

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**

NEWSLETTER

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HIGHLIGHTS



Youth Power Celebrated at the Impact Expo

On November 6th, 2024, Restless Development Uganda hosted the highly anticipated Youth Impact Expo, a gathering that brought together young change-makers, innovators, and stakeholders under one roof.

Call for Youth Inclusion at the Launch of the 2024 State of Youth Report

The State of the Youth Report launch attended by key stakeholders, spotlighted the increasing call for youth participation in decision-making and governance.



A group photo of participants at the NYWG meeting held at Eureka Hotel in Kampala last year.

NYWGM CREATES SPACE FOR YOUTH CENTERED DISCUSSIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

On October 30th, 2024, we joined a group of other youth led organisations to participate in the National Youth Working Group Meeting.

The significant meeting focused on organisational revitalisation in a bid to address the group's current challenges and establish a framework for future operations.

The meeting demonstrated strong stakeholder engagement, bringing together 31 participants with balanced gender

representation (15 males and 16 females).

Representatives were from organisations including VSO International, National Education of Peer Educators, World Diabetes Foundation, and many other youth-focused organisations, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on youth development issues.

"The meeting was also to reaffirm the NYWG's mission, objectives and key team member responsibilities in driving progress toward our goals and objectives," Gabriel



A participant speaking during the meeting.

Iguma the Restless Development ED said. "Coalitions are crucial because, while donors are willing to provide funding, they prefer to support multiple organisations for greater visibility and broader outreach," Chloe Namwase, a representative from

Wezesha Impact said. "I've been in sales for some time, and I can assure you—if you can't summarize all your objectives in one minute, it's time to sit back and revise them, because no one will give you more time to listen," Phillip Maloba from MuCOABI said.

YOUTH POWER CELEBRATED AT THE IMPACT EXPO



Participants share a light moment during the Impact Expo at Sky Hotel in Naguru last year.

On November 6th, 2024, Restless Development Uganda hosted the highly anticipated Youth Impact Expo, a vibrant gathering that brought together young change-makers, innovators, and stakeholders under one roof.

The event was not only a celebration of youth potential but also a powerful platform for fostering meaningful change.

The expo showcased a myriad of youth-led initiatives, offering a glimpse into the innovative solutions that young Ugandans are crafting to address pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

From climate action projects to tech-driven enterprises, the creativity and resilience

on display left attendees inspired and hopeful for the future of young people actively leading change.

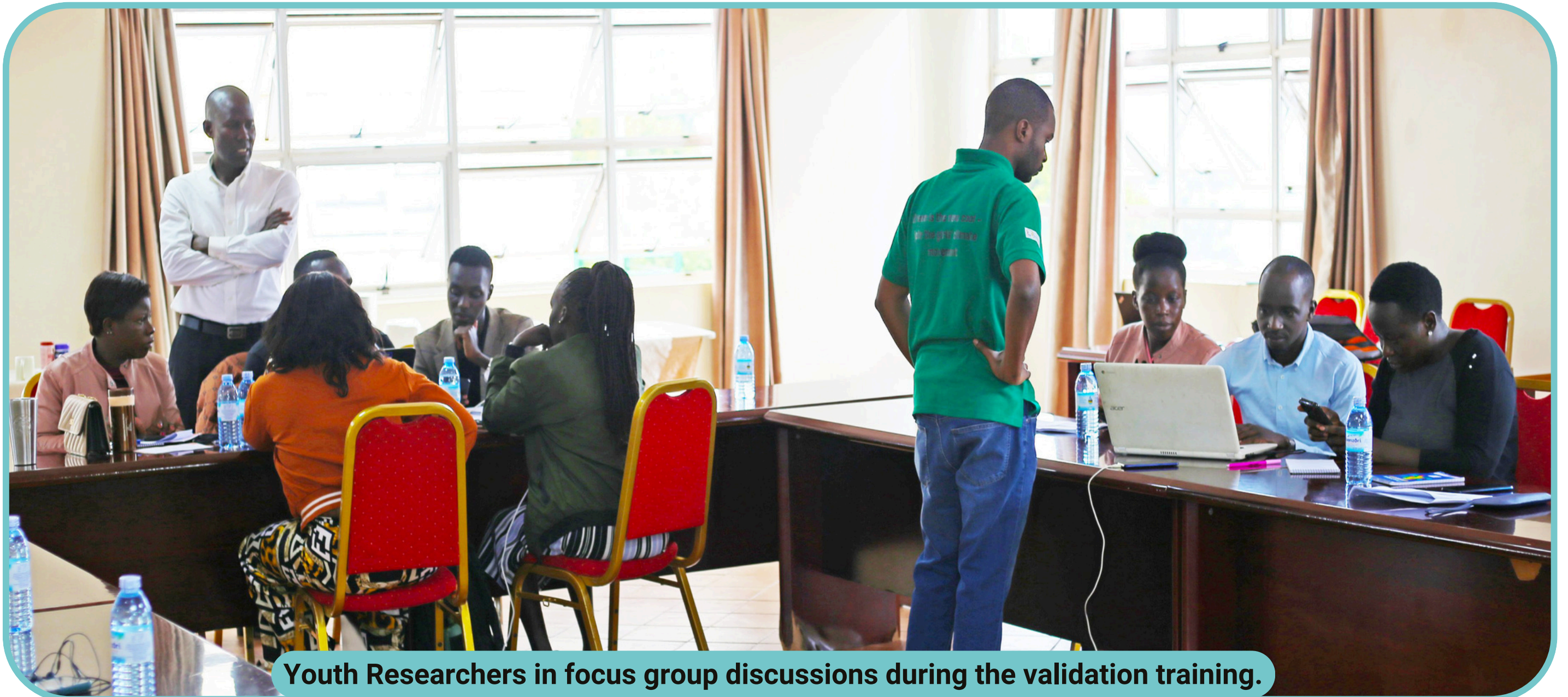
The exhibition provided an interactive space for learning and networking. Young entrepreneurs presented their ventures, while advocacy groups highlighted the power of grassroots movements in creating sustainable change. The event also created an opportunity for

networking and attendees were equipped with leadership, financial literacy, and digital skills to amplify their impact.

Some of the highlights of the day was the recognition of outstanding youth works. This was followed by a panel discussion where four young people who lead youth civil society organisations reflected on the importance of resource funding to attain meaningful youth engagement.



A team from Sawa World exhibiting some of their products.



Youth Researchers in focus group discussions during the validation training.

YRA DATA VALIDATION EXERCISE A SUCCESS

As a key milestone in their efforts to amplify youth voices, the Green Jobs Youth Researchers held a data analysis workshop to address critical issues affecting communities.

The workshop, held from November 18th to 22nd, 2024 as part of their broader research agenda, focused on findings from studies conducted in Jinja and Nakasongola districts. With the goal to scrutinise and validate data related to young people, sustainable livelihoods, and the

inclusion of persons with disabilities, researchers engaged in rigorous discussions and refining datasets to ensure their accuracy and relevance.

Through interactive sessions, participants identified trends and insights that highlight the challenges and opportunities young people face in achieving sustainable livelihoods. The workshop also shed light on the systemic barriers preventing full inclusion of persons with disabilities in community development efforts.

“The insights



Youth Researchers having an interaction.



Pamela, a youth researcher sharing her experience

gathered are crucial for shaping a comprehensive report that will not only inform policy but also empower stakeholders to take meaningful action,” said Douglas Sserwada, one of the lead facilitators. The success of this workshop

underscores the Youth Researchers Academy's commitment to equipping young researchers and people with practical skills and ensuring evidence-based solutions are at the forefront of development conversations.

CALL FOR YOUTH INCLUSION AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 2024 STATE OF YOUTH REPORT

"Youth matters need to be addressed, and for that to happen, youth must be at the table making these changes possible," Bernard Odoi, MP for the Eastern Region Youth and Chairperson of UPFYA made the remarks during the launch of the annual State of the Youth Report 2024 on Tuesday, 26th November, at the Kampala Sheraton Hotel.

The report, which points to youth involvement in Uganda serves as a barometer of the Government's investment in young people and assesses progress toward the demands outlined in the 2021–2026 National Youth Legislative Agenda.

The event, attended by key stakeholders, spotlighted the increasing call for youth participation in decision-making and governance. In his remarks,

Government Chief Whip Hon. Hamson Obua, who was also the Chief Guest, challenged the youth to be more innovative instead of solely relying on government startups.

He echoed the importance of self-reliance and taking up or seizing available opportunities.

"When you tell someone they are ignorant, they might feel insulted, but the real question is, what have you done for yourself? Government programs like Emyooga and PDM have had success stories, but some young people misuse these opportunities.

Youth in rural areas face access challenges, but those in urban centers must rise and hustle rather than complain," Hon. Obua said.

Ambassador Jan Sadek, Head of the EU Delegation to Uganda, underscored Europe's



Hon. Obua (left) and Ambassador Jan Sadek



Diginitories signing the board to launch the Report

commitment to youth-focused initiatives and sustainable development.

He emphasized the importance of youth participation in debating national issues to achieve sustainability. Issues Raised Gabriel Iguma, Hub Director at Restless Development, highlighted a number of issues including limited funding as a major obstacle to their efforts in promoting youth involvement.

"Over time, we have

prioritised young people periodic campaign promises to sustained national action. and placed them at the forefront of our work to boost their involvement. However, I must tell you, most of our work is hindered by funding limitations. We need support to continue pushing our initiatives because, without funding, we can't do much."

Meanwhile, the report not only amplifies youth voices but also emphasizes the urgency of elevating youth from povety.



Douglas, a Researcher Officer giving a presentation.



Researchers in a group discussion.

YOUTH RESEARCHERS HIGHLIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE AS A KEY HEALTH ISSUE

The Youth Researchers Academy on November 28, 2024 engaged stakeholders in validating four research reports on the intersection of climate change and sexual and reproductive health in Jinja and Mayuge.

The reports highlight critical insights into youth livelihoods, disability inclusion, and climate resilience.

One report revealed that promoting sustainable livelihoods could mitigate climate-induced disruptions to sexual and reproductive health services, addressing

socio-economic challenges in vulnerable communities and groups.

Another report highlighted barriers faced by young people with disabilities in accessing sexual and reproductive health services, citing limited autonomy, accessibility, and stigma as significant obstacles despite protective legal frameworks.

A third report underscored how climate change exacerbates sexual and reproductive health challenges, including food insecurity, maternal health issues, and gender-based violence.

Lastly, findings



A youth researcher stressing a point.



Participants in a group photo.

showed that extreme weather events disrupt essential health services, like impacting vulnerable youth.

The Academy stressed

integrating climate resilience and health systems to bridge these gaps and improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

On December 2, 2024, Restless Development partnered with Reach Out Mbuya to commemorate World AIDS Day at the Port Bell Luzira Landing Site.

The event featured exhibitions, blood donation drives, and a community cleaning exercise, including drainage clearing and road sweeping around Nakawa Division.

The activities underscored the shared commitment to promoting health and hygiene in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Nakawa Division Mayor, Hon. Paul Mugambe, delivered a compelling address, urging collective efforts to achieve Uganda's goal of ending HIV/AIDS by 2030.

He stressed the need for collaboration among communities, leaders, and organisations in fostering awareness, enhancing access to healthcare, and reducing stigma surrounding the disease.

RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT, REACH OUT MBUYA HONOR WORLD AIDS DAY 2024

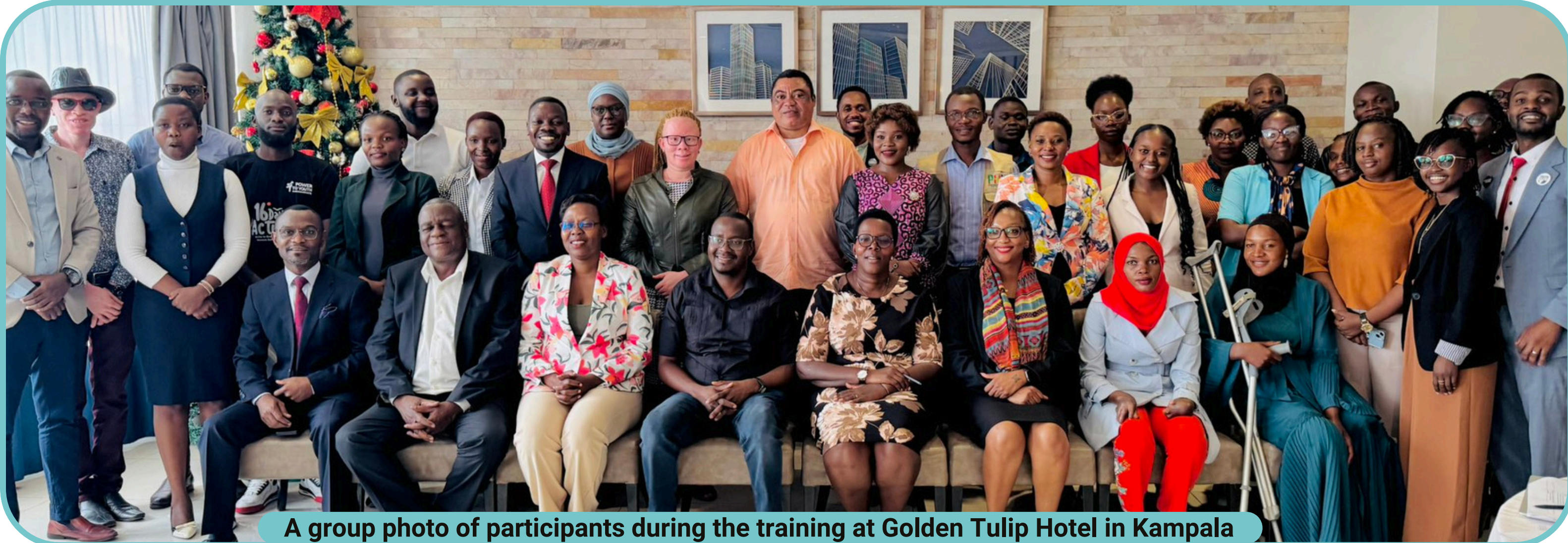


Nakawa Division Mayor Paul Mugambe giving a speech during the commemoration.



Participants marching in commemoration of the day.

The event served as a platform to engage stakeholders and raise awareness about the continued need for education, testing, and treatment to combat HIV/AIDS, reaffirming the dedication to creating an AIDS-free generation.



A group photo of participants during the training at Golden Tulip Hotel in Kampala

DISSEMINATION: RESEARCH REVEALS THE NEED TO LINK CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEXUAL HEALTH

The Youth Researchers Academy on December 3rd and 4th 2024 convened to share findings from research that explored the intersection of climate change and sexual and reproductive health in Jinja and Mayuge districts.

The studies focused on sustainable youth livelihoods and the inclusion of people with disabilities, offering vital insights into the challenges faced by these groups.

Part of the findings presented by the Academy revealed that promoting sustainable livelihoods is key to mitigating climate-

related disruptions to sexual and reproductive health services in vulnerable communities.

The research also highlighted significant barriers faced by young people with disabilities, such as limited autonomy, poor accessibility, and stigma, despite existing legal protections.

Climate change was found to exacerbate issues like food insecurity, maternal health complications, and gender-based violence, disproportionately affecting women and youth.

Additionally, extreme weather events were shown to disrupt critical



A youth researcher giving a presentation



A participant speaking during the training

health services, leaving marginalised populations, particularly youth, at greater risk.

The Academy emphasized the importance of integrating climate resilience into health care to ensure equitable

access to sexual and reproductive health services.

The findings urge immediate policy and community-level action to address the interconnected challenges of climate change and sexual and reproductive health.

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERISM: INSPIRING CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES

On December 5th, Restless Development celebrated International Volunteer Day 2024 at Kyambogo College School, focusing on the power of volunteerism to create lasting change.

With the theme "Healthy Communities, Responsible Volunteering:

Inspiring Sustainable Action Through Active Citizenship," the event brought together 31 participants from organizations like VSO International, Building Tomorrow, Makerere University, and the British High Commission.

Hon. Godfrey Kabbyanga Baluku opened the event, highlighting the importance of volunteers in building stronger communities. Xavia Ejoy from ActionAid Uganda delivered a keynote speech on responsible volunteering, while British High Commissioner Lisa



A team from Restless Development receiving a certificate of recognition

Chesney MBE shared a global perspective on the value of volunteer work.

Prof. Peter Baguma from Makerere University presented a policy brief on improving volunteer programs.

A panel discussion followed, featuring experts who explored challenges and opportunities in volunteer work.

The day ended with a Community Health, Wellness, and Sustainability Fair, showcasing how volunteer efforts make a real difference in people's lives.



A dignitary signs on the board to mark the day



Youth sharing a light moment

Our team proudly participated at the 7th National Girl Summit 2024, playing a key role in shaping discussions and driving efforts to end child marriage and promote girls' education.

Organised by Girls Not Brides Uganda under the theme "Fostering Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All Girls," the summit brought together hundreds of delegates to advance strategies for empowering girls.

In collaboration with CARE International under the SHE SOARS project, Restless Development worked tirelessly in championing initiatives that prioritise the rights and education of girls.

One of the summit's highlights was the platform given to child marriage survivors to share their stories, demonstrating how education has transformed their lives.

These powerful



Young adolescents sharing their experience on child marriages

RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT SHINES AT THE 7TH NATIONAL GIRL SUMMIT



A group photo for some of the participants

testimonies underscored the importance of collective action in addressing this complex issue.

Key discussions also focused on challenges in Uganda's education sector, with legislators calling for greater resource allocation to implement the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancies (2022-2027).

Participants exchanged



Adolescent girls during the summit

best practices and emphasized the need for stronger partnerships to create a future free from child marriage.

We remain committed to collaborating with organisations to

amplify efforts that empower girls and create sustainable change.

The 7th National Girl Summit was a powerful step forward in building a brighter future for all girls.

ACTION PLANNING FOR THE OLU ALU CAMPAIGN IN WEST NILE

Our team conducted a training from December 9th to 12th to prepare for the launch of the Olu Alu Campaign in Yumbe and Arua districts.

Change Mentors and Agents worked together to craft and refine impactful messages to ensure the campaign's success.

Restless Development Uganda played a vital role in selecting Change Agents and Mentors who are the key drivers of the Olu Alu Campaign.

As a result, these were trained on how to use drama series and other creative tools to enable proper communication of the campaign messages effectively.

The campaign aims t

o inspire action through active citizenship and responsible volunteering.

Olu-Alu, is a local name in Madi that stands for togetherness. It is a gender equity initiative empowering adolescent girls and boys.

The Campaign that started in Moyo and Obongi districts addresses critical issues such as education, sexual reproductive health rights, parenting, child abuse, and early marriages.

By leveraging diverse

platforms like radio drama series, songs, sports and community engagements, the Campaign

is fostering positive social change and building stronger, healthier communities.



A Change Agent giving her remarks during the training.



Change Agents looking at a devised campaign plan.



A representative from Aga Khan talking to Change Agents and Mentors.

G2C2 DATA ANALYSIS WORKSHOP IN JINJA



Denis, a Researcher Manager giving his presentation during the workshop.

The G2C2 team participated in a change-making workshop in Jinja from December 19th to 21st to thoroughly examine data collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), surveys, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

In partnership with YADNET and MUCOBADI, the team convened 30 Girl Champions from the districts of Jinja, Mayuge, Moroto, Napak, and Jinja City. These young leaders are part of the Global Girls Creating Change (G2C2) project, which aims to amplify girl-centred climate action and inform

equitable policies in Uganda. The workshop was designed to equip them with critical data analysis. Through pre-assessment exercises, facilitators identified participants' baseline knowledge, tailoring sessions to their needs.

Over the course of three days, the Girl Champions delved into analysing data collected. The goal was to align findings with the Green Jobs initiative's objectives while upholding ethical research standards.

The interactive sessions emphasized collaboration, with participants presenting



A G2C2 Researcher sharing his remarks.



Participants during a focus group discussion.

their analysis and receiving constructive feedback from the Research lead team.

In this, the workshop underscored the need of strengthening girls, in all climate action

initiatives.

By building capacity in data analysis, G2C2 ensures that these girl champions are equipped to influence policies and drive sustainable change in their communities.



IMPACT STORIES



Before joining the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) activities under the SHE SOARS project, Richard Adiga—a tobacco farmer and teacher from Owaa village in Terego District—struggled with strained family relationships.

Traditional norms made him the sole decision-maker of household resources. Believing that planning alone and surprising his wife and children reflected care and leadership, he unintentionally caused frustration and disengagement in his family.

His wife felt left out of household decisions, while his children, especially his 13-year-old daughter, struggled to express themselves.

Topics like menstruation were off-limits, and family plans lacked clarity. The result was slow progress.

NEW APPROACH

The SHE SOARS project introduced the SAA approach



Adiga (left) interacting with an SAA member

ADIGA'S JOURNEY TO FAMILY UNITY

designed to challenge harmful social norms and promote shared decision-making.

As an SAA facilitator, Adiga underwent intensive training that encouraged him to reflect on his beliefs about gender roles and power dynamics.

Using tools like the Staff Transformation Reflection Tool, he learned the strength of inclusivity, shared responsibility, and open communication.

TRANSFORMATION

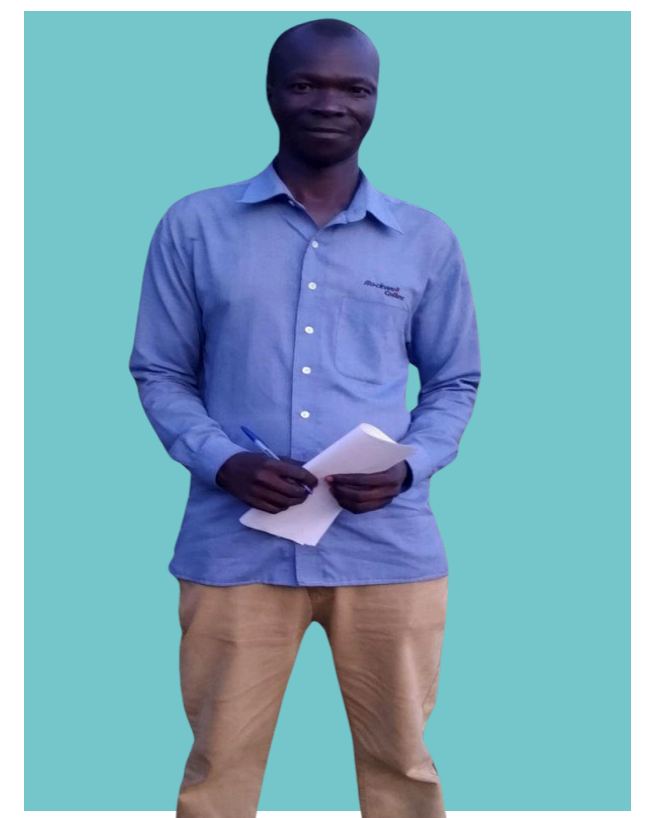
Empowered by the training, Adiga returned home with a new mindset. He started holding open family meetings where everyone could voice their opinions

His wife and children began contributing to decisions about family resources, including income earned from tobacco farming.

“My son suggested buying durable maroon iron sheets, while my daughter prioritised saving for her education,” he notes the family also created a budget that allowed them to save money, purchase the iron sheets, and set aside funds for school fees.

The shift in decision-making dynamics transformed their family life.

“My daughter can now talk to me freely about anything



Richard Adiga

including menstruation, and also ask for sanitary pads without hesitation,” he adds that this has since brought unity and trust among his family members.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Adiga now uses his story to inspire others in his community. He says it is important for families to create safe spaces for children to air out sensitive information on topics like sexual and reproductive health rights.

WATONGOLA'S FIGHT FOR INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

Edmond Watongola, born in Luuka district, Eastern Uganda, is a passionate advocate for persons with disabilities, especially those with albinism.

At 28, Watongola has dedicated five years to working in the program office of a non-governmental organisation, where he actively supports various initiatives.

Reflecting on his journey, he says joining Restless Development as a Youth Researcher in the Youth Researchers Academy was driven by a desire for personal growth and advocacy.

“The opportunity was a way for me to build my CV and also show that people with albinism have potential and can succeed,” he says.

His goal is to challenge societal perceptions and highlight the abilities of those often marginalised.

Growing up with



Watongola (left) during a research study recently

albinism, Watongola faced stigma and discrimination.

“People see us as incapable. There are myths that we don’t die or that our hair and nails can bring wealth,” he explains.

These misconceptions inspired him to join the research project, aiming to show that persons with albinism can make meaningful contributions to the society.

Watongola’s work focused on amplifying the voices of persons with disabilities, especially in areas like sexual reproductive health (SRH).

He found that many people with disabilities face barriers accessing these services, often

due to distance, exclusion, or misinformation.

“There’s a need for more awareness, and young people must become ambassadors for SRH awareness,” Through this advocacy, he works to ensure that persons with disabilities are involved in planning and decision-making.

“We need to speak for ourselves because we understand our needs best,” he asserts.

PRAISES

Watongola attributes his progress to humility, confidence, and the support of those around him. Despite challenges, he has built strong relationships that have fostered professional growth.

This has taught him the importance of humility and perseverance. Today, he envisions a future where persons with disabilities are a priority even at places of work.

He however, urges those with disabilities to love themselves first before they can seek external love.

“Love yourself, have confidence, and be ready to learn. Listen to people and be willing to learn. That way, you can deliver fully.” he adds.



Watongola

Nickson Trent, a 19-year-old from Kati village in Madi-Okollo district, lives in a remote area accessible only by foot or dirt road.

“Limited access to SRHR services and basic medical care worsens the struggles in Kati, where people face uncontrolled STIs, unintended pregnancies, and high maternal and infant deaths,” Nickson explains.

Determined to improve his health and well-being, Nickson made a bold decision. He moved 4 kilometers away from his parent’s home to Ulepi Sub-county to attend BCC outreaches organised by Restless Development.

Guided by information from a Village Health Team

NICKSON INSPIRES YOUTH TO PRIORITISE HEALTH

“I am happy to have shared the story with my friends, family, and peers and I emphasized to them the importance of prioritising one’s health”

(VHT) member, he sought out the comprehensive SRHR services offered at the outreach. These included family planning, HIV testing and counseling, sexuality education, and awareness of gender and social norms.

At the outreach, Nickson received personalised support from trained healthcare providers.

He learned about safe sex practices, family planning benefits, and how to protect himself from HIV and STIs. The experience transformed his health perception.

“Accessing SRHR services is essential for our well-being,” Inspired by his positive experience, Nickson said he decided to share what he learned.

He became a champion for youth health in his community.

“I’m happy to share my story with friends, family and peers. I emphasize the importance of prioritising one’s health,” he says.

Nickson’s efforts have encouraged many young people to seek SRHR services and medical care.

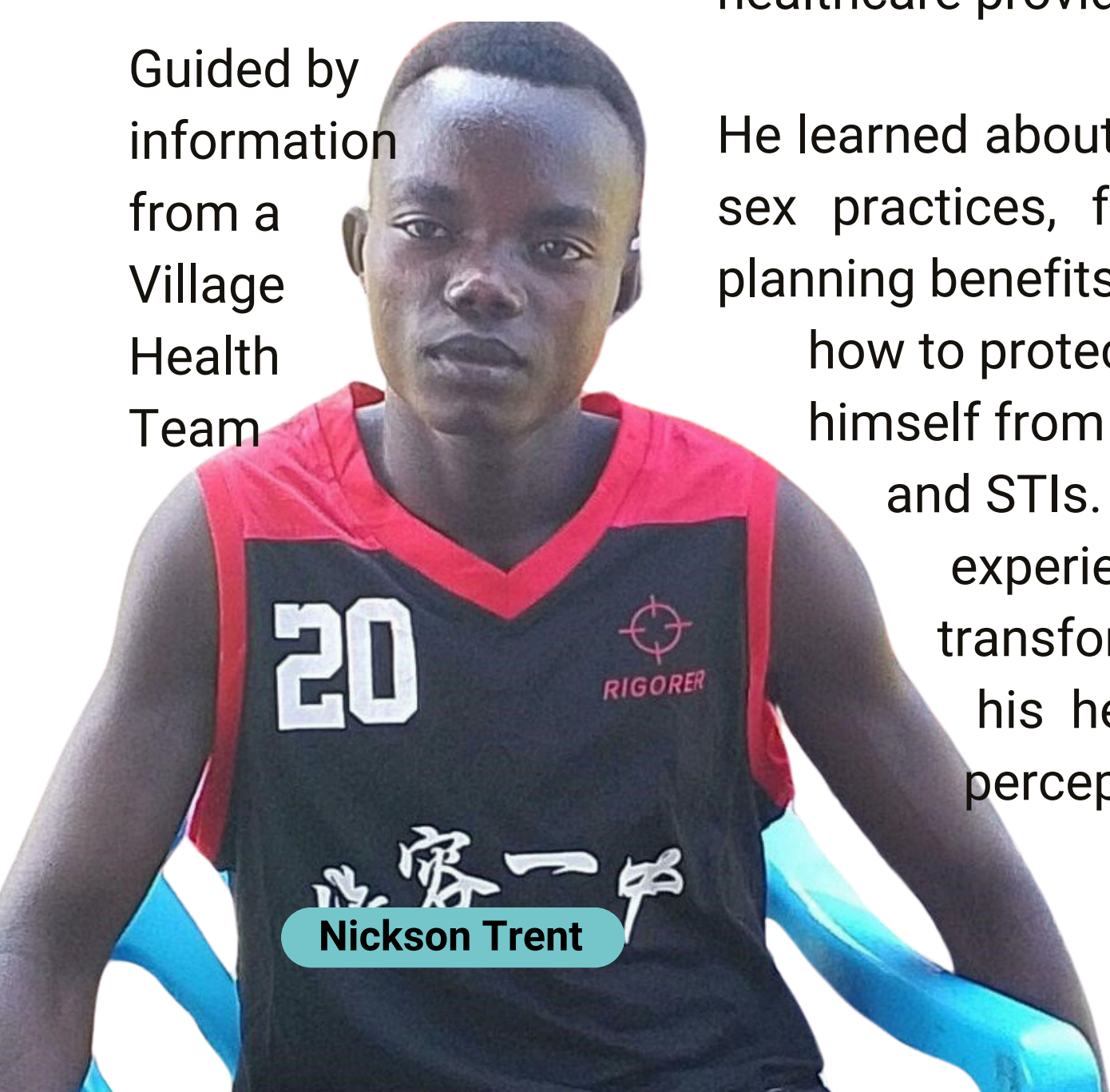
This growing awareness has created a ripple effect

of change in Kati. A nurse from Ulepi Health Centre III reports a noticeable increase in youth accessing health services.

The community has seen a gradual decline in teenage pregnancies, HIV infections, and other health issues.

Nickson’s goal to take charge of his health and inspire others is helping to create a healthier and more informed community. His story shows the power of individual action in sparking lasting change.

“Limited access to SRHR services and basic medical care worsens the struggles in Kati”



Nickson Trent

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