



YALI REGIONAL
LEADERSHIP CENTER
EAST AFRICA • NAIROBI

ISSUE 11 - OCTOBER 2019

THE LEADING EDGE

An Update for Partners and Stakeholders

Celebrating Over 3000 Alumni





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FINDING MY PURPOSE

by Harun Mwadena, Cohort 30, Kenya

I was a street boy. I grew up poor a good part of my childhood, in the far interior of coast province, in a small village called, Ifunda in Kambe-Ribe Ward of Kilifi County in Kenya.

After failing to join university in 2016 for lack of fees, I came across the YALI RLC EA U-Learn online courses. I had a hunger for knowledge and a great desire to serve humanity even as a street boy in Mombasa struggling to make ends meet. I completed 20 courses in civic leadership. I had found my purpose. I wanted to transform my society and create sustainable impact. In 2017, I left Mombasa to go back home to my community in Kilifi. This was the birth of my project, Lamukani, which means wake up. I mobilized my peers and together we would work as Kambe/Ribe Lamukani Youth Forum.

Through this organization, I have invested in the development, equipping of leaders who have purpose, motivated by service to humanity, and driven by sustainable results to achieve an inclusive society. Having volunteered for 4 years without funding, we have come to believe, to serve humanity is greater than the desire for money. With the very little, we have had different programs that focus on youth and women. Lamukani Youth Forum has been advocating for sexually reproductive health rights trainings, focusing on relationship issues, managing puberty, providing a platform to young girls to tell their stories and provision of free sanitary pads. We have managed to reach over 400 underprivileged adolescent girls in schools within Rabai District of Kenya.

Through our employment program, we have been supporting them to pursue one of two pathways; self-employment or employment. We have achieved this through use of systematic approach; building and growing market-driven enterprises using Design Thinking skills. One of the major projects I have undertaken is preparing detergents and disinfectants. This has benefited over 100 youth from informal sectors and young mothers.

With support from Human Rights Agenda (HURIA) and Arigatou International, we have been enhancing the level of awareness, knowledge and understanding of radicalization and violent extremism to communities with the key target being the community policing members, learning institutions, local youth leaders and media.



Harun Mwadena in Ethiopia

Currently, we plan to improve our capacity-building program to train youth advocates and women to know more about radicalization, violent extremism and equip them with skills on changing the narratives that promote ideologies of violent extremism.

There is comparatively low level of women involved in peace and security issues as compared with those involved in human rights and development issues. Our focus has been to ensure women and youth have more control over their life choices and know how to tell their stories. As a personal initiative, I launched it in Ethiopia in May 2019 where I collaborated with YALI RLC EA Ethiopia chapter and Ethiopia America Space. Through this, we managed to bring together 74 Ethiopian youth and women and they are now ambassadors of change.



Harun Mwadema soap project

In January 2019, I was selected by YALI RLC EA as one of the young leaders from East and Central Africa to participate in a 4-week intensive leadership training. Through this, I fully discovered my life and leadership journey. I learnt some principles of leadership that have helped me to lead effectively within my community. This was a stepping-stone for all my success stories of 2019 as captured below:

1. In February 2019, I was appointed as one of the board members of Kambe/Ribe Vocational Training Center where I am mandated of welfare of fellow youth and development of the Center strategic plan.
2. In June 2019, I was nominated to be a YALI RLC EA Alumni Kilifi County Chair with key mandate to lead YALI RLC EA programs from the grassroots level with support from my fellow alumni.
3. In May 2019, I was selected among the top 20 youth from East Africa through a program known as ChangemakerXchange hosted in Ethiopia, sponsored by Ashoka and Robert Bosch Foundation.
4. In July 2019, I was elected as Secretary General of IGAD Centre of Excellency on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) of Kenya where our mandate will be to strengthen collaboration & coordination in the prevention/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) space.
5. In August 2019, I got the opportunity to hone my leadership skills as a peace influencer, particularly in addressing violent extremism in the region, and using creative storytelling for policy and social change. This was a fully sponsored opportunity by Arigatou International.

LGBT:YALI RLC EA's INCLUSIVE CULTURE

"We should indeed keep calm in the face of difference, and live our lives in a state of inclusion and wonder at the diversity of humanity."--George Takei

Learning to be yourself and dealing with other people's perception of you can be hard for anyone. We cannot ignore the fact that we have lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community around us. They are our brothers, sisters, colleagues, peers and mentors. LGBT refers to a broad coalition of groups that are diverse with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Lesbians, gay men, and bisexual men and women are defined according to their sexual orientation, which is typically conceptualized in terms of sexual attraction, behavior, identity, or some combination of these dimensions. They share the fact that their sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual.

LGBTs are struggling with bullying and discrimination from families, communities and schools. These can put them at greater risk for emotional health struggles like depression, anxiety, substance abuse and even suicide. Having to deal with the additional stigma can worsen mental health conditions. If you are an LGBT,

- Surround yourself with supportive people,
- Seek help if you're experiencing sadness, anxiety or stress that is interfering with your ability to get things done and live a fulfilling life
- Remember it has nothing to do with you as others' reactions to your sexual identity or orientation should not give you sleepless nights.
- Join an advocacy group.

Below are two stories from LGBT alumni talking of their experience in and out of the Center:

ENSURING THE WELLBEING OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY

by Ayesiga Herbert, Cohort 30, Uganda

I am a Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgender (LGBT) activist, researcher and social worker by profession. I am currently working at Icebreakers Uganda, a non-profit support organization for LGBT persons focused on sexual health rights and advocacy, community mobilization for HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention for all LGBT persons. My career has progressed through a series of promotions leading up to my current position as a Program Director.

I pioneered the first research on mental health within the LGBT community in Uganda through the See the Invisible campaign whose main goal is to raise awareness on mental health. I ensure those at risk receive proper, timely and effective treatment through the NOT Alone Initiative. The initiative offers a safe space for sharing, therapy and learning for the LGBT youth who are going through mental health issues due to stigma, discrimination, and violence faced within and outside the LGBT community like inmate partner violence and gender based violence respectively.



At the time of joining the YALI RLC EA program, the initiative was in the inception stage. The Program gave me an opportunity to engage facilitators and fellow colleagues on my initiative while providing important feedback opening my mind to endless possibilities. Additionally, knowledge and skills gained from the Design Thinking and Seven Habits modules were helpful in evaluating the state of my initiative prototyping and test stage. As a result, I have empathized with and have a better understanding of the LGBT community needs. I realized it is key to consult the community first in coming up with solutions.

The Initiative being the first of its kind in Uganda has brought people together from different fields to make this initiative a success. We are now witnessing members of the society such as immediate family members to those in the LGBT community and professionals such as psychiatrists and others tackling mental health have begun embracing the LGBT community as a more accommodating attitude is seen. They are now open to offering friendly mental health services for LGBT persons.

YALI RLC EA really changed my thought process on how to go about identifying problems and coming up with solutions to make impact in the community. I also appreciated the fact that they are socially inclusive. I learned about the leadership Center through Dr. Frank Mugisha, the Executive Director of Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) and I applied several times for 4 years until I was accepted. Persistence pays! I now have good networks across 14 countries in East & Central Africa that I can collaborate with. While at the Center, I appreciated being in an environment where I was accepted.

In 5 years, through the NOT Alone Initiative, I aspire to start a mental health wellness center which will have different departments like yoga, art therapy, group therapy, one on one counseling among others. This will be beneficial in the healing process of LGBT persons who have been discriminated and violated against because of their sexuality. The Center will be inclusive of other persons like male and female sex workers, young people living with HIV, women who have gone through domestic violence and drug addicts.

If you want to be a change influencer, YALI RLC EA is for you. Do not apply if you are just going to go back to your community and sit on the knowledge and skills acquired from the program. Pay it forward! We need more change influencers within our communities and these can be within the LGBT community or non-LGBT. You will be doing Africa an injustice if you take the opportunity for granted.



I AM A TRANSMAN

by Janeth Mkodo (Kim Malcolm), Cohort 32, Tanzania

You are probably reading the byline and asking yourself, “Why does it have two names?” I am a transman. When growing up, I always felt that I was different from other people. However, while it was not a problem for me, I felt scared because of the community perspective towards Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI). People have this perception that LGBTQI people are cursed and that being part of that community is sinful and “un-African.”

After much reflection when I turned 20, I realized that I identified as a transman. It was difficult explaining to people because the community does not understand who a transperson is and that made me question myself. Overtime, I became comfortable with my gender identity.

In 2016, I got a chance to attend LILO (Looking In and Looking Out) workshop, where people got a chance to explore their sexual orientation and gender identity. It was during this time that I identified as a transman and I was connected to the Tanzanian Transgender Initiative (TTI). I started out as a volunteer to learn how to serve the transgender community and other minority groups in Tanzania.

In 2018, I was employed as an advocacy officer, community outreach worker and a peer educator with TTI. I dedicated my time to serving transgender and gender non-conforming people who live with HIV, focusing on HIV/AIDS and human rights promotion and advocacy through in depth partnership. I am currently a human rights activist working with TTI. My role is working to motivate youth, minorities and young women in my community and in my country by making sure that we build a team that works towards achieving the same goal.

Part of my leadership skills is to be flexible in accountability, transparency and hard work.

I attended the four-week leadership training at YALI RLC EA and the experience gave me the opportunity to connect with other like-minded people from the staff, facilitators and participants. What I found most valuable were the ideas of coming together with different people from a variety of diverse perspectives. From this, I learnt that there was power in bringing people together. I also learnt that I needed to improve how I communicated and presented myself as a leader.

People focus on building their personality, and forget to build their character. I knew that after the YALI RLC EA experience, I wanted to make that a priority for me. Through networking, developing ideas and presentation skills, I felt I was able to grow and change my mindset as a leader and as a human being.

One of the things that really struck me during the program was the positive reception and questions that people came to me with as a transman. It was my first non-judgmental experience. I was accepted and at home with the community of people at YALI RLC EA. I never felt that I was different and always felt that I was a human being. This came to me as a surprise but gave me faith that living positively in a community was possible. I knew when I returned to Tanzania, I wanted to take that with me.



After YALI RLC EA, I was able to integrate the learnings into my work. First, within TTI, I have changed how I communicate both within the organization and with the people that I serve. I am effective in advocating my ideas within the organization. For example, we began to arrange Sunday sessions at TTI so that new community members can come, learn and get support. Before, we used to come up with proposals without consulting the people that we serve. Now, we take a much more participatory approach in project development. We collaborate with other LGBTQI organizations in project development and implementation to grow the networks of the community both within and outside the country. We have already served over 150 people in the Dar es Salaam area.

There are still many challenges I face as a leader and activist in the Tanzanian context. The public perception and the general hostility is a problem towards people in the LGBTQI community. Being in the front line of the LGBTQI movement, we are perceived as promoting homosexuality and working against the laws of the country. The risk of violence is still very high and people are afraid to connect and support each other. We have to balance activism with safety. There is also a shrinking space for people to mobilize and connect. Another challenge is the infighting among LGBTQI people, which can slow progress. However, I am reminded through YALI RLC EA that even in the most critical situations, there is room for people to work together. We are working through these challenges by building empathy among each other and the community at large, recognizing that change does not happen in a day.

I know that the experience that YALI RLC EA gave me, will allow me to grow and share more with the people in my community. People, who did not think that this was a possibility for them, now believe that they have a chance to grow as well.

I would recommend that every young leader apply for the leadership program, no matter the diverse background they are coming from as the Center is all about inclusion.



INSPIRING CHANGE TO TRANSFORM LIVES

by Hassan Mulata, Cohort 12, Kenya

I am from Marsabit County in Northern Kenya and an award-winning activist who is passionate about women/girls rights, community peace building and development. I am the founder of Initiatives for Progressive Change (IfPC) which is a community-based organization that inspires change and transforms lives.

Being passionate about women/girls empowerment, I identified the harmful cultural practices and in particular, female genital mutilation (FGM) as a foundation to women/girls disempowerment and eventual community underdevelopment. FGM robs the girl child of her right to education and childhood leading to early marriages and high rate of school dropouts. There is also the risk of death from excessive bleeding or infections and numerous medical conditions. I carry out campaigns against this practice through creating platforms for community dialogue on effects of FGM. After my training at YALI RLC EA, I was able to reach out to one hundred women and youth leaders representing over three thousand members to whom they cascade the information during community dialogue.

In addition, I have trained 126 youth (57 female/69 male) across the four sub-counties of Marsabit County on Social Change Communication in a bid to build their capacity to trigger social movement within their different communities. The group of trainees are expected to directly reach approximately 3,200 of their peers and become part of the anti-FGM youth network – Marsabit Chapter.

This campaign is not limited to creating dialogue and capacity building exercises but also utilization of existing platforms such as social media, blog writing on positive stories of change and local FM radio talk shows where thousands of people are reached.

In order for community development to be achieved, there must be peaceful and harmonious co-existence among the communities that I serve. Hence, I am also involved in community peace building through active participation by closely working with the Interfaith Council of Marsabit that plays a mediatory role between Borana and Gabra leadership. I am also a member of Marsabit County Committee working on development of County Countering Violent Extremism Action Plan.

After YALI RLC EA in the Civic Leadership track, I had a paradigm shift on how to view myself as an individual and the society as well. With sharpened problem solving skills courtesy of design thinking model of addressing issues, I have been able to look beyond one or two generations into the future and embrace community challenges as an opportunity to solve them.



Hassan Mulata Addressing Youth in Moyale town

Synonymous with Marsabit, is the acute water shortage and food insecurity. To facilitate access to clean and safe water, I am working on the Maji Safi na Salama Project, that intends to harvest rain water into water pan and install a water purification and treatment system. This project once actualized is intended to cut water cost by 75% in the target area (approx 700 households). This project will also have a ripple effect of spurring economic growth and enhancing community health.

On food security, with insufficient rainfall and an unpredictable weather pattern, I have introduced Mulata's Farm, using irrigation and embracing demand driven farming. I have prepared three acres of land to plant kales, tomatoes, spinach and green pepper. With Marsabit market relying on Meru and Isiolo for grocery products, the prices of essential grocery items consumed by most of the households on daily basis is exorbitant yet the purchasing power of many is restricted. Mulata's farm will identify about 40 small-scale grocery traders and empower them as the farm agents to sell its produce at subsidized prices.



DISCOVERING MY PURPOSE TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT,

by Mariam Nakigudde, Cohort 9, Uganda

One great evening, I walked in the office of the Makerere University Business School (MUBS) Guild president. I found him focused on his computer busy typing. I then asked him why he was so busy still at campus late in the evening and he told me he was applying for YALI RLC EA, a program I had never heard about. I wrote it down and did more online research. I was sold.

I later went through the application process and in July 2016 I was selected for Cohort 9. YALI RLC EA enabled me to discover my potential in changing the face of my community. I made networks with other young leaders whom we shared ideas with, brainstormed, gave each other a shoulder to lean on that built us cohesion through which a synergy has been built that to date we support each other's' activities. The networks across the 14 countries keeps me abreast in terms of news, innovations, which I am grateful for because it has boosted my cross-cultural experience and understanding.



After YALI RLC EA, I was determined to lead the change I needed to see happen in my community. I started to work on some projects; tree planting campaign and advocacy to stop the use of polythene bags to protect the environment.

Having grown up accustomed to using polythene bags for packaging, cooking, among other uses, I had noted it has led to a lot of destruction of the environment, human and animal health. My friends and I founded Mvule Generation, a non-profit organization that focuses on addressing environmental challenges and providing sustainable solutions easily adaptable in the face of the need for economic survival. We are a dynamic and up-to-date versatile team with simplified hands-on approaches to bring about humane behaviour and a positive mindset change in the society.

Mvule Generation provides a cheap and environmentally friendly solution to plastic bags usage by distributing affordable and reusable paper bags to retail outlets. We address the real, everyday life environmental issues that require timely and structured solution-oriented approaches that focus on setting goals and formulating clear approaches to change. We aim to effect positive change environmentally by working with the current generation and generations to come as a lasting solution to environmental degradation.

We work closely with various university student leaders, primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Education, eco-organizations and various shareholders in the eco-movement through whom we believe a multiplier effect can be effected thus growing the impact in rural and urban areas.

We target young, energetic and innovative young people that form over 68% of Uganda's population most of whom are in the institutions of higher learning. This gives us assurance that we are working within sustainable and achievable means to boost and enhance climate adaptation among the many Ugandans who are still ardent users of polythene bags with a small solution as Mvule Generation Eco bags.

To enhance its usage adaptability, we also carry out mass public education through our partners on the importance of using climate adaptable means of survival for the present and the generations to come.



THE STORY OF MY OFFICE

by Yonas Alemayehu, Cohort 27, Ethiopia



This small house is neither my grandmother's house, nor my relatives in a small rural village. This is the Oromia Regional State Attorney General, Omo Beyyam District Office. My office is located in a rural village called Dalota, 100km from the city. The only means of travel is a motor bike, which I ride for 24km over a mountain road covered with tiny sharp rocks, making it hard to travel through. My office village is behind in civilization, there is no water, electricity, internet access, transport and restaurants. Moreover, the village is extremely cold and one has to constantly keep warm and ensure extreme safety while traveling to and from the village to avoid fatal accidents.

Dalota is a very cold mountain village in Jimma. You have to dress up like an eskimo. My fellow participants thought the venue of our teambuilding, Brackenhurst in Limuru, Kenya is cold. Dalota is worse! Riding a motor bike over this cold mountain is very dangerous and nerve-racking. In case you slip, you will end up falling about 60 meters, to fatal injuries and even death. I am the only staff member who has not been in any accident.

I work as a public prosecutor in Ethiopia, in which I came to learn during my stay in YALI that it is a grand and well-paying job in other East African countries unlike in Ethiopia. Being a judge or a public prosecutor in Ethiopia is a tough job, moreover, if you are a junior. It is not as glamorous as it sounds. When I was in Nairobi for YALI RLC EA program, I realized my profession is held in high regard. One day, in the beginning of our class, Public Management track, it was my turn to introduce myself. I stood up in front of the class and told them my name, where I come from and my profession. The mention of my being a Public Prosecutor in Ethiopia led everybody to exclaim. It was a proud moment for me. Raphael Laurent Banzi, a humble and kind roommate of mine at YALI RLC EA, told me my profession is the most respected and one of the highest paid in his country, Tanzania.

I learned, public prosecutors and judges in Tanzania drive the most expensive vehicles, live in the posh suburbs, and have security detail. This was the same narrative I heard from various countries represented at the Center. They imagined I was also wealthy. Back at home, I am the most paid public servant in Ethiopia earning 9067 Ethiopian Currency (Birr) per month, which is approximately \$335 with no benefits. My passion and commitment is what keeps me going and to continue working in Dalota. I am aware I can get better opportunities in the capital city, Addis Ababa but the satisfaction I get from serving my people is immeasurable. The need to serve the poor people whose thirst of justice is next to hunger of bread is my motivation.

By attending YALI RLC EA, I was able to do more for my community like better engagement and servant leadership. I realized this is not just a job but also a calling. I do pass on the skills I got at the Center through trainings and I hope to help this village become better. There is a lot of potential in Dalota. It is a scenic place with a beautiful scenery, but the village needs the basic amenities to function effectively.

GOING AGAINST THE NORM

By Alexis Arakaza, Cohort 18, Burundi



The notion of sex is seen as a taboo in Burundian culture. It is frowned upon to openly talk about sex to your child especially when they are in adolescent stage. Ignorance of their body changes and its probable consequences leads youth to sex practices at an early age. The repercussions are dire leading to dropping out of school, pregnancies, drug abuse, mental health issues, sexually transmitted infections and poverty. I vowed not to watch this happen. I organized and implemented a talk on sexual and reproductive health to high school students from Vugizo Lycee, Bujumbura. This was my most impactful event where I influenced 1,070 young students. They were eager to learn and engage in life changing conversations. This is part of my calling in servant leadership.

I currently lead a local organization, World Merit based in Bujumbura, Burundi. We work to promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through creating awareness and implementation in responding to specific country challenges. In World Merit, we identify country issues, categorize them in the 17 SDGs and bring practical actions to handle those challenges where we involve the youth in coming up with the solutions and as key actors of change.

I attended YALI RLC EA in Civic leadership track as a leadership promoter and peace activist and I was impressed by the leadership program since it contributed to further understanding of non-violent communication course, which I facilitate. I have participated in various forums that foster for good governance and peace building.



I work with youth organizations in Burundi to make peace and stability. I have pioneered youth movements and workshops with the themes of peaceful co-existence and conflicts prevention in the rural areas since 2014 in collaboration with the East African Community Youth Ambassador platform.

Three months after YALI RLC EA, I was invited by Xaveri Catholic Movement, of which I am also a member, to present on non-violent communication and conflict prevention to all catholic movement members of Wisdom Spirit Parish, Bujumbura. I impacted around a hundred youth.

Through my organization, during World Environment Day 2019, I collaborated with other local associations working in environmental protection for the whole month of June. We had open debates, conferences, radio programs to teach more about environment conservation. We mobilized hundreds of youth to join our campaign, 'zero plastic' where we collected non-biodegradable plastics around the city.

I recently won a grant from the US Department of State through Innova group, in the project competition for YALI alumni engagement. The call for proposals targeted alumni of all the programs supported by the US Department of State in Burundi. After being selected, I used the grant to organize sensitization sessions in Universities where we teach about SDGs, 7 Habits for Highly Effective People, Entrepreneurship and Social Media for Social Change to over 1,000 university students. I have engaged YALI RLC EA alumni to facilitate on different topics.

In the coming days, the same events are going to be held in other universities under the same themes using the grant remaining funds. My objective is to have all university students know about SDGs by the end of this year and have the maximum of ground actions realized in response to different goals. We plan also to search for as many partners as possible to support our initiatives.

We also plan to impact high school students, teach them on transformational leadership, entrepreneurship in order to prepare future healthy and open minded generations. Impact is our currency in World Merit. We are the change makers.



EXPERIENCE AT YALI RLC EA AS SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICE PROVIDERS



“..YALI RLC EA is not just a program. It has the power to bring people together not just as a family but also as a community through the wonderful networks and partnerships created”.

“...With the knowledge and skills gained at YALI RLC EA, it has enabled us to carry out mentorship and advocacy for PWDs.

by Faith Oliech and Clinton Onaya

Disability is not inability is a testament true. We often interact with Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and they have a strength of character and determination to succeed. Many of them contribute significantly to community development. We joined YALI RLC EA in 2015 as special needs service providers. We were third year students of Bachelors in Education specializing in Special needs at Kenyatta University. We have a good foundation in special needs education and the wide knowledge that cuts across classroom behavior management, different categories of persons with disabilities, curriculum adaptation and modification without forgetting ethics and professionalism in handling PWDs.

We have covered 32 cohorts since we joined the Center as special needs support. This became the starting point of growth and paradigm shift in our lives. It has been a moment of learning new ideas and viewing things from a different perspective. It is an excellent opportunity to put everything learned in class to practice. Learning American Sign Language was an added advantage to us. It is a universal language for the deaf society in the World and enables us to interact easily with deaf participants from the fourteen countries of East and Central Africa.

Apart from offering our services to participants with disabilities, we gain equally in terms of transformational knowledge. YALI RLC EA has equipped us with effective communication and presentation skills. We learned to believe in ourselves and remain open minded. We are able to prioritize the important things, set mission statements in our lives and always yearn to bring change. YALI RLC EA is not just a program. It has the power to bring people together not just as a family but also as a community through the wonderful networks and partnerships created. We have learned how to accommodate different personalities of people and appreciate that disability is not the same rather focus on specific needs of an individual. We have also greatly benefitted from the curriculum by being present in all the classes for years.

On the other hand, we have encountered a few challenges in the provision of our services. Some participants are used to their country's sign language hence have no idea of American Sign Language. As service providers, we have to teach them the language to facilitate proper learning. Sometimes the class videos lack subtitles hence we have to interpret them and some of the content is too long.

With the knowledge and skills gained at YALI RLC EA, it has enabled us to carry out mentorship and advocacy for PWDs. Currently we run a Facebook page and YouTube channel to help society learn sign language for them to be in a position to interact with individuals with hearing impairment. We started a movement, A Voice for Deaf Students where we mentor deaf students to explore their talents and abilities in academics, offer sexual reproductive health education where we teach deaf girls on menstrual hygiene and issue them with free sanitary pads.

Thank you YALI RLC EA for believing in our services. Thank you for making a positive impact in our lives.



WHERE FEARS ARE CONQUERED AND BONDS CREATED

by Tom Mwiraria, Kenya, Cohort 34

There is incredible power when young leaders moved by empathy, propelled by passion, sent by their dreams and walking the talk, are united by hope for a better Africa. It is even better when the new breed of disparate young changer makers are bound together in synergy to accelerate the transformative agenda of Africa. This is Africa rising!

Three days after arriving at YALI Regional leadership Center East Africa, 99 of us from 14 African countries in East & Central Africa were taken for team bonding exercises at Brackenhurst in Limuru, famous for the cold weather. Brackenhurst is an eco-conference Centre tucked in an indigenous forest in Tigoni, 20 Kilometers northwest of Nairobi, Kenya. The nature is serene, humble brilliance boasting perfectly manicured grass, dreamer meadows with a splash of delicate petals at the peripherals.



We became a team, on the first day, our facilitators dissolved the civil leadership, public management and entrepreneurship categories that defined us and organized us into four random crews: Pineapple, Watermelon, Apple and K-fruit.

We engaged in a series of outdoor experiential team building activities that accelerate personal learning and team development. The activity series was fun filled and entailed amongst other things, circling around each other in dance like exercises. We 'mingle-mingled' and circled each other as we sung courage songs and thumped our feet.

The second circle entailed a two by two walk over clean green meadows. This we achieved an interpersonal bond.

The third circle entailed climbing high ropes. The high ropes was a series of outdoor, high energy and height factor fun. The aim is to accelerate performance on factors such as building trust, problem solving, communication, trust, accountability, support, commitment, and much more. Though many a feet were initially cold and hearts froze by heights, at the end we had gained rope climbing powers. Fears had melted away. YALI RLC EA has totally defined networking. The facilitators requested us to pin a two-column sheet: opportunities we can offer and our needs.



This was a starting point of collaborations, synergies and complement of each other's gaps. Through this exercise, I identified 30 potential collaborations.

We had a session on character as a foundation of leadership dubbed 'My Leadership Pathway' through a thoroughly engaging story-telling session. The session provoked us to think about our passion and the difference we aspire to make in Africa. The facilitators emphasized on the rectitude of personal character as a guide to Africa transformation, notably integrity as the bone and spine that gives firmness to the stature of character. Therefore, without firm character neither talent nor learning can make the human spirit a change maker.

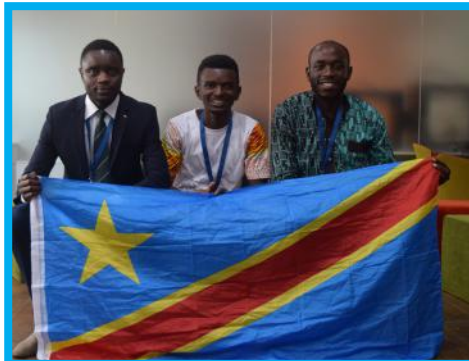
Worthy to be counted among virtues of change maker's character is courage. Courage is doing what is right even when heart gallops in the throat from fear, even when legs do a wobbly dance and lips tremble. The young leaders were prompted to identify what holds us back, and what bold step one needs to take to keep moving forward. We were challenged to identify challenges in our communities that provide opportunities for creative problem solving. So much that our minds like pendulums swung through inventions, innovations, initiatives, improvements, involvements, imaginations, information, interventions and inspirations.

We returned to the Center with a changed mindset, bonds forged, possessed by dreams, modelled for greatness. Africa is rising!



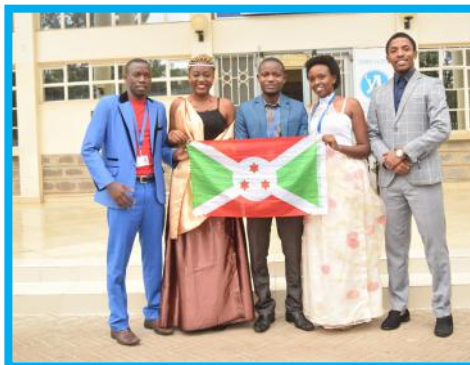
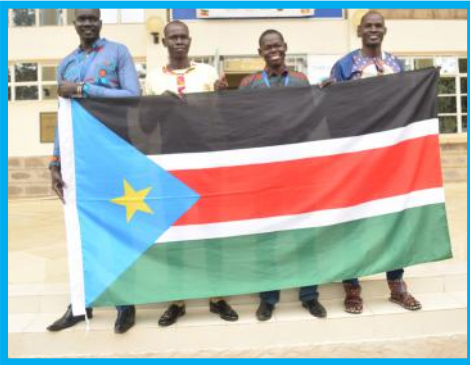


YALI RLC EA PHOTOGALLERY





YALI RLC EA PHOTOGALLERY



IMPACT THAT MATTERS

Media & Achievements



Beatrice Kariuki | YALI RLC EA Program Officer, Partnerships
Kevin Ismael | Kenya, Cohort 32

were live on air at Radio Citizen pushing for application call for cohorts 35, 36 and 37. The radio station has the biggest reach and the specific show, targets youth living in rural, ghetto and peri-urban areas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jk2G6WZsxo>

<https://twitter.com/RadioCitizenFM/status/1146704092359798784>

Eunice Chege | YALI RLC EA Communications Officer

wrote an article in the Business Daily, East African Wire and Mbarara News, Uganda as part of a campaign for International Youth Week. The article was about why we need more youth leadership organisations

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/analysis/letters/We-need-more-youth-leadership-organisations/4307714-5241536-19bbc/index.html>

<https://mbararanews.co.ug/opinionwe-need-more-youth-leadership-organisations/>
<https://eawire.com/letters-we-need-more-youth-leadership-organisations/>



Quinta Onditi | Kenya, Cohort 27

was interviewed by Sharon Mundia in Living with Ess, NTV Kenya regarding “Understanding the World of Technology”

https://youtu.be/XmZg_o3l6Rg

Shakiib Mustafe Ahmed | Somaliland, Cohort 29



participated in one of the largest book festivals in Africa called Hargeisa International Bookfair by sharing his experience about YALI RLC EA and explaining his new role as Deputy Director at African Youth Union Commission-Somaliland Chapter.

<https://www.facebook.com/XaruntaDhaqankaHargeysa/videos/859965644375594/>



Chrispin Bosire | Kenya, Cohort 28

His work was published in The Platform Journal for Law, Justice and Society, August 2019 Issue. Topic: Cooperative Governance and Intergovernmental Relations: Addressing Institutional Supremacy Contests in Kenya – Pages 50-53, 55.

<https://www.theplatform.co.ke/issue-46-august-2019/>

IMPACT THAT MATTERS

Media & Achievements



Boniphace Maduhu Daudi | Tanzania, Cohort 3 I

was interviewed by Jitambue Forum TV about his work as a Master of Ceremony, his community work, and about YALI RLC EA and the impact of it in our society. <https://youtu.be/ANjeXwpLwcs>

Timothy Mutugi Murithi | Kenya, Cohort I 4



was featured in Meru TV talking about sericulture production as a way of reviving the textile industry in Meru county as well as a way of fostering young Entrepreneurs in rural areas.

<https://youtu.be/mHGydMGM9sl>



Annet Birungi | Uganda, Cohort I 8

her organization, Safeplan Uganda, was featured in the following media links:

<https://vimeo.com/intermotion/review/350615877/faad3bfdd1> and

<https://medium.com/usaaid-2030/youth-in-uganda-find-a-sweet-solution-b6edd8292ee5>

Jean De Dieu Habakwizera | Rwanda, Cohort 25



featured in a local online media known as Muhabura. The article was about LEAD Rwanda to train university students on personal finances, accountability and entrepreneurship. He coordinated training as a trainer to the selected students from Christian University of Rwanda (CHUR)

In addition, the article was published in local language Kinyarwanda entitled.

<http://muhabura.rw/amakuru/ubukungu/article/lead-rwanda-yatangiye-2015-ni-umuryango-uteza>



Brian Gicheru Kinyua | Kenya, Cohort 24

wrote in the Business Daily highlighting part of a coffee revolution happening in his rural village in Nyeri called "Ndaroini Coffee Revolution" that has seen increased coffee prices for the premium coffee beans.

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/analysis/letters/How-split-led-to-better-coffee-prices-for-farmers/4307714-5180488-umlpptz/index.html>

Media & Achievements



Rebecca Mweru Kabejja | Uganda, Cohort 13

co-created a radio show called “A Good Day in Africa” that airs on Radio Zusa, a German radio station. The duo also produces and hosts a podcast titled “A Good Day in Africa.” Their work focuses on changing the negative African narrative.

<https://glimug.com/rebecca-mweru-change-negative-african-narrative-new-radio-show-germany/>

<https://www.hiretheyouth.org/unique-skill-sets/>

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2308882132553275&

William Agou Wuoi | South Sudan, Cohort 13



work was featured by African Development Bank talking about his technology firm that has developed an application to connect South Sudanese farmers with buyers, thereby creating markets for farm produce and helping to boost incomes. This was when he attended the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurs Forum 2019 as a Tony Elumelu Entrepreneur 2019.

<https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/african-development-bank-president-adesina-tells-african-business-community-put-capital-line-young-people-africa-27733>



Wevyn Muganda | Kenya, Cohort 26



made several appearances in different platforms talking about her work in youth, peace, inclusion and security.

highlighted my brief at the UN Security Council on Implementation of Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda; UNSCR 2250 and 2419. This was the first time the UN Security Council was being briefed on the implementation of YPS agenda. Other briefers were UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake and Sophia Ramyar from Afghanistan.

<https://news.un.org/sw/story/2019/07/1063291> - Featured in UN news. I talked about how I am using my blog, Beyond The Lines to increase awareness and understanding of SDG 16 -peaceful, just and inclusive societies

<https://news.un.org/sw/story/2019/07/1062431> - Featured in UN News highlighting the work HAKI Africa, the organisation I work for has done in empowering young people as peace champions.



Aline Berabose | Rwanda, Cohort 9

was featured in Inzozu Magazine, published by RwandAir. The article was about a weekly podcast, Breaking the Silences she co-hosts, discussing issues mainly related to Gender Equality. Read the article on pages 71-74 in the Journal at the following link:

https://issuu.com/inzozu/docs/inzozu_march___june-august_2019_v5___a91b09dbf59a6d/70?ff

Media & Achievements



Gerald Matolo | Kenya, Cohort 3 I

appeared on NTV Kenya during the Young Africa Works launch by the MasterCard Foundation as a youth panelist. The event was graced by President Uhuru Kenyatta and the Mastercard Foundation President Reetah Roy.

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2402843739995745&id=623565507658977

Joshua Eyaru | Uganda, Cohort 8



is an Atlas Corps Fellow at Creating IT Futures in Chicago. His article showcasing his work in tech with kids in rural Uganda was published on their blog

<https://www.creatingitfutures.org/resources/blog/creating-it-futures/2019/06/18/validating-coding-classes-with-young-digital-learners-in-rural-uganda>



Simon Odhiambo | Kenya, Cohort 23

was featured by Blue Lens Media with regards to the work he has done together with his team Mathare North Youth FC in visiting the inmates at Kamiti Maximum Prison for soccer friendly matches and mentorship in line with their initiative of “Badilisha Mtaa” (Transform the Community). https://www.facebook.com/bluelensmedia/videos/405824276806991/?q=blue%20lens%20media&epa=SEARCH_BOX

Mick Ndayishimiwe | Rwanda, Cohort 32



also called Doctor Poet. His poem on prevention of suicide was published at <https://talesfromtheotherland.wordpress.com/2019/07/30/what-the-future-holds/>



Margaret Osolo Odhiambo | Kenya, Cohort 18

was part of a panel on KBC talking about street families.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_MZ4oXRM6c&t=16s

Media & Achievements



Karangi Joel Karangi | Tanzania, Cohort 27

was interviewed by Capital TV about his 16 days journey to Cairo, Egypt to attend Nasser Leadership Fellowship as the delegate from Tanzania. He also shared about his YALI RLC EA experience as the window for getting world opportunities. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=hVqHUWs-SaE>

Chol Duang Chan | South Sudan, Cohort 30



was featured in various publications following his acceptance into Mandela Washington Fellowship leadership program

<https://www.bridgew.edu/news-events/news/triumph-home-fronthttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbFDq4QMh5Y>

<https://www.csmonitor.com/Daily/2019/20190723>

<https://cityscrollz.com/meet-one-of-mwf2019-chol-duang-ssbc-tv-reporter-assistant-editor-news-anchor/>



Nasri Ndune | Kenya, Cohort 20

was featured in Baraka FM, with his team Rabai Liberty Group CBO that champions for good governance at Kilifi County. We were urging the county government to ensure availability of fresh water, as there is a crisis leading to disease outbreak among other effects.

Yared Abera | Cohort 19, Ethiopia



was interviewed about Ethiopia's initiative planting 350M trees in 12 hours as a good move an example which should be replicated around the world. Ethiopia started and took the initiative by being a pioneer in planting #4billiontrees until the end of August to combat Climate Emergency <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wg8ViXWYuQI>



Maureen Muketha | Kenya, Cohort 3

wrote an article which was published in the Daily Nation newspaper during World's Breastfeeding Week. The article was a call to action for promotion of breastfeeding at the work place, which has numerous benefits for both the mother and child. <https://www.nation.co.ke/oped/opinion/Promote-breastfeeding-at-the-workplace/440808-5227202-2scg0gz/index.html>

Media & Achievements



Hanifa Salim Shaaban | Zanzibar, Cohort 26

was the guest speaker during the commemoration of International Youth Day, which took place at Equip hubs office in Zanzibar in collaboration with Pamoja Youth Initiative. She talked about the importance of volunteering in line with the theme, "Transforming Education" https://www.instagram.com/p/B02bNo8Bw_M/?igshid=j7vd8vu49cr6

Blandine Umuziranenge | Rwanda, Cohort 28



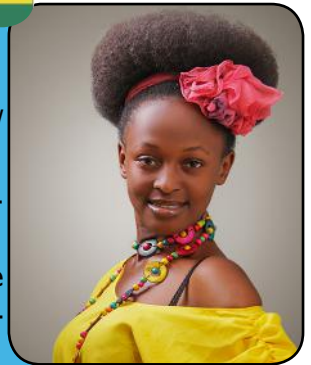
was featured in various media platforms:

Voice of America, sharing her experience from Mandela Washington Fellowship <https://www.facebook.com/RadiyoyacuVOA/videos/483893819068729/UzpfSTEwMDAwMDI5NzU1NTA3OToyNzg3NjE0NjgxMjU4NDIz/>
<https://taarifa.rw/2019/06/19/twelve-rwandans-off-to-usa-to-participate-in-yali-fellowship/>

Her story was featured in a blog from Nigeria during the Menstrual Hygiene Management Month of May <https://periodsandmore.com/our-periods-should-be-a-source-of-pride-and-power/>

She was selected to be part of 35 international fellows of the Global Program for Women's Leadership in New Delhi, India https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/E_brochure_ORF_conference_v02.pdf

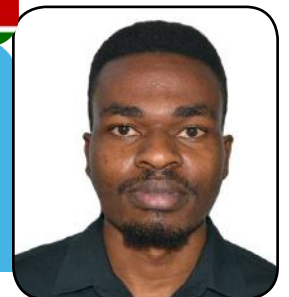
She also attended the Alibaba Netpreneur Program that empowered will a lot of knowledge and skills to do better business online as I wanted to start selling our products using eCommerce, and we were featured in our local newsletter <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/business/rwandan-entrepreneurs-benefit-alibaba-training-programme>



Paul Mutuku | Kenya, Cohort 34



was featured talking about impacts of climate change, deforestation and land degradation and the need for youth to be involved in coming up with solutions <https://www.theafricareport.com/16150/kenya-has-lost-nearly-half-its-forests-time-for-the-young-to-act/>



Dorothy Nabakooza | Uganda, Cohort 27



was selected as an International Youth Committee Ambassador Uganda by the IYC in New Delhi. Through her new social enterprise Hindura Recycling Initiative, she is aiming at mobilizing over 5,000 people to create climate change awareness. <https://www.facebook.com/1068711743186403/posts/2595705617153667/>

Media & Achievements



Josephine Adeti | Kenya, Cohort 27

was a finalist for the Governors Startup Challenge 2019, a program under Youth Empowerment Program Initiative (YEPI). She was selected because of her business, Awescribers where they do whiteboard animations for commercial adverts and for educational purposes <https://lifeinmombasa.com/the-2019-yepi-governors-startup-challenge-finalists/>

Carolyn Nandozi | Uganda, Cohort 11



initiated #TakeCare tech idea then put together a team to work on mental health and students wellbeing including work place employment wellbeing thus participating in a hackthon and she emerged the winner <https://edtechlaunchpad.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2019/06/13/197/>



Kenton Mutethia Muthaura | Kenya, Cohort 32

was featured in Taifa Leo newspaper and Meru FM talking about sports empowerment and how it can transform our youth. He also shared about his organization, Youths for the Boy Child Organization and its role in empowering and solving the plight of the boy child in Kenya <http://kenya-news-alerts.com/avalia-njuga-boy-child-taifa-leo/> https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=949923848694494&id=100010306628646

Marie Ange Raissa Uwamungu | Rwanda, Cohort 12



was interviewed about Ethiopia's initiative planting 350M trees in 12 hours as a good move an example which should be replicated around the world. Ethiopia started and took the initiative by being a pioneer in planting #4billiontrees until the end of August to combat Climate Emergency <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wg8ViXWYuQI>



Fredrick Omondi Oduor | Kenya, Cohort 25

is an Assistant County Commissioner and he appeared in various media houses covering various topics such as issues of child defilement, debate on the reduction of consensual age for sex and acceptance of new currency by residents of Baringo County. <https://youtu.be/d8od1qHAUig>, <https://youtu.be/uPN8iWG0GjA>, <https://youtu.be/A5-8dnUG1UA>

Media & Achievements



Gloria Albert Pitya | South Sudan, Cohort 30

was interviewed by Voice of America (VOA) to talk about menstrual hygiene day
<https://www.voanews.com/episode/south-sudan-focus-3846811>

Brian Malika | Kenya, Cohort 13



made numerous media appearances as below:

Project Syndicate which is a Europe based international Think Tank featured his commentary on disability employment <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/improving-disabled-workers-employment-education-prospects-by-brian-malika-2019-08>

Jordan's leading English newspaper featured his article on disability employment this month of August. <http://jordantimes.com/opinion/brian-malika/good-jobs-disabled-workers>

Argentina's national daily featured his article about disability employment <https://www.nacion.com/opinion/columnistas/pagina-quince-buenos-empleos-para-trabajadores/TFB7DPZ2NBFTTICNYACNVJS27I/story/>

He also contributed insights on how volunteering contributes to enabling youth to identify their passion on the official website of iVolunteer <https://www.ivint.org/volunteering-enables-youth-discover-their-passions/>

He wrote an article on menstrual health in Kenya with a U.K Based online magazine called Wellbeing For Women Africa <https://www.wellbeingwomen.org/menstrual-health-in-kenya-and-what-the-world-and-learn-from-it>



Maryanne Muriuki | Kenya, Cohort 12

was featured in various platforms on her opinion about the formation of the Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction (AYAB-DRR) by the African Union Commission, and she is a board member.

Space in Africa-a youth led venture featuring news about space science and technology in Africa <https://africanews.space/meet-the-15-selected-members-of-the-newly-formed-africa-youth-advisory-board-on-disaster-risk-reduction/>

Era Environment-an environment media platform based in the Comoros.

<https://www.eraenvironnement.com/young-african-scientists-are-engaging-to-make-africa-disaster-resilient-9012-ready-maryanne-muriuki/>

Aniella Niyondiko | Burundi, Cohort 5



Her project was selected to be part of the 54 women entrepreneurs out of 2,000 applications by The Women In Africa Initiative in the WIA 54 PROJECT 2019. https://wia-initiative.com/promotion2019/?fbclid=IwAR0Ifnc6ZXDU6JcW4UvqYI-GKE8SCd6ZsaNxP25r_pf2qPIwMDDHnwlDXuw



Media & Achievements



Desmond Ogubi | Kenya, Cohort 29

his Anika initiative was featured in the NewTimes Rwanda Magazine alongside Robbin Omeka Nyakundi, Kenya, Cohort 16 as they were doing the East Africa Artists Tour with the main aim of leveraging on the power of art as a tool to champion social change. <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/entertainment/kenyan-artistes-rwanda-tour>

Maurice Ouko | Kenya, Cohort 22



was interviewed on the work of Young Women Campaign Against AIDS programmes in impacting lives of vulnerable women and children affected by HIV, GBV, Drug and Substance Abuse among others, in the urban and rural poor areas in Kenya. He appeared on the Star NewsPaper, KBC and Capital FM

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/nairobi/2019-06-14-bribery-fear-shame-blamed-for-slow-progress-on-gender-violence-war/>

<https://www.kbc.co.ke/kenyans-join-world-to-celebrates-world-day-against-child-labour/>

<https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2019/06/campaigners-call-for-firm-action-against-children-rights-offenders/>

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/big-read/2019-08-27-triumphs-and-tragedies-of-women-in-kibagare-slum/>



Douglas Serwada | Uganda, Cohort 12



published an article in Medium website, "Is Tech the Solution to Health Worker Recruitment Challenges in Uganda"

<https://medium.com/amplify/is-tech-the-solution-to-health-worker-recruitment-challenges-in-uganda-95b8198f5e2a>



Junior Kiluba | DRC, Cohort 22

been awarded as a DRC entrepreneur from the Tony Elumelu Foundation. He was awarded due to his social mobile platform called viI dealer, a free mobile application on both Android and iPhone (come and deal, or "vient dealer" in french). The app allows local people to sell, buy, donate or exchange used or new stuff online locally for free using their mobile phones and internet.

Website: www.viIdealer.com

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.viIdealer.app>

iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/viIdealer/id1255062202?ls=1&mt=8>

Media & Achievements



Purity Jebor Ainea | Kenya, Cohort 13

a social worker, was featured by Gikuyu TV talking about importance of public participation in Public Expenditure Management (PEM) cycle more specifically on the coming Annual Development Plan (ADP) for FY 2020/2021. <https://youtu.be/VACsKUWKOD8>

Nelson Villema | Tanzania, Cohort 33

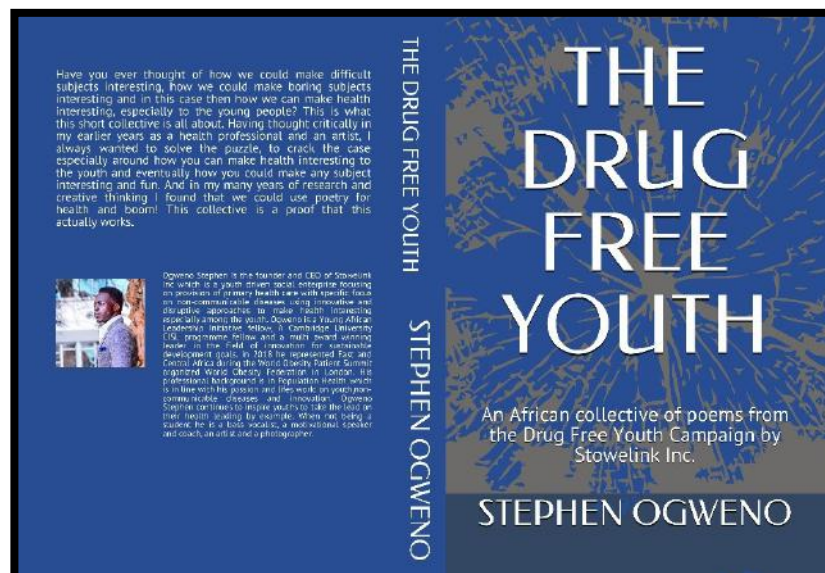


was interviewed via call by "The Sandton Express Morning Show". The interview was about "The future I want" and seeks to accelerate the building of communities that are inclusive, progressive and prosperous. <https://www.facebook.com/the1873fm/videos/751846381884456/>



Ogweno Stephen | Kenya, Cohort 25

published his first book, "The Drug Free Youth" he designed a way to make health interesting especially among the youth, and this was using Art 4 Health. The Drug Free Youth Poetry collection brings on board some of the most read poems composed by some of the most brilliant young people across the country. The poems come following a Stowelink project dubbed THE DRUG FREE YOUTH which was an awareness campaign which reached 230,000 youths with relevant messages on drug abuse and its effects to these youth's health and livelihoods. We were able to reach these young people through a poetry contest which attracted over 150,000 reads reaching out directly to over 90,000 young people.





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