

Zimbabwe Youth Researchers Academy Dissemination Meeting, Thursday 10 October 2019

On Thursday the 10 October 2019, the Zimbabwe Youth Researchers Academy Dissemination meeting was held at UNICEF Harare, an event hosted by Hivos Regional SRHR Fund in partnership with Restless Development, The Biomedical Research & Training Institute (BRTI)/London School of Health and Tropical Medicine.

Opening remarks were delivered by Ms. C. Ukwimi (Programme Manager Hivos Regional SRHR Fund), Ms. L. Moshiri (Unicef Country Representative), Mr. F. Muronzi (Hub Director Restless Development Zimbabwe & Tanzania) and Dr. K. Kranzer (Assistant professor BRTI/LSHTM Research partnership), whom all explained the key objectives of the Youth Researchers Academy which was to provide an opportunity for young people to take ownership of their SRHR agenda and actively inform and determine their ASRHR (research) needs.

The aim of the dissemination meeting was to introduce models of youth led research initiatives, which can increase capacity for youth driven research, youth engagement and leadership in the ASRH field and the broader SRHR discourse. A total of 8 presentations were delivered from Chiedza (BRTI) and Restless Development whom also had a special presentation from their deaf youth researchers, that looked at the barriers youths with hearing disabilities experienced in accessing SRHR services in Mutare.

Amongst the invited guests were representatives from the Embassy of Sweden, UNDP, UNESCO, UNAIDS, USAID, SAT Zimbabwe, Heart & Soul, Nzeve Trust, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, Childline Mutare and many others, whom all attended to provide support to the SRHR issues the youth researchers highlighted.

Presentations from Chiedza (BRTI) were the following;

“The Youth-friendliness Research Project”

“Talking Periods – The Menstrual Health Management Study”

“Increasing Young Men’s Engagement with HIV SRH services”

“Evaluating Young Peoples Use of Technology”

“Creating Social Maps for Chiedza Clusters”

“Engaging Young People Through Social Mapping”

Presentations from Restless Development were the following;

“Restless Development Presentation - Hearing YRs”

“Nzeve Youth Presentation – Deaf YRs”

The presenters managed to raise some compelling facts with regards to SRHR service provision in their respective communities and gave subsequent calls to action such as raising awareness of deaf culture among health personnel and the wider community (Nzeve Youths Presentation), providing comprehensive sexuality education in schools (Increasing Young Men’s Engagement with HIV SRH services presentation), leveraging social mapping tools in understanding communities to establish SRHR service sites (social mapping presenters) and the use of technology playing an instrumental role in helping youths gain access to SRHR services (Evaluating Young Peoples Use of Technology presentation).