

Report for The Soroptimists Denmark Strengthening the Capacity of the Youth Anti-FGM/C Network Kenya (YANK)

October 2023 - March 2024

Thank you to Soroptimists Denmark for supporting our work to end female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C). Orchid Project is hugely grateful for your support and for enabling us to strengthen the capacity of the Youth Anti-FGM/C Network Kenya (YANK).

Highlights and achievements in the reporting period

1. Capacity Assessment of Network

This was reported in the mid-term report in October 2023.

2. Capacity building on campaigning

In the previous reporting period, we supported four young people from YANK to participate in the online advocacy training under the Africa Led Movement to end FGM (ALM) programme, of which Orchid Project is a consortium partner. The 4-day online meeting dealt with key thematic issues that are of interest to the young people. This training provided much more input on campaigning than was previously thought, so we wanted to highlight it here again. Also, the attendees were able to cascade this training to many peers at YANK, so we did not carry out as many separate training sessions on campaigning during the KSW as originally planned, reverting the KSW back from 5 days to 3 days.

3. Knowledge Sharing Workshop (KSW) for 25 Network members

Provide capacity institutional strengthening

During the knowledge sharing workshop, which also aimed to enhance partnership, collaboration, institutional effectiveness and advocate for important causes, a panel featuring key officials from various organisations engaged with young participants. Among the panellists were the Influencing & Advocacy Advisor from Plan International, the former Chairperson for the Youth Anti-FGM Network, and the CEO of Orchid Project. Others who also interacted with the young people were, Africa Campaign Manager from Brave Movement and the CEO of Samburu Girls Foundation, they shared expertise on advocacy strategies, grassroots mobilisation, and advocacy for policy change (including influencing policy frameworks to address social issues effectively).

Budgeting and resource allocation were emphasised, highlighting the importance of strategic planning and financial management in implementing initiatives. The panellists also stressed the significance of resourcing through proposal writing to secure funding for projects and programmes. Addressing the challenges faced by young people in being visible in their communities was also highlighted. This involved discussions on lack of resources, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Furthermore, the importance of visioning was underscored, encouraging young participants to articulate their long-term goals and aspirations for their communities. They were encouraged to develop strategic plans that align with their vision, incorporating innovative solutions and approaches to address challenges effectively. Lastly, the workshop provided a platform for young people to elect new national and secretariat officials, promoting continuity and leadership development within the youth network.

The KSW, initially planned for 25 members, aimed to facilitate exchange of ideas and knowledge on best practices to combat Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in Kenya's 22 hotspot counties. However,

we managed to mobilise 30 participants, allowing for even broader collaboration among stakeholders. This expansion enabled the inclusion of more young professionals, implementers, and thought leaders, enhancing the diversity of perspectives and expertise. The additional 5 participants were Somali community members as we are focusing on change in that specific community where little change is happening. Spanning three days from January 24th to 26th, the KSW was meticulously structured to cover various dimensions of FGM/C eradication, focusing on social norms-based, gender-transformative approaches. Through interactive sessions, participants aimed to deepen their understanding of effective strategies and create a joint work plan to address the pressing issue of FGM/C prevalence in Kenya.

The first KSW day convened young professionals, implementers and thought leaders to address FGM/C in the 22 hospost counties. Cecilia Wangui of the Education Centre for the Advancement of Women (ECAW) emphasised the crucial role of youth in shaping policies and practices, celebrating their potential and stressing the importance of engaging them on community issues. Ms. Catherine Mootian, Chairperson of YANK, commended collaborative efforts within the YANK movement, expressing confidence in ending FGM/C in this generation. Macharia Karanja Programmes Manager Orchid project took through the participants on the need for visioning. He emphasized on the importance of the role of young people in the fight to end FGM/C. Orchid Project and Samburu Girls Foundation were recognized as co-conveners for GirlsNot Brides movement, a key component towards ending child marriages and FGM/C. The first day consisted of four sessions, with the first session focusing on Gender Bias, then on identifying gender stereotypes, then gender transformative approach, and finally on power. The conclusions from the first day of KSW were as follows:

1. Gender equality issues encompass numerous nuances, emphasising the need for recognition to ensure inclusive and responsive programmes.
2. Recognizing and utilising various forms of power can significantly contribute to driving positive change.
3. Many traits traditionally associated with femininity carry negative connotations, such as being emotional, highlighting the need to challenge stereotypes.
4. Gender transformative programmes offer the most comprehensive approach to effecting change.
5. There's a risk of conflating gender transformative approaches with gender-specific ones in programming, underscoring the importance of awareness regarding biases' impact on programme design and implementation.

The second day of KSW had several sessions, with the first focusing on the role of social media in advocacy, particularly Twitter. The second session was focused on social norms, with a case study and the key elements of social norms. The session highlighted the importance that due to sanctions, values, acceptance and decision-making (which is interdependent), changing cultural norms takes time and resources. The last session was lead by Nyerere Kutwa from the anti FGM Board highlighted a 15% national prevalence but stressed the dire situation in some counties, emphasising the need for representation and collaboration for solutions. The key takeaways from the second day were as follows:

1. Social norms are reinforced by sanctions to uphold acceptable behaviour, emphasising the importance of understanding and challenging these norms.
2. Legislation can serve as a tool to create an environment conducive to catalysing social change, highlighting the role of policy in driving progress.
3. Initiatives like YANK demonstrate how youth can be mobilised for collective action, showcasing the potential for youth-led movements in driving social change.
4. Statistics play a crucial role in highlighting issues and guiding evidence-based interventions, underscoring the importance of data in addressing societal challenges.
5. Community exchange is essential for fostering sustainable social change, emphasising the value of grassroots efforts in driving progress.
6. While prevalence of FGM is higher among older generations, there's a need for continued efforts to combat the practice, especially through survivor-led movements.

7. Collaboration is key to closing gaps in the implementation of mandates, such as those of the Anti-FGM Board, to support survivor-led movements effectively.
8. Further mapping of FGM hotspots in Kenya is necessary, as the practice is not limited to specific regions but has also been observed in urban areas like Nairobi and Thika, indicating the need for targeted interventions across various locations.

Finally, the third and last KSW day started with a resource mobilisation tips and tricks session. It was followed by a session led on including people living with disabilities and by a reflection on YANK as a Network, its values, its importance and its appointment of new officials and members. The final day also included conversations between YANK members and government officials on how best to work together.

4. Support young people to attend The Regional Anti-FGM Conference in Tanzania

This was reported in the mid-term report in October 2023.

5. Provide training for 25 government officials

The Knowledge Sharing Workshop (KSW) served as a vital platform for youth engagement with high-level government officials, focusing on issues such as gender-responsive budgeting and operationalizing anti-FGM/C policies at the county level. On the final day, a dialogue between the Youth Anti-FGM Network (YANK) and government officials from Gender and affirmative action ministry and the Anti-FGM Board was held. The officials were Principal secretary Gender and affirmative action, Director Youth Social development, State Department for Youth Affairs, and creative Economy. CEO of the anti FGM board and director of programmes. The dialogue aimed to address gaps in policy implementation and advocate for the inclusion of anti-FGM/C agenda in County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).

The dialogue between the Youth Anti-FGM Network (YANK) and high-level government officials during the Knowledge Sharing Workshop (KSW) yielded several key outcomes:

1. **Enhanced Understanding:** Participants gained deeper insights into gender-responsive initiatives as highlighted by the director of Youth Social Development, State Department for Youth Affairs and creative Economy and operationalization of anti-FGM/C policies, fostering a clearer understanding.
2. **Empowered Advocacy:** Youth participants were empowered to advocate for the inclusion of anti-FGM/C agendas in County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) including their participation in the county and sub county anti FGM steering committees. The county committees are led by the county commissioners. The anti FGM board emphasized on the need for young people to show leadership and be part of these committees, promoting more effective policy implementation at the county level.
3. **Knowledge Exchange:** The session facilitated by the Anti-FGM Board director of programs provided valuable insights into evidence generation and the implications of KDHS 2022 findings for hotspot counties, fostering knowledge exchange between youth and government officials.
4. **Strategic Collaboration:** The dialogue facilitated collaboration between youth and government stakeholders, creating opportunities for joint efforts to address gaps in policy and campaign implementation to advance anti-FGM/C agenda.

Originally targeting 25 officials, the focus shifted to high-level representatives from the Gender and affirmative action ministry and the Anti-FGM Board, following advice from the anti FGM board. The decision to focus on high-level officials was guided by the desire for greater impact and cost efficiency. Additionally, concerns about budget constraints, particularly regarding revised per diem rates for gender directors, influenced the decision to prioritise key decision-makers which eventually led us to reduce the number of government officials from 25 to 5 who were part of the panellist and facilitation. Overall, the dialogue contributed to bridging gaps between youth perspectives and government policies, fostering collaboration for more effective advocacy and policy implementation.

6. Develop a Youth Ambassador Programme

This activity has been slightly reworked and adapted to the small group we intend to have. The Orchid Project Ambassadors programme is being designed, so young people (maximum 3 and based on the number of applications) will form part of the wider Ambassadors Group. At the moment, external consultations are being held with stakeholders to ensure the Ambassadors' programme is responsive to the needs and priorities of potential members. The selection and initial programme are expected to be completed by the end of May 2024. We want to make this programme as successful as possible, so we need more time to plan and execute it.

7. Follow ups and monitoring after the KSW

Following the KSW, the participants developed a work plan so monitoring visits will be carried out to follow up on the progress of these work plans and had initial phone calls in relation to that work plan. We were asked to fund the work plan which we could not provide the funding for and as a result YANK created an online campaign which did not need the support of our funding. Stories of change have not yet been documented but we know they will be truly impactful.

8. Outcomes/ results

Supporting the Youth Anti FGM Network Kenya (YANK) enables them to be a strong, united and knowledgeable Network that can see their objective through. As a result, these young people not only have developed the necessary skills to be the change makers now and in the future but also, influencing other youth groups and networks to follow and to bringing about change in ending FGM/C in Kenya and all over the world.

Project Timeline (February 2023 - March 2024)

This project was to have a duration of 9 months, from July 2023 to March 2024 following the Timeline below (we have added subtitles for clarity in orange):

1. Youth Voices Project									
International Conference on FGM in Kigali and Dar				X					
Develop a Youth Ambassador Programme and Launch (this will not be happening in this grant period, it will happen next year)				X	X				
Government officials workshop (this took place in February instead)						X		X	
2. Capacity strengthening project									
Capacity Assessment	X		X	X					
Development of capacity strengthening for training (drawn from the needs assessment)				X	X				
Knowledge Sharing Workshop (this took place in January instead of December)						X	X		
Follow ups and monitoring through physical visits, calls and online meetings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reporting				X					X

Photos



Workshop Day 1: Sessions on Gender bias, gender transformative approach and power



Workshop day 3: Session on including people with disabilities



Young people from different countries posing after the dialogue session.



Youth activists taking part in the campaign for International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM/C



YOUTH ANTI FGM NETWORK NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE



Chairperson
Ms. Aisha M. Mwangi



Secretary
Mr. James M. Mwangi



Member
Mr. James M. Mwangi



Member
Mr. James M. Mwangi



Member
Ms. Aisha M. Mwangi

YOUTH ANTI FGM NETWORK SECRETARIAT



Secretary
Mr. James M. Mwangi



Secretary
Ms. Aisha M. Mwangi

The newly elected officials

Budget

Reporting Period: February 2023 - March 2024

Item	Budget Total cost (£)	Soroptimists grant (£)
Youth Network KSW		
Venue hire (with tea and coffee)	£ 1,875	
In-country travel costs for 4 facilitators and 25 participants	£ 3,480	
Accommodation and subsistence for facilitators/participants (3 days)	£ 6,960	
Resources	£ 750	
Contingency & Misc.	£ 600	
Facilitators costs	£ 720	
Photography and Videography	£ 720	
Subtotal	£ 15,105	
International Conference on FGM		
Support 3 young people and 2 staff to attend regional anti FGM conference in Arusha, Tanzania	£ 3,300	
Subtotal	£ 3,300	
Government officials' workshop		
Photography and videography	£ 120	
Venue and meals	£ 720	
In country travel costs for participants	£ 240	
Facilitators costs	£ 160	
Subtotal	£ 1,240	
Follow ups and monitoring through physical visits, calls and online meetings		
Monitoring, evaluation, learning and follow-up twice a year on action plan	£ 800	
Subtotal	£ 800	
Develop a Youth Ambassador Programme and Launch		
Developing Youth Ambassador Programme	£ 600	
Subtotal	£ 600	
Admin		
Orchid Project salaries	£ 3,060	
Orchid Project overheads contribution (15%)	£ 3,713	
Subtotal	£ 6,773	
Total	£ 27,818	£ 5,578

If you have any questions or would like more detail on our work, please do not hesitate to contact:
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