age. His family encouraged his passion and sought out opportunities for him to explore his interests. Alex faced significant physical challenges, including limited mobility and difficulty with tasks requiring fine motor skills. Traditional tools and work environments were often not designed with his needs in mind. However, his determination to work with his hands and his interest in welding mechanics drove him to overcome these obstacles.

In high school, Mbalwa enrolled in a vocational training program focused on welding and mechanical repair. The school provided adaptive tools and modified equipment to accommodate his needs. Despite initial difficulties, Mbalwa's enthusiasm and aptitude for welding shone through. His instructors, impressed by his skill and perseverance, provided additional support and encouragement. Mbalwa's breakthrough came when he successfully completed a challenging project: fabricating and welding a custom metal sculpture that was featured in a local art show organized by VETA. His work was praised for its precision and creativity, catching the eye of a local welding shop owner who recognized his talent and offered him an apprenticeship.

Starting the apprenticeship was not without its hurdles. Mbalwa adapted his workspace to accommodate his physical needs, utilizing specialized tools and ergonomic adjustments. He faced scepticism from some peers but remained focused on his goals. With the support of his mentor and a personalized approach to his training, Mbalwa honed his skills and became proficient in welding mechanics. Mbalwa's dedication paid off. After completing his apprenticeship, he secured a position as a skilled welder and mechanic at a renowned workshop. His innovative approaches and meticulous craftsmanship earned him respect in the industry. He eventually started his own business, "Kazimoto Welding Solutions," specializing in custom metalwork and repairs.

Mbalwa's success story extended beyond his achievements in welding. He became an advocate for accessible vocational training and inclusive work environments, speaking at events and working with organizations to promote opportunities for individuals with disabilities. His journey inspired many young people and demonstrated that with the right support and determination, remarkable accomplishments are possible.

Mbalwa Julius Kazimoto's story is a powerful example of how passion and perseverance can overcome significant challenges. By leveraging adaptive tools and support, Mbalwa transformed his love for welding into a successful career, proving that every young person, including those with disabilities, has the potential to excel and make a meaningful impact. His success not only highlights his individual achievements but also serves as an inspiration for others to pursue their dreams regardless of the obstacles they face.



Tanzania Men as Equal Partners in Development (TMEPID) Promotes Youth Involvement in Decision Making Bodies

As is the situation in many other developing countries, existing cultural norms regard young people as a group that always need to be told by adults what to and not to do. This norm therefore prevents young people from making decisions on their own current and future needs. Unmet social and economic development of youth therefore falls into the hands of the leaders, the majority of whom are adults. Therefore, for many years youth issues have not always been prioritized in development plans and policies as they should.

The government of Tanzania observed this challenge, and to this end, resolved to develop supportive policies and framework that address the gaps and strategies that the country should implement. The government has integrated youth issues in its development plans from national to district level; the National SRH Policy Guideline is in place as well as the National Accelerated Investment Agenda for Adolescent and Health Wellbeing (NAIA-AHW 2019-2022), just to mention a few.

Despite the existence of these supportive policies and guidelines, young people are still facing a challenge that their concerns are not addressed, and they are not represented in decision-making structures. In regions like Simiyu, adolescents continue to be subjected to gender-based and sexual violence. For example, Simiyu is among the leading regions with a high teenage pregnancy rate of 44.7% (TDHS 2022) despite an overall notable contraceptive prevalence rate of 52%.

The disturbing trend is partly attributable to the youths' poor access to and lack of quality and equitable health services, particularly in terms of contraceptive information and supplies. Social-cultural beliefs and practices still treat sexuality education as taboo, denying adolescents the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions. Additionally, there is low representation of adolescents in decision-making bodies such as Health Facility Governing Committees (HFGCs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and the Full Council and Parliament. This lack of representation impacts adolescents and youth who approximately accounts for 60% of the entire population in Tanzania.

The Safeguard Young People (SYP) programme has marked a turning point in the lives of many youths in the country by providing them with awareness of different opportunities. Having been left out of the decision-making bodies for a long time, the youth in the targetted regions have been empowered (by SYP programme) through various advocacy and engagement meetings with decision makers. The programme being implemented in two districts (Itilima and Meatu) of Simiyu Region led to the establishment of platforms for youth and leaders of the youths-led organizations, to meet decision makers and express their opinions.

Advocacy meetings at Regional and District levels conducted by TMEPiD in Simiyu raised the main issue as, "Low involvement/participation of youth in decision making bodies that are responsible for ensuring improved accessibility to SRHR services and reducing the unmet



"Dreams are the fuel that powers the journey of youth. In the heart of every young person lies the potential for greatness. Youth is not a phase; it's a revolution waiting to happen. The future belongs to those who dare to dream beyond boundaries."

**Adam Abraham Bwiru, 27 years of age,
Bariadi – Simiyu ,Tanzania**

need for family planning. The meeting directed the health facilities to recruit community health workers prioritizing youth applicants. Following this directive, the Itilima – Lugangabilili Health facility became one of the centers to start recruiting young community health workers.

Young people were encouraged to apply for the positions which were vacant within the centre (considering putting young people first, nothing about youth without youth). Government bodies were encouraged to monitor and coordinate the process and also provide technical guidance as per the policy guidelines. As a result, many youths accessing health services at the health facility confirmed that they were now receiving SRHR information and education through the recruited community health workers who are youths.

A lesson from the Simiyu case demonstrates that, if given the opportunity, youth can participate and lead efforts geared to respond to their existing unmet SRHR needs. Therefore, youth stakeholders including policy makers, youth themselves, youth-led organization, and development planners must ensure that young people are given the opportunity to participate in planning and decision making on issues that affect them. More efforts are needed to invest in building capacity amongst the youth and increasing their level of participation and involvement in decision making platforms. This is important to reach the goal of having a world where young people can take the leading role and access youth-friendly health services, and expand their level of economic, educational and psychosocial possibilities.





Arm in Arm Towards a More Inclusive Future



At UNFPA, it is our vision to leave no one behind. We are working to create a world where everyone has access to sexual and reproductive health and rights – with particular emphasis on everyone. Yombo Vocational and Rehabilitation Centre for Youth with Disabilities (Yombo) in Tanzania stands as a leading example of this vision. The centre falls under the portfolio of the Prime Minister’s Office for Labor, Employment, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities in Tanzania.

Yombo is a colorful oasis in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, where sign-language is spoken across the schoolyard and students are considerate and adept in assisting each other. Two of the students, Amir and Lisa, are walking arm in arm: Amir showing his presence in case guidance is needed, Lisa walking confidently with her mobility cane towards the que to the chai. No one, here, is left behind.

Lisa explains how Yombo became a new opportunity for her to complete her education, despite her vision impairment. Before Yombo, she completed Form Four, but was not allowed to continue her education. She had to stay at home, in an environment where discrimination and bullies “kipofu” were a part of her everyday life.

To the students, Yombo has been more than an educational institution – it is also a safe space, where they feel protected from the rejection and discrimination they face in their communities. Yombo fosters an inclusive space where the students make new friends, have access to rehabilitation programs, and receive educational, life skills and vocational training in various trades or professions that can support them both inside and outside the center. Lisa dreams of taking her gardening skills into the agricultural sector. At Yombo, she is taught how to grow vegetables and plants, and that it can be done with a mobility cane in hand.





Amir describes how Yombo has helped him start his dream of becoming a businessman. At Yombo, he is a part of running the chicken farm and has sold over 900 chickens during his time at the center. Training in agriculture and livestock-keeping is one of the courses on the Yombo curriculum. Other courses offered to the students include welding, tailoring and masonry skills training. The vocational training empowers and promotes independence for the students, ensuring that persons with disabilities fully enjoy the rights and choices to which they are entitled.

Inclusion is at the heart of Yombo. What also lies at the centre of Yombo, is its health facility. As a part of UNFPA's Safeguarding Young People program, supported by the Embassy of Switzerland, UNFPA procured medical equipment supplies and refurbished the waiting lounge of the facility. This way, the students of Yombo, as well as the community outside the center, are sheltered from the baking sun, as they wait to receive health services.

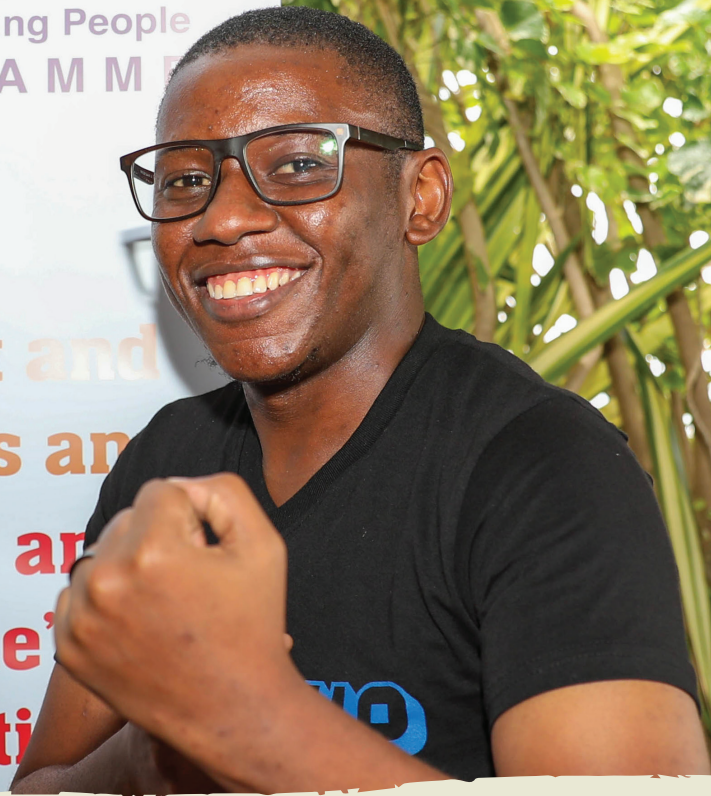
The students highlight the convenience of having the health center located in Yombo's compound. They mention how having easy access to health services and medicine has helped them receive timely and appropriate medical care and referrals where necessary. In addition to the students at Yombo, the health facility also serves two wards (Kiwalani and Minazi mirefu) with a catchment area population of about 16,000.

Yombo represents a significant step towards a more inclusive future. Just like Amir and Lisa, who walk arm in arm, we should continue to advance together, ensuring that everyone has equal access to essential services and opportunities. By taking these steps collectively, we can make sure that no one is left behind in our journey toward a more equitable and inclusive community.

SYP

Safeguard Young People
PROGRAMME

Expanding adolescent and
youth-friendly services and
information to uphold and
protect young people's
sexual and reproductive




SYP

Safeguard Young People
PROGRAMME

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