



#WeAreREADY



Welcome to the 12th edition of the READY newsletter! This issue highlights READY's approach to advancing gender equality throughout our programming and movement building with and for adolescents and young people living with HIV in all our diversity. It's timely as the READY team is planning a massive presence at the Women Deliver 2023 Conference in Kigali this month.

If you've read our past 11 newsletters, you'll know that the READY movement applies youth-led, gender-transformative approaches to programming. And this issue further demonstrates our efforts to achieve gender equality.

READY's focus on gender equality aligns with the Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026), which stresses the need for collaboration to address inequalities as key drivers of the epidemic.

JOYCE OUMA, GLOBAL NETWORK OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (Y+ GLOBAL)

The theme of the Women Deliver 2023 Conference – Spaces, Solidarity and Solutions – provides a platform for us to showcase our commitment to delivering a youth-led, intersectional approach to gender equality. We also want to learn from the feminist movement how we can catalyse collective action to advance gender equality and trigger conversations on the clear relationship between HIV and gender equality, which are still addressed in silos.

We have an action-packed agenda for the conference. We'll be hosting key events, including a thought-provoking side event on HIV as a feminist issue. We are keen to redefine feminism and lobby for the need for gender equality for all. And that includes gender-diverse individuals – not just binary men and women.

As a young woman leader, feminist from Africa and youth advocate in the HIV response, I'm looking forward to what the future holds. I hope to see the power of collaboration with other feminist movements and investment in gender equity for all.

Inspirational young peer mothers



BY DR ABDON DAUDI, KWA WAZEE

We recently caught up with Alkanjera Bravius from Kagera region, Tanzania, who featured in our READY newsletter #4, back in November 2018.

Formerly a young 'peer mother', with three beautiful children, Alkanjera left the project in 2021. She did a great job of ensuring that young mothers living with HIV can access quality health services, enjoy good maternal health and receive social support from family members, especially their partners. She also helped eliminate mother-to-child transmission.

Her eldest child, aged 13, is in form one at school. According to Alkanjera, the knowledge and exposure gained from the READY project have increased his confidence and networks within the community.

She has been invited to various meetings to talk to women and young people during special events, including the International Day of the African Child. She has become an inspirational young woman in the village, and in 2021, was elected leader of Nyakanyasi, a hamlet in Kaisho ward.

From a financial point of view, Alkanjera is doing well as she saved the stipends she received from the project. She feels like a superwoman: her involvement in READY has enabled her to support her family and live happily with her partner.



“ I am thankful to READY for it has connected me to many people. It has empowered me and made me more resilient. I'm now able to talk and work in community gatherings, which helped me to become chairperson of the ward I live in. All this wouldn't have been possible if not for the skills I obtained from the READY project.

Feminist leadership



Interview with Maximina Jokonya, Interim Executive Director, Y+ Global

In your opinion, what is feminist leadership?

“As a young woman proudly living with HIV, mother of a boy and passionate activist for gender equality and human rights, I always ask myself: is there a difference if I call myself a feminist or a young woman who is passionate about shifting the systems and structural barriers that are taking away our voice, rights and power as women and girls?

My definition of feminist leadership is about me being confident to take along every young woman in this movement, in their own understanding of what feminist leadership is, and being assertive in finding our voice together, defining our rights and owning our power to shift the barriers that have for so long been suppressing us.

Why does it matter in our work with the READY movement and in our communities?

“It’s one thing to have a movement of young people and another to be able to use the voice and power that lies in coming together and applying feminist principles to advance our agenda as young people from different contexts and backgrounds. With the READY movement, it is the intersectionality of young people’s leadership that shapes it in a way that produces a ripple effect by raising our voice, challenging punitive laws, creating our own safe environments and being the change we want to see.

Tell us about your experience as a feminist leader.

“In my role with Y+ Global, I’ve come across powerful, assertive young women who define feminism in their own way. One young woman stood up in a session and said, “The reality of life for me is about surviving patriarchy. I have to face boys being sent to school while I look after the household – this is my fight on an everyday basis”. This statement gave me a different perspective on how I view feminist leadership and the various privileged spaces I have. Whose voice am I going to represent? Am I going to bring that authentic voice and experience of young women in their diversity to advocacy spaces? Being a feminist leader requires constant check-ins and evaluating yourself.

Do you have any advice for other young feminist leaders?

“Perhaps you are a young woman like me, still trying to define yourself and relate to the principles and plethora of definitions of feminism. That’s okay too. Most importantly, don’t lose your voice, power and purpose in enabling us – young women in our diversity – to realise our human rights.

Check out our session on **Doing Development Differently** at **Women Deliver 2023**

Find out more on page 6.

DOING DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENTLY

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND DISRUPTING POWER TO END AIDS

LIVE AT WOMEN DELIVER

Date: Tuesday 18 July

Time: 19:30 - 21:00 SAST

Location: Kinigi & Kivu Rooms, Four Points by Sheraton, Kigali, Rwanda



Jacqueline Utamuriza-Nzisabira
UN Women



Tinasho Rufurwadzo
Prevention Access Campaign



Anne Githuku-Shongwe
UNAIDS



Patricia Humura
Her Voice Fund



Maximina Jokonya
Y+ Global



Remmy Shawa
UNESCO



Moderated by:
Tumie Komanyane
Frontline AIDS



SPOTLIGHT ON REGIONAL PARTNERS



Hands Off

BY LA SANTA RAJABO, NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS

The Hands Off programme in Mozambique, implemented by the National Platform for Sex Workers' Rights, aims to reduce violence and stigma against sex workers in order to prevent HIV. With the help of focal points in each province, the Platform builds strong relationships with local police so that they can create a safe environment for sex workers and ensure access to justice after cases of violence. This story, shared with the Platform by a focal point, illustrates the impact of their work.

João, a transgender woman, experienced stigma and discrimination from members of the defence and security forces in her area. When focal point, Simba, was alerted to her situation, he approached the members' superiors about their behaviour. Simba asked to give a lecture to the defence and security forces to sensitise them to the existence and needs of transgender women and LGBT+ people.

While the superior said that Simba would be called to deliver the lecture, within a week, two more members of the defence and security forces physically assaulted João because they did not accept her as a transgender woman.

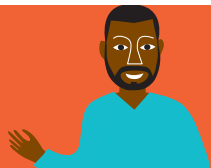
João called Simba again to report the violence she'd suffered. This time, Simba called the police, who immediately went to the scene to arrest the perpetrators. Because the police took the concerns of transgender sex workers like João seriously, the perpetrators were taken into custody and sent to trial. In March, they were found guilty of assault, with one sentenced to 14 months in prison and the other to a year.

Because of cases like this, transgender sex workers now feel comfortable speaking up against violence and claiming their human rights. With the support of the police, potential abusers are taught an important lesson: every trans woman is worthy of respect, dignity and a life free from violence.



Watch this space as we spotlight stories from READY+ regional partners supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Maputo.

The road to positive manhood



Group safe space held by Zvandiri in Harare, Zimbabwe © Zvandiri/2023

BY ZVANDIRI

In Zimbabwe, traditionally it was the role of the uncle (*sekuru*) to teach adolescent boys and young men about the journey to manhood and becoming a responsible member of society. But this role has long gone. Instead, many perceive being a man as someone who should be feared in the home, uses violence, takes what he wants without consent and oppresses women.

To fill this gap, at the beginning of READY+2, Zvandiri established group safe spaces targeting adolescent boys and young men. The safe spaces were created to give the group information and tools to guide them into manhood and help them handle the challenges, expectations and vulnerabilities they face.

Four group safe spaces have been held since January 2023 and a total of 95 adolescent boys and young men aged 10-24 have attended sessions in Chitungwiza and Masvingo districts. These were facilitated in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Care, JF Kapnek Trust and My Voice in Zimbabwe.

Adolescent boys and young men learned about positive masculinity, preventing gender-based violence and disclosing HIV status to partners. One said:



When we address harmful gender norms and attitudes, we need to consider the experiences of both boys and girls. Boys are often expected to be strong, aggressive and unemotional. And girls are often expected to be passive, nurturing and emotional.

We at Zvandiri learned that adolescence and young adulthood present a critical opportunity to engage adolescent boys and young men and mould them so that they understand the importance of gender equality and acknowledge their role in promoting the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women. By using and sharing their power and privilege, boys and young men can shift dominant norms and ideas about gender and masculinity. They can also challenge the patriarchal beliefs, practices, institutions and structures that drive inequality between men and women.

Gender-transformative programming in READY – are we there yet?



Left © Frontline AIDS/Peter Caton/2018 Right © Frontline AIDS/Jason Florio/2018

BY YUMNAH HATTAS, SENIOR ADVISOR: SRHR AND GENDER, FRONTLINE AIDS

Gender affects everyone of all ages. Entrenched patriarchal norms have been imposed upon communities and spread across continents where colonial power reigned. Women, girls, transgender and gender non-conforming people are most affected by these norms, with racist standards and power inequalities that privilege cisgender men, whiteness and heterosexuality.

We know that HIV flourishes in conditions of inequality. In many countries, HIV prevalence is high among women and girls, men who have sex with men, and others who experience intersectional gender inequality. Toxic masculinity can lead to men and boys exerting control in intimate relationships as well as a reluctance to practise safer sex and seek HIV prevention services and healthcare. Women, girls and gender non-conforming people who are living with HIV also experience discrimination, violence and abuse in certain settings, including healthcare.

To address this inequitable system that fuels human rights violations, a wide-ranging approach is needed that tackles the power structures underpinning gender inequality – often through community-led, gender-transformative, feminist action.

The READY movement is right on track with efforts to make its programming gender-transformative. And to secure this approach, READY has developed a gender strategy. Key resources supporting the strategy include Frontline AIDS' Good Practice Guide on gender-transformative approaches to HIV (Download here: <https://frontlineaids.org/resources/gender-transformative-approaches-to-hiv-good-practice-guide>).

The strategy will be a guiding document to ensure that READY promotes gender equality; sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including the neglected issue of female genital schistosomiasis; and addresses harmful gender practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child, early, or forced marriage/union and gender-based violence.

The strategy will also ensure that READY works to remove gender-related barriers to access to services and information, promotes menstrual health and hygiene and collects gender-disaggregated data. In addition, it will link with other areas such as communications, monitoring and evaluation, and linking and learning; and inform how READY implements safeguarding and other relevant policies.

Young people at

WOMEN DELIVER 2023 CONFERENCE

Silindile Gama, 24, Eswatini

What is your role at Women Deliver?

Participant.

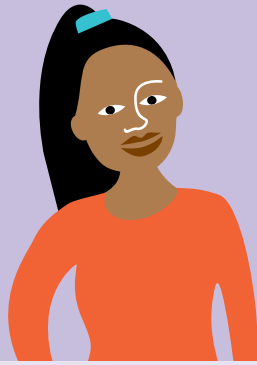
What do you hope to gain from the conference?

Knowledge and skills to be fully competent to advocate for the rights of adolescent girls and young women. Also, to advocate for a safe environment for communities and adolescent girls and young women.

What excites you?

To be able to see a change or improvement in a beneficiary's life.

Listening to adolescent girls and young women in Eswatini



BY PRECIOUS SHONGWE, PROGRAMMES MANAGER, SWAZILAND NETWORK OF YOUNG POSITIVES (SNYP+)

Adolescent girls and young women in Eswatini face multiple challenges. First and foremost is poverty, forcing many girls into sex work and fuelling their vulnerability to HIV as well as violence and mental health problems. With limited access to contraception, adolescent pregnancies and unsafe abortions are rising. Knowledge of SRHR, including family planning and HIV prevention methods such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), is low. According to a national survey, SHIMS3, HIV prevalence is significantly higher among women (30%) than men (19%).

Young women and girls with disabilities face stigma and discrimination within their own families and are at high risk of sexual abuse and HIV. In addition, the provision of mental health support is extremely limited, with just four psychologists in the country.

Against this challenging backdrop, SNYP+ plays an important role in ensuring access to safe spaces and quality services for adolescents and young people living with HIV. To amplify the voice of young women in all their diversity and promote their active engagement in designing and delivering HIV programmes, we recently held consultations with 45 adolescent girls and young women.

Participants included young women living with HIV, sex workers, young women with disabilities and young people from LGBT+ communities – young women and adolescent girls who have traditionally been marginalised and excluded. This created a valuable opportunity for us to listen to their views, priorities and personal experiences.

They expressed concern at the lack of safe spaces for young mothers and adolescent girls and women living with HIV. Young women also called for expanded access to HIV and SRHR services at mobile clinics and one-stop centres to respond to gender-based violence and provide psychosocial support. And to highlight the benefits of PrEP, young women recommended reframing it as a positive lifestyle choice.

These findings will shape our proposal to the Global Fund, which will be co-written by three young women. We are also planning a series of advocacy meetings and training to build the skills and capacity of the adolescent girls and young women who took part in the consultations.

HIV is a feminist issue!



S02 | EP02



BY ALLIE LIU, ADVISOR: DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS, FRONTLINE AIDS

Ahead of Women Deliver 2023, Frontline AIDS is thrilled to launch the next Sharing the Mic podcast episode: HIV is a feminist issue. Tune in for a lively discussion with Vuyiseka Dubula and Joyce Ouma alongside co-hosts Oratile Moseki and Ben Plumley.

As a young leader and READY advocate, Joyce speaks about the vital relationship between gender and health programming for young women in all their diversity. “It’s high time we linked and integrated HIV and feminism,” she said.

The panel also grapple with how we can ethically and meaningfully engage youth, especially in spaces such as Women Deliver, where we will be firmly advocating that HIV is indeed a feminist issue.

Young people at

WOMEN DELIVER 2023 CONFERENCE

Comfort Mukobe, 24, Zambia

What is your role at Women Deliver?

“ To learn, understand and be able to analyse and promote gender equality as a READY+ focal point.

What do you hope to gain from the conference?

“ I hope to gain more knowledge and inspiration from the initiatives other countries have undertaken to advance gender equality.

What excites you?

“ What excites me about this conference is that I will be able to engage with people from different parts of the world about gender equality.

READY Doing Development Differently

TUMIE KOMANYANE, LEAD: PROGRAMMES (ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH), FRONTLINE AIDS



In the pursuit of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Africa stands at a crucial intersection: carrying on with the status quo or doing things differently. To ensure meaningful progress in global health and gender equality, it is imperative that adolescents and young people are involved in co-creating a world that will enable them to live to their full potential. Likewise, it is essential that locally created solutions, notably in the context of HIV and SRHR, are embedded across the development continuum.

At the centre of the READY portfolio of programmes is the focus on ethical engagement of young people in development through tapping into their creativity, agency and perspective to inform and implement innovative youth-centred programmes. This strategy recognises that locally driven change is necessary to achieve lasting impact, and that development activities can be made more pertinent, sustainable and efficient when led by young people as stakeholders.

So how is READY Doing Development Differently?

- 1** Young people are engaged in decision-making processes where their unique experiences, innovation and creativity are integrated into programming strategies. This is a bold move towards ensuring that young people are meaningfully supported to own their present and future health outcomes.
- 2** We acknowledge that the best solutions for impactful response are those from affected communities. Therefore, our mandate is to co-create programming and invest in community-led responses as well as engaging in ongoing learning alongside young people in order to stay relevant and shape good practice.
- 3** The READY Doing Development Differently agenda is about meaningful partnership, recognising the power imbalances that exist and consistently pushing boundaries with our ways of working. We invest in young people and walk the talk.
- 4** To truly transform the development landscape, we recognise young people's agency and are constantly creating platforms for inclusive dialogue and collaboration. This approach enables the integration of diverse perspectives, fosters innovation, and ensures sustainable change that resonates with local and global communities.

At READY, we are driven by these aspirations and potential for change, and we strive for an inclusive future for young people in their diversity. Together we can do more – we are READY!

What is your role at Women Deliver?

“ To participate and learn.

What do you hope to gain from the conference?

“ I hope to meet adolescents and young people, learn from other adolescents and young people, exchange experiences and learn from the challenges encountered in other countries.

What excites you?

“ Being at my first international conference, dealing with issues that affect adolescents and young people, and representing the voice of adolescents and young people in my country.



Fredina Muxabata
Matari Major, 22, Angola

Young people at

**WOMEN
DELIVER 2023
CONFERENCE**

We hear you

We're excited to share an update on our READY newsletter! We've now released a dozen editions and we couldn't have done it without contributions from our amazing partners, NGOs and the young people who are at the heart of the READY movement.

Our goal has always been to make a positive impact on the lives of young people and we want the newsletter to reflect that.



Earlier this year, we sent a survey to our readers (consortium partners, young people, healthcare providers and implementing partners) to ask for your input so that we can make sure the newsletter meets your needs. We received valuable insights into how the newsletter is used and how we can improve it. Overall feedback was positive, with one person commenting, "I really like its design and compactness". Another suggested making it more youth-friendly, with less text. We've taken note of this feedback and are improving the format to cater to young people's needs.

We also received a suggestion to increase representation of the CATS (community adolescent treatment supporters) and include jobs and opportunities for young people. This is a fantastic idea, which is aligned to our commitment to meaningful youth engagement.

To ensure wider readership, easy access and targeted distribution, many of you recommended creating a mailing list. This will help us reach more young people and organisations who might benefit from the newsletter. As a starting point, we've set up this link (<https://forms.office.com/e/9gpb9EkAsU>) so you can sign up straight away.

Lastly, we received multiple requests for the newsletter to be translated into Portuguese, Swahili and other local languages used in READY countries. We believe in inclusivity and accessibility, so we're committed to making the newsletter available to as many people as possible. We're working on how best to address this, within budgetary constraints.

We'd like to thank everyone who participated in the survey. Your feedback is incredibly valuable to us and we will incorporate your ideas into future editions of the newsletter.

Download them all at <https://frontlineaids.org/resources/ready-newsletter/>





FOLLOW THE MOVEMENT! Dates for the diary

17–20 July	Women Deliver 2023 Conference, Kigali, Rwanda
23–26 July	IAS 2023, 12 th IAS Conference on HIV Science, Brisbane, Australia
12 August	International Youth Day
20–22 September	High-Level Meetings on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response; Universal Health Coverage; and TB, New York, USA
28 September	International Safe Abortion Day
4–5 October	REPSSI Psychosocial Support Forum, Johannesburg, South Africa
11 October	International Day of the Girl Child
14–16 November	PATA Summit (virtual)
25 November– 10 December	16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence

Support the READY movement by following these events and posting to:



READYMovement



@READY_Movement



@readymovement

using #WeAreREADY. And visit <https://frontlineaids.org/ready> and <https://www.yplusglobal.org/projects-ready-2.0> for news and updates.

Thank you!

Y+ Global and Frontline AIDS would like to say thanks to:

- All the young people at the forefront of this work.
- All the partners implementing READY projects: Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP), Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO), Paediatric - Adolescent Treatment Africa (PATA), Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI), Young Africa and Zvandiri.
- All other organisations that are part of the READY movement.
- The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Elton John AIDS Foundation for their support.



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