



## In this edition:

- Kevin advocates for young people's healthcare needs
- Phiona uses her crown to challenge stigma and discrimination
- Annet speaks up for young women in the parish council

## Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Umbrella newsletter!

Over the years, SRHR Umbrella partners have been doing fantastic work supporting young leaders and advocates. As we celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March, this newsletter features some of the amazing young women who are driving change in SRHR through the programme and beyond. Read about Phiona's, Kevin's and Annet's leadership journeys and find out how they are using their influence to advance women's rights. We hope you will be inspired by their stories to #EmbraceEquity.

*The SRHR Umbrella team*

## Kevin advocates for young people's healthcare needs

**Kevin Namala is a passionate peer educator with the SRHR Umbrella. Since 2018, the programme has mentored her to become an agent of change and supported her to advocate for improved health services for her fellow adolescent girls and young mothers.**

Her experience of working with young women and girls enabled her to identify the key challenges that were preventing them from accessing quality healthcare. Kevin realised that many young women in her community were getting pregnant because they didn't know about the family planning services that were available in the local health facility. She raised this issue with the health facility, and, together with other health workers and with the support of Youth Alive Uganda (YAU) through the SRHR Umbrella, started to hold community dialogues. In all, they sensitised over 1,200 adolescent girls and young women about sexual and reproductive health, including family planning methods.

Because of her impressive work and assertiveness during the dialogues, some opinion leaders from her community nominated her to represent young people on the health unit management committee (HUMC). And in September 2021,

she became youth representative on the HUMC for Bowa Health Center III. This role provides a platform for her to keep advocating for equitable, quality healthcare for the young women and girls in her community.

Kevin shares health information during a community dialogue



## Phiona uses her crown to challenge stigma and discrimination

**Bero Phiona, 24-year-old peer educator and youth advocate with the SRHR Umbrella, was crowned Miss Y+ Central Region at the Y+ (young positives) beauty pageant in 2021. The annual pageant fights stigma and discrimination against young people living with and affected by HIV by promoting beauty and inclusiveness.**

“The campaign turns stigma into pride and establishes a platform for learning and showing communities the inner beauty of young people living with HIV so that they can become champions in the battle against negative stereotypes,” Phiona said.

As an ambassador of change, Phiona shares her story widely to inspire young people and promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.

“Because of my position, it’s now easier for me to influence young people in the community. I want to ensure that young people, especially girls and young women, have equal access to integrated sexual and reproductive health and HIV services.”

Phiona, former Miss Y+ Central and vocal advocate for SRHR



## Annet speaks up for young women in the parish council



Annet, peer educator with CEDO and elected member of the parish council

**Faida Annet, 24, started work as a peer educator with Child Rights Empowerment and Development Organization (CEDO) at Tonya health facility III in Hoima district in 2018. She helps the SRHR Umbrella programme deliver HIV and health services and information to sex workers. Young people find it easy to chat to Annet because she is not only confident, kind and well-informed about SRHR, but she also openly shares the challenges she’s faced in her life.**

In 2019, while still working as a peer educator, Annet gained the confidence to run for a position on the parish council in Buseruka sub-county. “My peers pushed me to aspire for the position and promised to vote for me, which they did. And I won the election! I reach more young women, especially adolescent mothers, and get to hear and address their needs.”

As a member of the parish council who is knowledgeable about SRHR, Annet has won the community’s trust. This has made it easier for her to spread the word about sexual and reproductive health to young women and girls. Annet also speaks on behalf of young people at formal community events. “Young people – especially girls and women – talk to me freely because they know I now represent their voice and I make sure I put forward their feedback in meetings with other stakeholders,” she added.

The SRHR Umbrella has enabled peer educators like Annet to reach their full potential and play an important part in delivering integrated healthcare to their peers.

### About SRHR Umbrella

The **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Umbrella** is a seven-year programme funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

It is managed by Frontline AIDS and implemented by Ugandan NGOs across 11 districts, coordinated by Alive Medical Services.

### Thank you

Frontline AIDS would like to thank the current SRHR Umbrella implementing partners: Alive Medical Services (AMS), Child Rights Empowerment and Development Organization (CEDO), The AIDS Support Organisation (TASO) and Youth Alive Uganda (YAU).

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**Find out more: [frontlineaids.org/our-work-includes/srhr-umbrella-grant/](https://frontlineaids.org/our-work-includes/srhr-umbrella-grant/)**