

POWER TO YOU(TH)

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



photo by Noah Wekesa



**POWER
TO YOUTH**
CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU(TH)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 3

1. Context, Risks and Opportunities 4

2. PtY Implementation at Country Leve 6

3. Global and Regional Implementation 17

4. Results, Progress and Lessons Learnt 20

on cross-cutting themes

4.1 Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation 20

4.2 Gender Transformative Approaches 20

4.3 Climate Change 23

4.4 SEAH, Fraud and Corruption

4.5 Innovation and scale up

5. Reaching Scale: Learning, Research and Evidence

6. Partnerships and Synergy

7. Conclusion 32

Annex 1: Indicator overview 2025 & 2021-2025 33

Annex 2: overview per country - summary of the partnership and the main results per country 34

INDONESIA 35

GHANA 37

SENEGAL 39

ETHIOPIA 43

MALAWI 45

UGANDA 48

KENYA 51

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGYW:	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
AU:	African Union
CBO:	Community-based Organization
CM:	Child Marriage
CMT:	Country Management Team
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
EAC:	East African Community
ETE:	End Term Evaluation
FGM/C:	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GBV:	Gender-Based Violence
GMT:	Global Management Team
GSB:	Global Supervisory Board
GTA:	Gender Transformative Approach
GYG:	Global Youth Group
HP:	Harmful Practices
HTP:	Harmful Traditional Practices
HRC:	Human Rights Council
ICFP:	International Conference on Family Planning
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEU:	Men Engage Uganda
MIYP:	Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation
MOFA:	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoH:	Ministry of Health
MP:	Member of Parliament
MYE:	Meaningful Youth Engagement
PMEL:	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PMERL:	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning
PtY:	Power to You(th)
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goal
SCS:	Strengthening Civil Society
SEAH:	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment
SGBV:	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SOGIESC:	Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities, Gender Expressions and Sex Characteristics
SRH:	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR:	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STI:	Sexual Transmitted Infection
ToC:	Theory of Change
TWG:	Technical Working Group
UPR:	Universal Periodic Review
VAWG:	Violence Against Women and Girls
YLO:	Youth-led Organization

Executive Summary

Power to Youth (PtY) was a five-year, multi-country programme (2021–2025) supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented across seven countries in Africa and Southeast Asia. The programme strengthened the agency of adolescents and young people, particularly adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), to realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), challenge harmful practices, and participate meaningfully in civic and decision-making processes. In its final year, 2025, PtY focused on consolidating results and embedding successful approaches within civil society, community, and state systems amid increasingly complex political, economic, and climate-related pressures.

Across the four programme pathways, PtY achieved substantial and measurable results. By the end of 2025, 4,561 young people participated meaningfully in decision-making bodies, progressing from consultation to leadership, agenda-setting, and accountability roles. Youth advocates engaged authorities through social accountability tools, evidence generation, and structured dialogue, contributing to concrete outcomes such as prevention of child marriage, improved youth-friendly services, and strengthened protection mechanisms. In parallel, more than 600 civil society organisations (CSOs) were strengthened in advocacy, organisational development, Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP), and Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA). Many youth- and women-led organisations formalised their status, accessed new funding, and built durable coalitions, enabling them to collectively defend civic space and sustain youth-centred advocacy beyond programme funding.

At community level, sustained engagement with traditional, religious, and societal leaders contributed to gradual but tangible shifts in social norms related to child marriage, FGM, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and gender roles. Community-rooted dialogue, male engagement, media partnerships, and culturally grounded approaches helped translate changing attitudes into collective action, by-laws, and strengthened referral and protection systems. At institutional level, PtY partners contributed to the adoption and improvement of 77 laws and policies and implementation of 138 laws and policies between 2021 and 2025. In 2025, emphasis shifted to embedding these gains in budgets, coordination mechanisms, and public systems to ensure continuity beyond the programme lifecycle.

The End-Term Evaluation confirms that PtY met or exceeded five out of six core indicators, with nearly 80% of harvested outcomes rated as highly significant. Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation

in research, for example through the COR youth researchers network, strengthens both empowerment and evidence quality. Overall, Power to Youth shows that sustained, multi-year investment in youth leadership, civil society strengthening, and state engagement can generate impact that is both measurable and durable, even in fragile and politically sensitive contexts. The programme leaves behind empowered youth networks, more resilient civil society, and public institutions better equipped to advance SRHR, gender equality, and youth participation, providing a strong foundation for future Dutch support to youth-led, gender-transformative programming.



1. Context, Risks and Opportunities

The Power to Youth (PtY) programme operated in dynamic and often fragile environments across the seven implementing countries. While the period 2021–2024 was marked by post-COVID recovery, political transitions, and economic volatility, by 2025 the contextual landscape had evolved further. In 2025, PtY operated in a context characterised by heightened political sensitivity, economic strain, expanding but contested youth civic engagement, rapid digitalisation, and increasing climate-related pressures. These dynamics directly shaped adolescents’ realities and influenced programme strategies, risks, and opportunities for impact. At the same time, 2025 also reflected important progress. Youth leadership and civic awareness had strengthened, partnerships with local stakeholders had matured, and digital engagement created new avenues for advocacy and participation. These positive developments provided a stronger foundation for sustained progress on SRHR, gender equality, and meaningful youth participation.

Political Context By 2025, political environments across PtY countries remained fluid and, in several contexts, increasingly sensitive. The post-election transitions in countries such as Kenya and Indonesia reshaped governance priorities and required renewed engagement with newly appointed officials. In some contexts, civic space for SRHR advocacy remained constrained, particularly where discussions around Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and LGBTQ+ rights were politically contested. At the same time, 2025 reflected a notable rise in youth political consciousness. Youth-led civic mobilisation, particularly visible in Kenya in 2024–2025, signalled growing demand for accountability and inclusion in decision-making processes. However, this increased visibility also came with greater state scrutiny in some settings, requiring careful navigation by civil society actors. In Uganda, decentralisation reforms continued to provide structured entry points for engagement with district leadership and Parliament, allowing PtY partners to consolidate earlier gains and move further toward policy influence rather than

awareness-raising alone. In Senegal, earlier institutional openings translated into more structured youth participation mechanisms, while in Ghana and Malawi, policy reforms coexisted with implementation gaps and funding uncertainties. Across countries in 2025, leadership changes and shifting policy priorities required adaptive programming. PtY partners prioritised relationship-building with new officials, applied evidence-based and politically neutral advocacy approaches, and relied on community-level structures where national-level engagement proved sensitive. The consolidation of resilience-focused learning into practical tools supported partners in managing uncertainty while safeguarding programme continuity

Economic Context Economic pressures remained significant in 2025. Inflation, currency depreciation, and the lingering effects of global economic instability continued to affect household incomes and public sector budgets. Youth unemployment, particularly acute in Kenya and parts of Ghana, continued to shape adolescents’ vulnerability, contributing to harmful coping strategies such as early marriage and transactional relationships. In Malawi, the after-effects of donor funding withdrawals in the SRHR sector were still visible in 2025, with service delivery gaps and constrained government capacity. In Indonesia, budget rationalisation continued to affect coordination around gender equality and child protection mechanisms. Although PtY was not designed as an economic empowerment programme, economic fragility directly influenced SRHR outcomes and youth participation. In 2025, partners increasingly prioritised high-impact, low-cost interventions and strengthened coordination with local authorities to maintain service continuity. The persistence of economic drivers behind harmful practices highlighted the importance of linking SRHR programming with broader socio-economic resilience strategies in future interventions.

Social Context By 2025, social norms across PtY countries reflected both progress and continued resistance. Deeply embedded stigma around

adolescent sexuality, restrictive gender norms, and harmful practices such as child marriage and SGBV had not disappeared. However, compared to the programme’s early years, there were clearer signs of incremental normative shifts. Community dialogue platforms, intergenerational conversations, school-based sensitisation, and male engagement strategies contributed to increased openness among religious and traditional leaders in several contexts. Families demonstrated more equitable decision-making patterns, and youth were increasingly recognised as legitimate stakeholders in local development processes. Youth civic engagement expanded both offline and online. In 2025, more young people participated in decision-making forums, youth-led campaigns, and locally managed grant initiatives. Importantly, youth leadership was no longer limited to participation but increasingly extended to agenda-setting and accountability efforts.

Nevertheless, change remained uneven and context-specific. PtY learning by 2025 reinforced that sustainable normative transformation requires long-term engagement, trusted community intermediaries, positive masculinity approaches, and strong accountability mechanisms. Short-term interventions alone proved insufficient to shift entrenched beliefs. Continued investment in youth leadership and community-rooted strategies remained essential for lasting impact.

Technological Context By 2025, digital engagement had become an established component of youth activism and SRHR advocacy. Compared to the early years of the programme, connectivity and digital literacy had improved, and hybrid engagement models were widely used. Young people increasingly leveraged platforms such as TikTok, Telegram, Facebook, and community radio to disseminate SRHR information, mobilise peers, and challenge harmful norms. At the same time, digital risks became more visible and urgent. Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), including cyber-

bullying, online harassment, and image-based abuse, continued to disproportionately affect girls and marginalised youth. In some contexts, increased government monitoring of online spaces added another layer of complexity for digital activism. Research in Ghana under the Central Operational Research Trajectory highlighted ongoing policy and enforcement gaps related to online protection, underscoring the need for multisectoral prevention and survivor support mechanisms. In response, PTY further integrated digital literacy, online safety models into its 2025 programming, aiming to ensure that technology functioned as a tool for inclusion rather than exclusion.

Climate and environmental shocks Climate-related shocks remained a structural reality in 2025. Recurrent droughts, floods, and extreme weather events continued to disrupt livelihoods, education access, and mobility, particularly in rural areas of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Malawi. These shocks compounded economic vulnerability and heightened risks for adolescents, especially girls. Environmental pressures influenced participation patterns and required flexible scheduling, relocation of activities, and closer coordination with community structures. As climate impacts became more frequent, the intersection between environmental stress and SRHR vulnerabilities became increasingly evident. A more detailed analysis of climate-related impacts and programme adaptations is presented in the dedicated climate change chapter of this report.



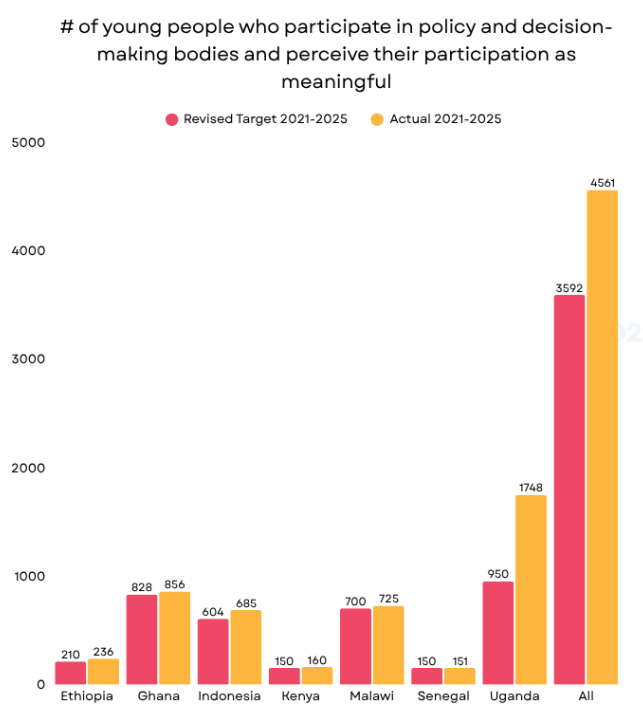
2. PtY Implementation at Country Level

In 2025, the PtY programme reached an important milestone with the completion of its End Term Evaluation (ETE). The evaluation found that the programme achieved many of its intended outcomes across the four pathways, while also generating several unintended results that offered valuable lessons. This chapter outlines the 2025 implementation experience alongside the ETE findings for each pathway. A full overview of the quantitative results linked to MoFA's Strengthening Civil Society basket indicators, presented both in aggregate and by country can be found in Annex 1.

PATHWAY 1: YOUNG PEOPLE DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS ON HARMFUL PRACTICES, UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES AND SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Pathway 1 aimed to strengthen young people's ability to demand accountability and responsiveness on harmful practices, unintended pregnancies, and sexual and gender based violence by increasing meaningful participation in civic and decision-making spaces. The ETE confirmed that progress toward this objective was achieved through sustained investment in youth knowledge, leadership, and engagement with governance processes. By the end of 2025, 4561 young people have participated meaningfully in decision-making platforms through the programme. This section presents key results from 2025 and reflections from the ETE.

Strengthening knowledge and skills of young people on harmful practices, SGBV, and unintended pregnancies A central focus of Pathway 1 has been equipping young people with the knowledge, confidence, and skills required to address harmful practices, SGBV, and unintended pregnancies. The ETE found that sustained investments in awareness raising, capacity strengthening, peer learning and service linkages contributed to meaningful youth participation. Young people not only gained knowledge, but also became advocates, trainers, and mentors in their communities being able to continue the transfer of skills to other youth within their organizations and communities in the future.



In Ghana community mobilisation teams, youth-led CSOs, and youth leaders became master trainers in GTA and Model Gendered Households, and they now independently facilitate dialogues, advocate for harmful practice prevention, and sustain youth-focused initiatives. In Malawi, where youth in youth-led organizations and clubs became trainers in 'Social Accountability Monitoring' (SAM), in 2025 they continued to institutionalize this practice in more schools and communities, and were invited by district government to continue trainings in schools in 2026.

The programme also strengthened structured knowledge delivery through education systems. In Ethiopia, for example, the programme has empowered more than 10,000 adolescent girls and boys (62% female) across over 40 primary and secondary schools through the 'Meharebe' SRH and life skills education curriculum. Research showed that the Meharebe curriculum served as an eye-opener for adolescents, encouraging open peer-to-peer and family discussions, improving communication skills, boosting confidence, and enhancing problem-solving abilities, especially in relation to young people's SRH challenges. In Indonesia SRHR education has

been scaled through strategic collaboration with local governments, who have integrated it in the general school curriculum of their districts for the coming years, reaching a total of 392 schools by 2025. These examples illustrate how embedding youth knowledge strengthening within institutional systems can extend impact beyond project timelines.

Young people engage with decision makers Beyond knowledge building Pathway 1 enabled young people to interact constructively with decision makers. Across countries, youth were supported to generate evidence, participate in consultations, and advocate for commitments on SRHR, harmful practices and service accessibility. In Senegal, youth platforms actively monitored municipal commitments related to SRHR, using citizen consultations and public hearings to hold mayors accountable for integrating youth priorities into local budgets. This resulted in concrete outcomes such as the Mayor of Fatick signing an agreement to increase CSO budget allocations and several municipalities committing to include an SRHR budget line in their development

plans, following sustained youth-led social accountability. In Uganda, youth engaged district level structures including District Health Commissions, District Aids Commissions and District Technical Working Groups, presenting evidence collected through social accountability monitoring. In Kalangala, for example, young people used a community scorecard to lobby for a youth-friendly space at the Health Center, which was approved and constructed in 2025.

Youth engagement also helped prevent harmful practices. In Ethiopia, Social Accountability Committees (SACs) and youth clubs monitored child marriage risks at community level, identified unreported cases, and coordinated with local authorities. In Central Lombok, Indonesia, young people from the Village Children's Forum (FAD) and PATBM collaborated to detect and annul six planned child marriages by documenting cases, convening duty bearers, and ensuring follow-up. These experiences show that when equipped with tools and data, young people's engagement shifts from symbolic to evidence-informed dialogue with authorities.

My name is Zahara Ahmed
"I reported the case of my friend Asiya Yahya, who was about to be forced into early marriage. At the time, stopping the marriage felt almost impossible, but I was able to find the right support with the help of Abdu Jemal who coordinates the Power to You(th) project intervention in Afar Ethiopia. He guided us on where to seek help, who to talk to, and how to take action. In the end, through collaboration, we successfully prevented the marriage. That experience was life-changing. It not only strengthened us but also opened the door to more training and knowledge on issues like early marriage, FGM, GBV, and teenage pregnancy. Now, we are equipped to educate our friends, families, and the community, working to eliminate these harmful practices from our society. We empower girls by teaching them what to do and how to report when they face such situations. This experience has taught me a valuable lesson and made me even more determined to keep fighting, supporting,

and protecting girls in every way possible. When I learned my best friend was to be married off, I acted. Thanks to the Power to You(th) sessions, I knew early marriage wasn't our fate. I reported it, and the intervention stopped the marriage. My friend will return to school next year. This project empowered us to protect each other."



Young people Participate in decision-making processes

Pathway 1 also aimed to institutionalize youth participation within governance structures. Over five years, youth representation increased across local and national bodies, and participation is now embedded within formal mechanisms likely to continue beyond programme support. In Ethiopia, youth secured representation on health centre governing boards, ensuring youth concerns are formally voiced. Some districts allocated budgets for youth club activities in subsequent years, demonstrating institutional recognition. In Senegal, 51 young people from the Cii Laa Bokk platform progressed into leadership positions in ministries and municipal councils, directly influencing policy processes. These developments reflect a shift from ad hoc consultation to structured inclusion, enhancing sustainability and ensuring youth perspectives are formally integrated into governance processes.

Lessons learned & recommendations for future programming

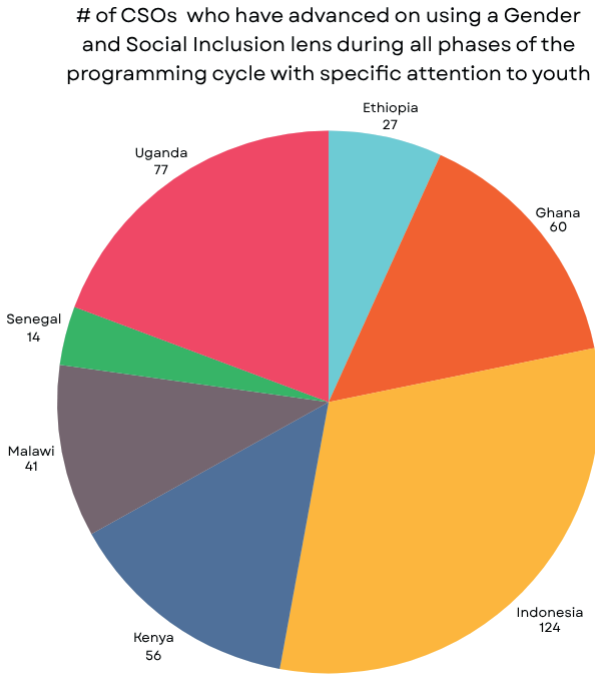
The following cross-cutting lessons emerged from the implementation and ETE:

- 1. Continuous capacity strengthening and mentorship strengthens impact:** one-off training interventions are insufficient. Across all seven countries, the ETE showed the effectiveness of long-term mentoring, coaching and refresher training to maintain confidence and advocacy skills.
- 2. Economic vulnerability affects participation:** Poverty, unemployment and climate-related shocks limit youth engagement. While some partners piloted small-scale livelihood initiatives, future programming would benefit from integrating economic empowerment components alongside SRHR and civic participation strategies.
- 3. Inclusion requires intentionality:** Although diverse youth were reached, intersectional barriers persisted for marginalized groups, including youth with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and LGBTQIA+ youth. Future programmes should partner with rights-holder-led organizations to co-design interventions that reflect lived experiences.

Education systems offer untapped potential: Integrating gender and SRHR content into formal and informal education platforms proved highly influential in shaping norms and advancing gender justice among adolescents and young people. Institutionalisation of curricula, as demonstrated in Indonesia, provides a promising model for sustainable norm change and programme scalability.

**PATHWAY 2:
CSOS AMPLIFY YOUNG PEOPLE’S VOICES TO CLAIM, PROTECT AND EXPAND CIVIC SPACE**

In 2025, CSOs across the seven PtY countries demonstrated significant progress in their ability to amplify young people’s voices, protect civic space, and strengthen gender-transformative and youth-led advocacy ecosystems. The programme’s long-term investment in capacity strengthening, coalition-building, and organisational development resulted in a more confident, coordinated, and influential civil society landscape. Across contexts, CSOs moved beyond project implementation roles and increasingly positioned themselves as strategic actors, shaping policy processes, resisting shrinking civic space, and building broad alliances around SRHR, harmful practices, GBV, and youth rights. In total for 2021-2025, the ETE shows that 646 civil society organizations are strengthened in advocacy, SRHR, and organisational management and 399 CSOs have advanced on using gender transformative approaches (GTA) and meaningful and inclusive youth participation (MIYP) .



Sustainability of CSOs

Throughout the Power to You(th) programme, there has been investments in capacity strengthening of Youth-led Organizations, Women-led Organizations and Community Based Organizations. It is great to see that by 2025, many of these groups and structures have formalized themselves and established linkages with available government, public and private funding sources. For example in Malawi, where two youth networks trained and mentored under PtY in 2025 successfully met the standards set by the National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM) and were formally registered as youth organizations. With legal status, these networks and organizations can now access funding, engage with government and development partners, and influence district-level coordination processes. In Kenya, platforms such as Husika Dada, youth parliaments, and Adolescent Girls and Young Women cycles have matured into autonomous entities, regularly convening discussions and advocacy meetings without direct programme funding. These platforms provide continuous spaces for youth voice and accountability within community and county processes.

Movement building and sustainability of networks for unified action

Another important strategy in the final year for CSOs and Youth-led Organizations was to build and extend networks, to ensure their continued operation after the ending of the programme. For example in Kenya, where PtY partnered with 248 CSOs. This resulted in improved coherence and collective voice of civil society, or, as a Kisumu county official stated *“Collaboration among youth-led and adult CSOs has improved; they now approach government as a bloc, which increases their influence.”* In Malawi, the Power to Youth (PtY) programme played a pivotal role in reconstituting the National Youth Technical Working Group (YTWG), which had been inactive in the last 5 years. Over the course of the PtY programme, sustained engagement with the Ministry of Youth, National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM), and other key stakeholders helped rebuild momentum for youth sector coordination, and in 2025 the National YTWG was started again and Youth Wave, a youth-led organization and PtY partner, has now been selected to co-chair the National YTWG alongside government representatives for the coming 4 years, and mandated to coordinate and mainstream youth development across all sectors, following the National Youth Policy, which was adopted in 2024 as a result of technical support and advocacy by (amongst other) PtY partners.

CSOs successfully protected and expanded civic space through strategic engagement

Despite tightening civic space in several countries, in 2025 CSOs played a critical role in safeguarding youth rights, defending SRHR agendas, and expanding participatory governance spaces. For example in Ghana, where the Power to You(th) organizations actively confronted the implications of the Family Values Bill by mobilising like-minded actors, strengthening public education, and engaging traditional councils, reducing fear and ensuring advocacy on SRHR continued safely. And in Uganda, where CSOs protected civic space by engaging district committees, security actors, and community leaders, ensuring safe environments for youth-led dialogues even in politically sensitive dis-

Overall, CSOs supported and trained by Power to You(th) invested in this final year in creating safe spaces for participation, securing dialogue opportunities with authorities, and reinforcing protections against backlash.

Networking, showcasing & learning events

For the final year, all PtY countries have organized in-country networking, showcasing & learning events where they highlighted the achievements and innovations from the program's implementation over the past 5 years. These events featured key accomplishments, positive impacts, increased visibility, and built networks for future collaboration and sustainability. In Senegal, the closing workshop brought together technical and financial partners, implementing CBOs and youth-led organizations, representatives of sectoral ministries (Education, Health, Youth, etc.), parliamentarians, media and local authorities, who expressed their desire to launch a second phase of the project in order to scale it up and integrate new themes such as menstrual hygiene management and entrepreneurship, and their dedication to jointly develop a fundraising strategy for this. In Uganda, the networking and learning events showcased how PtY strengthened CSO coordination and youth-responsive advocacy. District coalitions highlighted achievements such as SGBV referral pathways, youth inclusion in decision-making, and institutionalised safeguarding and GESI systems. CSOS also shared sustainability

gains through independent funding, strategic consortia, and mentoring support. National and regional advocacy outcomes, including progress on the EAC FGM Bill, illustrated how local coordination contributed to broader policy influence.

Lessons learned & recommendations for future programming

- 1. Funding youth- and women-led organizations long-term enhances effectiveness.** The ETE concludes that flexible and long-term (multi-year) funding for youth-led and women-led organizations was more effective than short-term project-specific funding, as it enhanced sustainability and agency.
- 2. Stronger CSO coordination and coalition-building amplified youth voices** and widened civic space. Where CSOs worked together, rather than individually, youth participation and influence expanded significantly. However, the ETE concludes that in these collaborations, it is important to invest not only in joint advocacy but also in joint knowledge management: systematically document and share lessons and tools to build a public repository for the wider sector.
- 3. CSOs were most effective when acting as intermediaries between youth and the state.** We learned that CSOs played a critical "translation" role, helping to frame youth priorities in ways that are accessible and actionable for authorities, and in this way, amplify the voices of young people.

Power of partnerships

"Through this programme, we have seen the power of partnerships. We have seen evidence-based solutions deliver impact. And most importantly, we have seen young people step up as leaders, researchers, and advocates, proving that their energy, creativity, and innovation are central to our nation's progress. This celebration aligns strongly with Uganda's broader vision of creating a safe, inclusive, and enabling environment for all." Hon Peace Regis Mutuuzo, The State Minister for Gender and Culture Uganda, during Ugandan learning & celebration festival



PATHWAY 3:

SOCIETAL ACTORS TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE YOUTH RIGHTS AND PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL NORMS

Transforming deeply ingrained social norms requires more than just policy reform; it necessitates a sustained shift in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors among the individuals and institutions that shape everyday community life. From 2021 to 2025, PtY facilitated this transformation through Pathway 3 by involving religious leaders, traditional authorities, male allies, parents, teachers, media figures, and youth themselves as champions of young people's rights and gender equality. The program recognized that enduring progress on issues like FGM, child marriage, sexual and SGBV, and unintended pregnancy hinges on influential community figures transitioning from passive observers or even gatekeepers to active advocates.

In seven countries, PtY employed sustained dialogue, intergenerational exchange, public commitments, grassroots mobilization, digital storytelling, and institutional engagement to create environments where young people especially AGYW are acknowledged as rights-holders. By the program's conclusion, Pathway 3 had evolved from a developing to a nearly sustaining level of maturity, illustrating that patient, culturally grounded, and strategically coordinated engagement can lead to transformative and lasting norm change.

Engagement with traditional and religious leaders emerged as one of the most effective strategies for advancing community-level norm change, as identified by the ETE. Where PtY prioritized long-term, trust-based relationships, leaders transitioned from awareness-raising participants to visible advocates. This shift was evident in public declarations against child marriage, endorsement and enforcement of community by-laws protecting girls' rights, and the modeling of more equitable gender roles within households and institutions.

Multi-faceted approaches combining dialogue, theological reflection, public commitments, and community mobilization proved particularly effective



Power to You(th) Senegal.

Photo by Amref Health Africa/Jacques Manga. Awa Diassy, the young one, in her early twenties, is peer educator and president of the anti-FGM youth parliament. Her Grandmother, Coumba Donna, is a respected elder and once a revered FGM-cutter in the community. Coumba Donna: "I practiced FGM/C for more than ten years. In the villages I visited, I excised up to ten girls. But I changed my perspective due to intergenerational conversations in our family and our community"

tive on sensitive SRHR issues. Cultural and religious authority was increasingly redirected to support youth protection and advocacy rather than hinder it. In Ghana, for instance, a chief in the Sirigu Traditional Area appointed a young woman as Queen Mother, symbolizing expanded leadership roles for women and girls. In Kenya, faith leaders established the Religious Leaders' Forum, embedding SRHR advocacy within religious structures and linking their efforts to county governance and budgeting processes to ensure continued influence beyond 2025. Elders and morans publicly denounced FGM and child marriage, promoting youth safety

and family well-being within religious teachings. In Uganda, cultural institutions like the Buganda Kingdom and the Bugisu Kingdom supported male engagement forums and ebyooto dialogues addressing teenage pregnancy and SGBV. In Malawi, traditional leaders in Dedza and Machinga districts developed joint action plans to tackle child marriage and GBV, strengthened enforcement of community by-laws, integrated SRHR messaging into sermons, and reformed initiation practices through the adoption of an age-appropriate curriculum developed under PtY. Chiefs' forums collaborated with schools and police to reinforce child protection mechanisms. These experiences demonstrate that sustained engagement with traditional and religious leaders can institutionalize positive norms. By embedding advocacy within cultural and faith structures, PtY bolstered the long-term sustainability of efforts to prevent child marriage, FGM, school dropout, and SGBV.

Transforming masculinities and mobilizing men as allies. In various countries, male champions, youth male groups, and men's forums have played a pivotal role in challenging patriarchal norms and reshaping power dynamics. In Uganda, Male Engagement Forums have evolved into community-led accountability platforms where men critically examine masculinity, address domestic violence, and promote shared household decision-making. Many groups have initiated savings and livelihood activities, reducing economic stressors that can contribute to SGBV.

In Malawi, MenEngage Community Networks have intervened in GBV cases, prevented child trafficking, and collaborated with traditional chiefs to enforce protective by-laws. Their formal registration as community-based organizations has enhanced their legitimacy and sustainability. In Kenya, morans and boda-boda leaders, once seen as resistant to change, have become vocal advocates against FGM and SGBV, using their social influence to discourage harmful practices.

The ETE also confirmed that positioning men as partners rather than adversaries has strengthened



Power to You(th) Kenya, Boda boda riders campaigning against SGBV

youth-led advocacy and reduced resistance to progressive initiatives such as comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly services. Over time, male engagement has shifted from participation in awareness sessions to sustained community leadership, contributing to intergenerational changes in attitudes and more equitable decision-making at family and community levels.

Creative and cultural expression has emerged as a powerful vehicle for advancing sensitive SRHR discussions. By grounding messages in local identity and tradition, PtY has made complex and often taboo topics more accessible and legitimate. For example in Indonesia, the poetic form Nadzam Al Injabia, a rhythmic poem written in Arabic Pegon script, has translated sexuality education content from the SETARA module into culturally resonant language. This innovation has enabled teachers, students, and community members to internalize key concepts within a familiar Islamic framework, reducing resistance and strengthening acceptance. Additionally, in Uganda, youth artist Joseph Yusuf Mukibi's song Kisoboka ("It's Possible") has transformed SRHR messages into musical storytelling, fostering reflection and dialogue among men and boys where formal messaging had previously generated discomfort. Across contexts, arts-based approaches have complemented dialogue and advocacy by opening new emotional and cultural entry points for norm change.

Media and digital platforms as accelerators.

The ETE confirms that media has functioned as an accelerant, amplifying local awareness into broader social mobilization. In Indonesia, journalists in East Lombok have produced in-depth reporting on child marriage, CSE implementation, local by-laws, and youth-led advocacy. Media coverage influenced village deliberations, with leaders referencing published stories in policy discussions. Youth activists have further leveraged TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts to normalize conversations on consent, menstruation, and protection mechanisms. Creative formats, including animated explainers, digital comics, and culturally rooted music, have reached millions of adolescents and helped reduce stigma around SRHR topics.

In Senegal, short Wolof- and Pulaar-language videos have debunked myths about contraception and school re-entry, while coordinated "media days" have brought journalists, imams, and youth together to produce joint radio programming on GBV and family planning, enhancing legitimacy through shared ownership. In Malawi, partnerships between CSOs, youth groups, and local radio stations have strengthened public accountability. Youth reporters and listening clubs have contributed to regular programming focused on SRHR and community dialogue, featuring traditional leaders, district officials, and young advocates.

From shifting attitudes to collective action

Under PtY, changes in norms led to concrete community actions. Youth groups increasingly collaborated with parents, leaders, and authorities to prevent harmful practices and influence local policy. In Ghana, members of Movements of Youth (MoY) became mentors and community advocates, influencing parental attitudes and contributing to strengthened by-laws. In the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District, the Assembly adopted a by-law prohibiting child marriage and school dropout due to pregnancy, including sanctions for offenders. In Uganda, Male Engagement Forums produced community champions who promoted peaceful conflict resolution and girls' rights. Several groups independently launched savings and agribusiness initiatives,

demonstrating a shift from program-supported dialogue to self-driven collective action. These examples illustrate that when youth and community actors work together, shifts in perception can evolve into institutional reform and protective action.

Strengthening community structures and systems

The ETE identifies two overarching achievements in strengthening community systems. First, PtY built resilient grassroots networks by empowering youth-led organizations and civil society actors to integrate gender-transformative and intersectional approaches into advocacy and service delivery. Second, by forging alliances with traditional and faith leaders, the program embedded youth advocacy within broader governance structures, reinforcing sustainability and accountability.

Significant progress was made in localizing responses to SGBV and harmful practices. In Kenya's Siaya County, coordination structures were decentralized to the ward level through the establishment of a steering committee in South East Alego Ward. This platform convenes government representatives, community health promoters, boda-boda leaders, religious and traditional authorities, teachers, and youth-led CSOs to coordinate referrals and monitor cases - strengthening responsiveness and community ownership. In Malawi, structured collaboration between community groups, traditional leaders, and police enabled the prevention of the trafficking of 22 children in 2025 who were being transported to Mozambique for labor and sexual exploitation. The children were safely returned and perpetrators arrested, underscoring the tangible impact of strengthened community state coordination.

Lessons learned and recommendations for future programming

- **Norm change is long-term and non-linear.** Sustainable shifts require repeated engagement, trust-building, and consistent youth–community dialogue. One-off activities are insufficient.
- **Co-create strategies with gatekeepers.** Early and meaningful involvement of traditional and religious leaders strengthens ownership and accelerates acceptance of sensitive SRHR issues.
- **Facilitate intergenerational dialogue carefully.** While powerful in building trust and legitimacy, such spaces require skilled facilitation to avoid reinforcing hierarchies.
- **Institutionalize male engagement.** To sustain gains, male allyship should be embedded within national SRHR strategies, district development plans, and education systems, supported by clear transition planning for CSOs and youth-led groups.
- **Invest in localized systems and coalitions.** Strengthening ward- and district-level coordination platforms enhances accountability, embeds norm change within governance structures, and ensures community-led protection mechanisms endure beyond program closure.

Overall, Pathway 3 demonstrates that transformative social norm change is achievable when youth leadership, cultural legitimacy, male allyship, and institutional reform are advanced together. By aligning community values with rights-based principles, PtY has contributed to more supportive, accountable, and equitable environments for young people, particularly AGYW to exercise their rights and shape their futures.

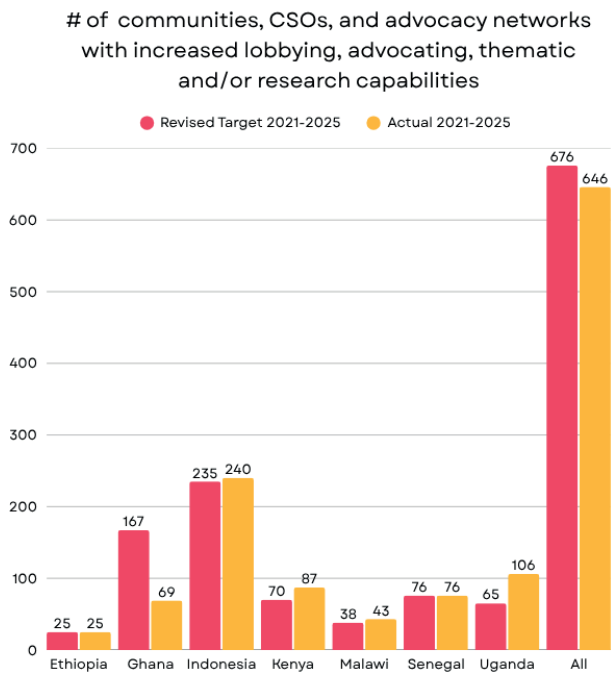


PATHWAY 4
STATE ACTORS IMPROVE POLICY MAKING, BUDGETING AND IMPLEMENTATION ON HARMFUL PRACTICES, SGBV AND UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES

In 2025, PtY partners converted years of youth- and evidence-driven advocacy into tangible state action. Across the portfolio, governments did not only adopt or refine laws and policies, many also budgeted for them and operationalised coordination, referral and monitoring mechanisms that make protection real in the places young people live. At the same time, achieving national-level policy change was also challenging, and sometimes remained constrained by political inertia. In total for the 2021-2025 period, 77 (inter)national law and policies have been blocked, adopted, maintained or improved and 138 (inter)national laws, policies, norms and practices have been implemented. This final year focused on consolidating reforms and making them stick: finishing policy processes started earlier, securing public finance, anchoring delivery in local systems, and sustaining the multi-actor coalitions that hold duty bearers to account.

State actors recognize the rights of young people and the importance of eradicating harmful practices, SGBV, and unintended pregnancies

2025, as the final year of the PtY programme, marked the completion of advocacy processes initiated in earlier years. In Malawi, the government launched the revised National Gender Policy (2025–2030), with PtY providing technical and financial support throughout stakeholder consultations, policy revisions, and the national launch. The policy reflects diverse voices, including youth and grassroots women, and establishes a stronger, inclusive framework for mainstreaming gender equality across planning, implementation, and accountability systems. In Kenya, Siaya County launched both the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Act and the Siaya County Adolescent and Youth Programme (2025–2028), providing legal and budgetary frameworks for adolescent health and empowerment. In Ethiopia, the Ministry of Health endorsed a national Meaningful Youth Engagement guideline incorporating the PtY



MYE scorecard, institutionalizing youth participation standards in the health sector, while Afar’s regional authority approved the ‘Afar Family Law’ clarifying rights around marriage, divorce, inheritance, and countering forced marriage and FGM.

State actors engage with youth representatives and express commitment through policy and budgets

Across countries, governments demonstrated growing political will to institutionalize youth participation. In Ghana, district authorities integrated the Model Gender Household approach into Medium-Term Development Plans (2026–2029). In Senegal, municipal development plans in Mbour and other regions reflected youth-driven SRHR priorities, ensuring financial allocations and sectoral activities continued despite political transitions. State actors also strengthened formal mechanisms, such as Social Accountability Committees in Ethiopia, which coordinate with police and health facilities to enforce bylaws and follow up on harmful practice cases. These examples show that youth advocacy is most effective when linked to institutional mechanisms that anchor commitments in official structures.

State actors improve policy-making and implementation on key issues A major focus in 2025 was translating policy wins from previous years into measurable, budgeted, and durable outcomes.

Sub-national systems were strengthened, frontline coordination reinforced, and financial commitments embedded in local plans. In Uganda, district officials in Busia, Mbale, and Isingiro participated in capacity-building trajectories covering bylaw development, SRHR gaps, and political-administrative processes, ensuring continuity of progressive legislation beyond PtY funding. In Ghana, ministries and districts operationalized the Affirmative Action Act through steering committees and advisory boards, embedding gender-transformative principles within routine governance. Implementation in Ethiopia relied on formal and traditional institutions to sustain service delivery and prevent harmful practices, while in Senegal, monitoring platforms ensured youth representation commitments translated into actual appointments and resourcing.

Equipping state actors to sustain progress.

A key ambition in 2025 has been to ensure that state actors remain capable, confident and committed to advancing SRHR, preventing harmful practices, and responding effectively to SGBV long after PtY funding ends. Strengthening state capacity is not only about delivering trainings, it is about embedding competencies, tools, incentives and systems within government structures so that progressive action continues as part of routine governance. In Uganda, this long-term anchoring took shape through an intensive capacity-strengthening trajectory for district officials in Busia, Mbale and Isingiro, focusing on the full cycle of by-law and ordinance development. Officials were supported to diagnose gaps in local protection frameworks, draft regulations that respond to emerging SRHR challenges, and navigate the political and administrative processes required for adoption. This approach aimed to ensure that, even after PtY withdraws, district authorities can continue to design and advance progressive legislation based on evidence from their communities. In Ghana, state capacity strengthening centred on policy leadership and governance. After the passage of the Affirmative Action Act, ministries and district authorities were supported to translate the law into operational structures, including steering committees, advisory boards and district review mechanisms. This

engagement helped civil servants internalise the gender-transformative principles of the Act and maintain momentum on implementation, even as political cycles shift. Overall, these investments ensured that skills, systems and leadership now sit firmly inside public institutions, increasing the likelihood that protective policies are enforced, budgets are maintained, and youth voices remain embedded in state processes - long after PtY concludes.

Future-proof advocacy ecosystems

A central element of sustainability in 2025 was the deliberate strengthening of advocacy ecosystems that can function independently of PtY, ensuring that SRHR, SGBV prevention and youth participation remain firmly on the public agenda after programme closure. Rather than relying on individual champions or project-based coalitions, PtY focused on building durable platforms, rotating leadership structures, and shared agendas that extend beyond the lifespan of any single organisation. This approach recognised that long-term policy change depends on networks capable of weathering political transitions, maintaining technical expertise, and mobilising collective influence across sectors. For example in Ghana, PtY leveraged its longstanding partnerships with national and regional coalitions, such as the Pan African Parliamentary Network, various SDG platforms, and the Ghana Civil Society Forum, to institutionalise youth and gender-transformative priorities within broader national dialogues. These platforms received targeted support to strengthen their internal governance, clarify member roles, and adopt rotating co-convenor arrangements, ensuring that leadership is distributed and not tied to PtY's presence. In Senegal, where advocacy landscapes are highly decentralised, PtY invested in enhancing the autonomy and strategic clarity of regional CSO platforms across 12 regions. Building on years of mobilisation around youth participation and SRHR, these platforms developed "beyond-2025 strategies" outlining their future advocacy priorities, coordination mechanisms, and inter-regional collaboration structures. In Indonesia, sustainability was reinforced by positioning village-level and district-level coordination bodies (such as FAD

(Village Children Forums), PATBM committees, and Education Department working groups) as the permanent custodians of SRHR implementation and prevention of harmful practices. Many of these bodies received formal budget allocations through village funds or district planning cycles, ensuring that their convening ability, case-referral functions, and youth engagement roles are financially viable post-2025.

Lessons learned and recommendations for future programming

The End-Term Evaluation (ETE) and reflections from the 2025 'Learning & Celebration Festival' highlight key lessons for sustaining youth-led advocacy and embedding institutional change beyond PtY.

- **Accountability scorecards and performance metrics** proved effective in strengthening transparency, responsiveness, and state engagement.
- **Strategic collaboration with high-level decision-makers through multi-stakeholder coalitions**, Technical Working Groups, and partnerships with local media and ministries was essential to accelerate law reform advocacy, maintain momentum, and achieve long-term policy impact.
- **Youth-led advocacy was more sustainable when linked to formal institutional mechanisms**, such as county fiscal planning sessions, legislative assemblies, and national coalitions, rather than relying solely on community-level dialogues.
- **Turnover of politicians and civil servants** disrupted continuity and slowed progress. Relationships had to be rebuilt and commitments sometimes renegotiated, requiring additional time and resources. Future programmes should focus on institutional engagement and strong documentation to maintain momentum despite personnel changes.
- **Policy implementation continues to face systemic barriers**, including limited budget allocations and gaps in political will. By consolidating multi-actor coalitions, formal accountability mechanisms, and evidence-based advocacy, governments should be held accountable to sustain SRHR, SGBV prevention, and youth participation well beyond the programme's closure.

3. Global and Regional Implementation

Global Advocacy In 2025, Power to You(th) advanced a coordinated global advocacy agenda, combining policy influence, movement building, and the amplification of youth voices across UN and continental platforms, despite shrinking civic space and political scrutiny. We leveraged major global moments, including CSW69, CPD58, the Human Rights Council, the High-Level Political Forum, UNGA 2025, and ICFP 2025, to elevate youth perspectives on SRHR, harmful practices, gender equality, mental health, and inclusive health systems. Across these spaces, youth were positioned not only as beneficiaries of policy but as essential contributors to global solutions.

PtY achieved significant global policy milestones. Youth leaders played visible roles in the Beijing+30 review processes, CSW69, and the HLPF, contributing to outcome documents such as the CSW69 Outcome Declaration, Ministerial Declaration, and CSW Revitalisation process. At CPD58, oral statements and advocacy efforts influenced youth-focused language in draft texts and positioned young advocates within the official programme, despite political obstruction blocking a final resolution. At the Human Rights Council, technical inputs shaped negotiations on violence against women and girls, education, elimination of FGM, civil society space, maternal mortality, and youth and human rights, securing historic references to SRHR and comprehensive sexuality education.

Beyond UN resolutions, global advocacy focused on positioning youth within health systems. At UNGA 2025, governments and partners highlighted the structural neglect of the 5–24 age group in primary health care - an issue consistently advanced by the alliance. The digitization of MIYP frameworks and Ethiopia's adoption of the MIYP scorecard illustrate how global youth accountability frameworks are being applied at the national level, demonstrating the impact of Power to You(th)'s global advocacy strategies rather than reflecting a regional legislative process. This marked important milestones in institutionalizing youth-centered accountability within national health systems.

Digital engagement remained a cornerstone of global advocacy. Platforms such as Mighty Networks enabled youth-led dialogues post-CSW69, creating inclusive spaces for reflection on the Beijing Platform for Action, national commitments, intersectional gender equality, accountability, male allyship, and resource pooling. These efforts strengthened intergenerational and cross-movement connections while complementing formal advocacy channels.

Regional Advocacy At the regional level, PtY achieved major breakthroughs in policy influence. PTY Uganda played a pivotal role in the introduction and gazettment of the EAC/EALA Elimination of FGM Bill in April 2025. Building on this momentum, the alliance strengthened regional advocacy through collaboration with the East African Legislative Assembly and partners on the Cross-Border Anti-FGM Bill, supported by evidence from a rapid scoping review on cross-border FGM. This work expanded discussions on harmonized enforcement mechanisms and regional accountability for ending harmful practices.

Youth voices were intentionally positioned as legitimate and influential actors in regional policy spaces. Intergenerational dialogues with governments and UN agencies, including panels co-organized with UNFPA and multiple Member States, enabled youth to engage as equal partners in shaping policy. Engagement at AHAIC 2025 and ICFP 2025 connected grassroots experiences to regional health and development agendas through panels, case studies, and research presentations.

Several regional advocacy efforts also generated unintended positive outcomes. Youth-led digital platforms, especially Mighty Networks dialogues, increased global visibility and sustained engagement beyond formal UN spaces. Evidence-based advocacy, including the cross-border FGM scoping review, widened discussions on coordinated enforcement and accountability. Hybrid advocacy strategies expanded PtYs reach to new audiences, partners, and policy actors, establishing the alliance

as a trusted actor in SRHR, gender equality, and harmful practices advocacy.

Despite these successes, regional advocacy faced challenges, including political obstruction, limited partner availability, high workloads, staffing transitions, delays in advocacy outputs, restricted remote access to UN processes, high travel costs, and digital security risks. These obstacles highlighted the importance of coalition-based advocacy, hybrid engagement models, and sustained investment in youth leadership. Strengthening resilience remained a priority, with resources such as Rutgers' updated Resilience in Action toolkit shared widely to support partners and reinforce protection for human-rights defenders, feminist organizations, and youth activists.

Strengthening resilience and solidarity remained a key priority for PTY in 2025, as anti-rights actors continued efforts to roll back progress on SRHR and target those advancing it. Building on four years of experience, Rutgers focused on consolidating and sharing learnings from the Community of Practice

(CoP) on Dealing with Opposition and the 2024 Collaborative Forums. These insights were brought together in the updated Resilience in Action toolkit, which offers practical approaches on crisis preparedness, coordinated messaging, rapid response mechanisms, and coalition-building. The toolkit was widely disseminated among partners across PTY, Generation Gender, RHRN2, as well as (I)NGOs, donors, and government stakeholders, and also informed a tailored version for Dutch NGOs.

In 2025, the CoP was formally closed, with a final session at the Learning Festival in Kenya. This provided space to reflect on key lessons, share experiences, and identify areas where continued investment is needed. Overall, these efforts contributed to stronger connections between partners and reinforced their capacity to respond to opposition in different contexts. Through strengthened resilience, solidarity, and collective approaches, partners are now better positioned to carry forward more sustainable advocacy efforts and continue advancing SRHR beyond the programme's lifecycle.

Visual notes from 'Dealing with Opposition' session during the Learning & Celebration Festival.



Global communications and campaigns In 2025, Power to You(th) focused its global communications on profiling its results, learnings and youth leadership externally, making them clearly visible and valuable to stakeholders, partners and possible post-2025 donors. This year there were 3 priorities: communicating clear, evidence-based impact stories; using digital platforms to deepen meaningful engagement; and improving knowledge exchange between country teams and global partners.

A central milestone was the launch of [SEMA: Amplifying Youth Voices for Global Change](#), a youth-led podcast (3 episodes) elevating young advocates' perspectives in global policy spaces. Introduced around the 30-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), SEMA created a platform for critical reflection on gender equality, shrinking civic space and Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation. A special joint episode with CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality connected youth advocates from Africa and Southeast Asia, modeling cross-regional solidarity.

Next to this, in 2025 we finalized the development of several communication products, based on the results of the End-Term Evaluation, being refined into practical resources for advocates, practitioners and fundraisers.

- [Power to You\(th\) Global result video](#)
- [Power to You\(th\) Magazine: Celebrating 5 years of Power to You\(th\)](#)
- Video's, case stories and policies briefs from Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal and Indonesia (assessible at www.powertoyouth.com - country chapters)
- [GTA Case Studies](#)
- [MIYP stories of change](#)

All resources are accessible at the Power to You(th) website, being the single, accessible home for the programme's evidence, tools and narratives. Throughout the year we have used them for profiling on our social media, for meetings and events where we have shared results and learnings

internally & externally at all levels (globally and in-country), for presentations with possible new (post 2025) donors/partners.

Further, Power to You(th) consolidated its role as a leading youth-driven voice in the SRHR ecosystem across three major spaces: AHAIC in Kigali, CSW69 in New York, and ICFP in Bogotá. At AHAIC 2025, PtY curated high-visibility moments such as the *Power of the People* session, an evening reception on "From Grassroots to Global Impact," and the Hear Us Out campaign, using panels, performance, and digital storytelling to spotlight how harmful norms, social determinants of health, and gender inequality shape SRHR outcomes for adolescent girls and young women. At CSW69, PtY strategically engaged in side events on Beijing +30, feminist movements, civic space, and survivor-centered storytelling on FGM/C, positioning itself as a bridge between grassroots realities and global gender policy discussions, while exploring new methodologies like storytelling to support survivors and catalyze norm change. At ICFP 2025, the PtY Coordination Lab and partners brought youth leadership to the fore through Youth Summit interventions on human-centred design for contraceptive access, powerful positions on bodily autonomy at the ICFP LIVE stage, and research poster sessions that opened doors to new collaborations.



4. Results, Progress and Lessons Learnt on cross-cutting themes

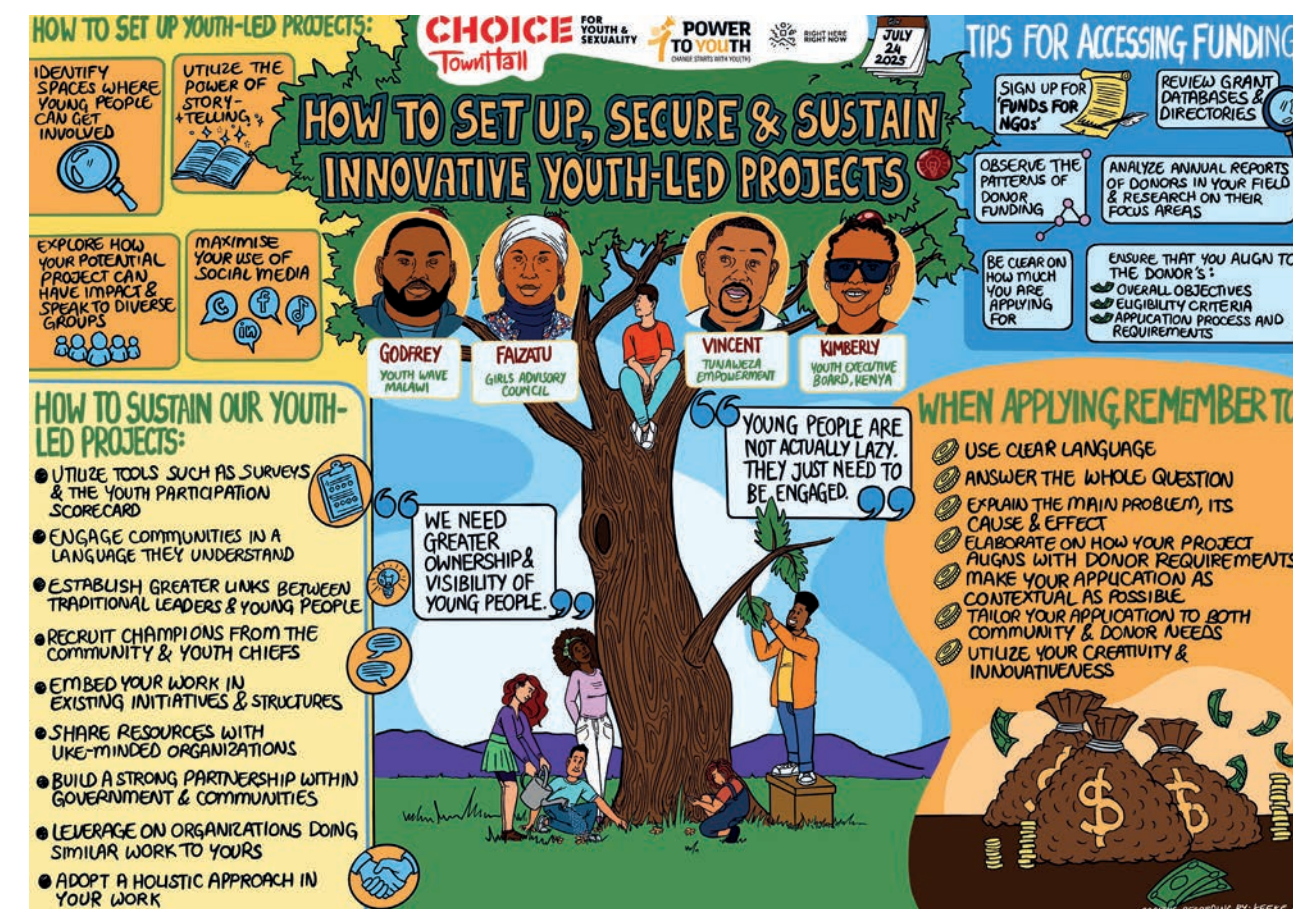
4.1 Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation

From the start in 2021 till the end in 2025, MIYP has been deeply rooted in the philosophy and operations of Power to You(th). This final year, we have focused on capturing and sharing successes and lessons learned on MIYP and building sustainable networks of youth activists and researchers.

Insights & lessons learned on MIYP from the ETE. From design to implementation, PtY prioritized the integration of youth-led organizations and your representatives in governance structures at all levels. As a result, the ETE concludes that “this institutionalization of MIYP created an enabling environment where youth could exercise decision-making power alongside traditional implementers, contributing to the programme’s legitimacy and impact”. This applies both to the in-country level, where the ETE states that “across all countries, these interventions show that MIYP

became embedded not just as participation, but as leadership and accountability, with youth shaping agendas, policies, and outcomes in ways that validate the PtY Theory of Change”, and also at the global governance level. A best practice mentioned was ‘peer mentorship of youth representatives at the global level’, which “addressed both capacity gaps and self-confidence barriers, enabling young actors to gradually take up meaningful roles in programme oversight”. There are also several lessons learned from the ETE, with regards to MIYP. At the start of the programme, MIYP was treated as a standalone concept, which made it difficult to track progress, and it took time before it was mainstreamed in all reporting systems. Next to this, we also learned that ‘youth representation’ needs to be resourced better, as some youth-led partners faced constraints due to limited financial and human resources. Also, effective models and strategies of MIYP need to be documented, to replicate to other programmes.

Connecting youth leaders and activists during Connector Week 2025



Documenting change stories and effective strategies. A key learning has been the importance of continuous documentation and evidence generation, to not only capture best practices and showcase the impact of MIYP in the programme, but also to support partners with future resource mobilisation efforts. To address this, the [MIYP Stories of Change](#) have been developed. The stories highlight meaningful participation and intergenerational collaboration has led to transformative change at the local, national, regional and global level, as well as personal, through skills strengthening, confidence building and communication. Next to this, a [knowledge piece](#) on MIYP capacity strengthening in Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal has been developed documenting effective strategies, why they work, and how they can be scaled or adapted across different contexts.

Connecting youth-led organizations for sustainability. In 2025, we focused on strengthening and safeguarding MIYP gains, platforms and connections made. One of the highlights has been

the third edition of [the CHOICE Connector Week](#) in Benin, with over 40 young activists from across Power to You(th) and RHRN2 coming together. For this edition, we had a strong focus on solidifying the connections we have built over the last 5 years, sustaining the knowledge and best practices harvested from the programme, and how to seek out and secure future funding opportunities for YLOs. Also, a youth researchers network, launched in late 2024, connected young researchers across all PtY countries to promote peer learning, professional development, and sustainability of youth-led research beyond the PtY programme lifecycle. Throughout 2025, the network convened monthly sessions focusing on research career development, conference participation, and engagement in webinars and podcasts. Members presented their work at events such as RHNK (June 2025) and participated in the PtY Learning Festival in August 2025, where findings were shared and peer exchange strengthened collaboration across countries.



Next to this, to support youth-led organisations with their resource mobilisation efforts, we hosted an online Townhall focusing on how to set up, secure and sustain youth-led projects. The 'Youth Engage Community of Practice' which was setup during the programme as a sharing platform between youth-led organizations, has changed its setup to being member-led, planning to continue after the programme ends.

4.2 Gender Transformative Approaches

Since the inception of the Power to Youth programme in 2021, Gender GTA have been increasingly integrated into youth empowerment, gender equality, and social inclusion initiatives across all partner countries. By 2025, the programme has achieved notable outcomes at individual, community, and institutional levels, demonstrating sustained efforts to challenge harmful gender norms and enhance youth agency.

In Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Uganda, Malawi, and Senegal, GTA interventions have bolstered the capacity of adolescent girls, young women, boys, and youth-led organizations to

engage actively in decision-making and advocacy. In Ghana, the creation of the Youth Queen Mother role and the implementation of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion policies within partner organizations have established structural opportunities for youth influence. In Kenya, multi-level interventions, including male engagement, community-led dialogues, and localized SGBV coordination, have reshaped cultural narratives and improved protection against harmful practices. Creative initiatives like the Silantoi Series have provided empowering alternatives to traditional rites of passage while preserving community pride.

In Ethiopia, despite political instability and socio-economic challenges, GTA has been successfully incorporated into school curricula and community accountability structures, preventing numerous child marriages and FGM cases and securing formal adoption of GTA frameworks by local government. Indonesia has witnessed progress in inclusive planning processes, with adolescent girls participating meaningfully in decision-making forums, while efforts in Senegal have led to a significant reduction in harmful practices, with the prevalence of FGM and early marriage in Matam decreasing from 65

percent in 2020 to 25 percent in 2024. Uganda and Malawi have strengthened community-led initiatives, male engagement forums, and institutional adoption of GTA policies, enhancing reporting, accountability, and opportunities for young women to assume leadership roles.

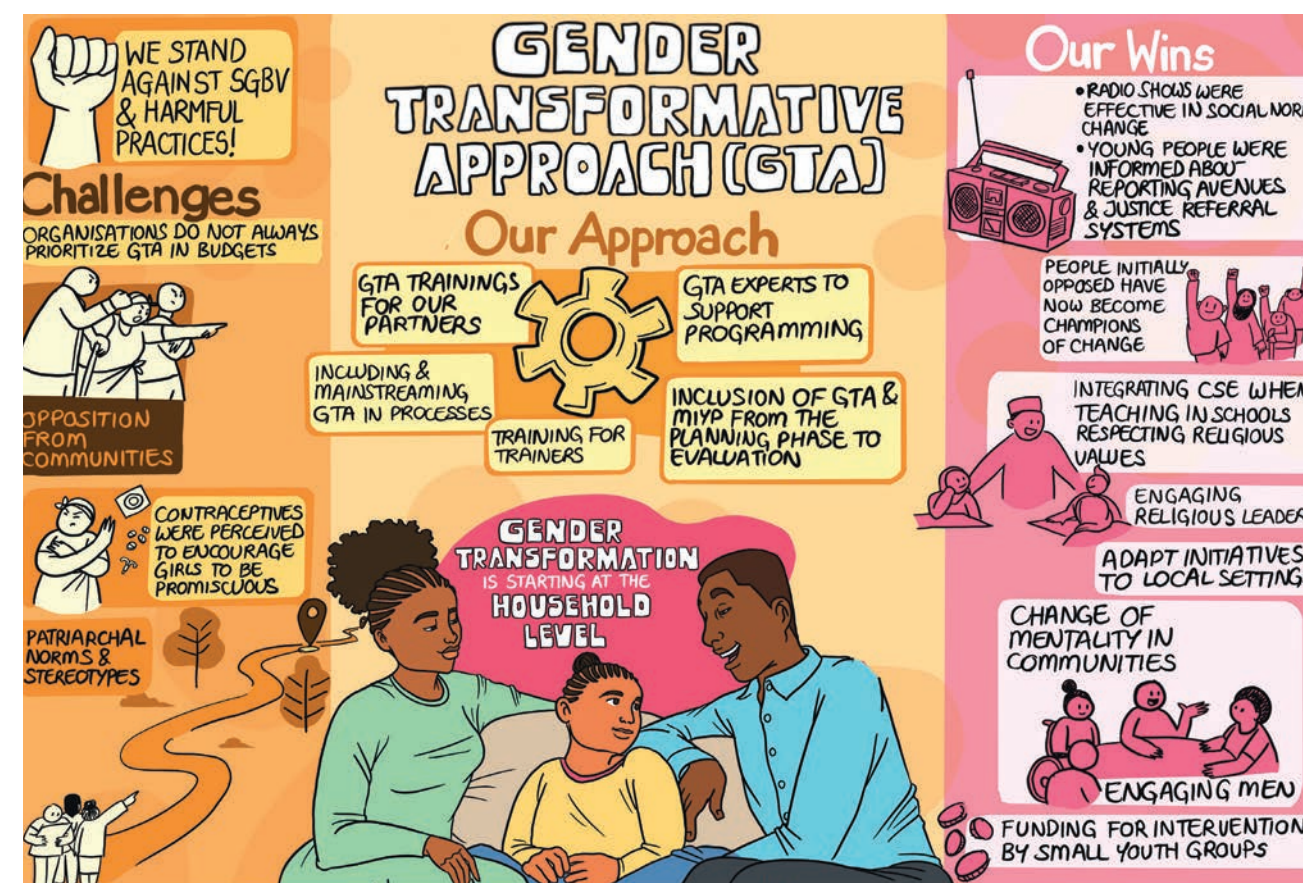
The consortium-level Technical Working Group has facilitated knowledge sharing through global webinars, side events at the PtY festival in Mombasa, and the documentation of best practices. These efforts have supported strategic learning, resource mobilization, and planning for the sustainability of GTA interventions beyond PtY.

Key lessons from 2025 underscore the importance of multi-level engagement, sustained male allyship, and context-sensitive approaches. Interventions that simultaneously target individual skills, family and community dynamics, and structural governance are most effective. Creative communication strategies, including media campaigns, art clubs, and digital platforms, have amplified youth voices and accelerated normative change. Embedding GTA in partner organizations and government systems

has been crucial to ensuring sustainability. Attention to intersectionality has strengthened equitable participation, ensuring the inclusion of marginalized groups.

Challenges persist, particularly in contexts with deeply entrenched social norms, resistance from conservative groups, and uneven access to digital tools. In fragile or conflict-affected areas, political and socio-economic instability can impede consistent implementation. Some unintended outcomes have also been observed. Greater visibility of youth in leadership occasionally exposed adolescents to social backlash or tension within communities. Increased reporting of SGBV revealed gaps in referral systems and protection mechanisms.

To sustain and expand the impact of GTA, it is recommended to continue enhancing the advanced capacities of staff and community actors, strengthen institutional pathways to integrate GTA into government and CSO systems, and maintain strong male and community allyship. Expanding the use of digital platforms can broaden youth



engagement, while monitoring mechanisms should be prepared for potential backlash. Additionally, leveraging local funding and government resources will be crucial for the long-term sustainability of GTA interventions.

In conclusion, the program has shown that sustained, context-sensitive gender transformative interventions, combined with institutionalization and multi-level partnerships, can lead to tangible reductions in harmful practices, enhance youth agency, and contribute to lasting shifts in social norms. The lessons learned provide a foundation for deepening impact and sustaining transformative change beyond the program's initial phase.

4.3 Climate Change

Environmental shocks and climate variability increasingly shaped the implementation environment of the Power to You(th) programme, influencing the wellbeing, safety, and opportunities of adolescents and young people across participating countries. Throughout the 5 years, communities have experienced rising temperatures, prolonged dry spells, erratic rainfall, and recurrent flooding—conditions that directly affected household livelihoods, mobility, and access to essential services. These disruptions had a disproportionate impact on adolescent girls and young women, who faced heightened risks of early marriage, transactional sex, school dropout, and reduced access to SRHR and GBV services as families struggled to cope with climate-related losses.

As weather patterns became more unpredictable, climate shocks repeatedly interfered with programme delivery and access to services. Floods, rising water levels, and damaged infrastructure limited mobility in areas such as Kalangala (Uganda), Sawla-Tuna-Kalba (Ghana), and parts of Senegal, leading to postponed or cancelled community dialogues, youth meetings, and outreach sessions. In drought-affected regions of Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi, failed harvests and livestock losses deepened food insecurity and economic hardship, pushing families toward harmful coping mechanisms and exposing adolescents—especially girls—to

exploitation, child labour, and harmful practices. Along the shores of Lake Chilwa in Malawi, climate-driven fluctuations intensified vulnerabilities for AGYW and increased risks of child labour among boys, prompting community-level protection responses.

Climate-related stressors also affected mental health, safety and protection systems. Young people in several contexts reported increased anxiety, uncertainty and reduced participation in empowerment activities due to displacement, livelihood losses, or family pressures. Extreme heat in parts of Indonesia and Ethiopia affected meeting schedules, school attendance, and adolescent health, while rising rates of domestic violence were reported during periods of economic and environmental instability.

Although climate change was not originally a core thematic focus of PTY, its effects became impossible to ignore. Across countries, partners adapted by aligning activities with seasonal patterns, expanding community-based outreach, integrating climate resilience and adaptation messages into youth dialogues and strengthening protection structures to safeguard AGYW during environmental shocks. These adaptations underscored the need for long-term strategies that recognise the intersection between climate vulnerability, gender inequality, and youth empowerment and highlighted the importance of embedding resilience-building within future SRHR and gender programmes.

4.4 SEAH, Fraud and Corruption

As 2025 marks the final year of the Power to You(th) programme, we reflect on five years of sustained investment in safeguarding and integrity systems across the partnership. From the onset, we prioritised the prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH), as well as fraud and corruption, as a non-negotiable foundation of responsible programming. Working closely with in-country partners, Amref, Sonke and Rutgers have, in the period 2021-2025 supported the development and adaptation of safeguarding and anti-fraud policies, strengthened codes of conduct,



doing training and check-ups and ensuring that clear, confidential reporting and response procedures were in place and understood at all levels. This has been an ongoing process, based on needs and gaps identified in-country. In 2025, after an incident, a safeguarding training and assessment took place with one of the partners in Malawi, which resulted in the appointment of a safeguarding focal point at Board level to oversee safeguarding and continuously stimulate internal critical reflection.

In 2025, two safeguarding cases were reported, investigations took place, and measures were taken. Key recommendations from one of these cases have resulted in a comprehensive review and adaptation of the Power to You(th) Safeguarding Policy, streamlining reporting pathways and strengthening the survivor-centred approaches and trauma-informed investigation processes. The cases were also reported to MoFA (one in July 2025, one in January 2026).

Key learnings During the Learning and Celebration Festival, the Global Supervisory Board came together and reflected on 5 years of implementation of the Safeguarding Policy. A key learning has been the importance of investing in trust-building to enhance openness between organizations on safeguarding cases and the way they are managed, because this is never easy and there is a lot to learn from each other. Another learning has been that working with youth-led organisations, many did

not have all SEAH & integrity policies & processes in place at the start of the programme, and we all invested extra time and efforts (and budget) in supporting them in the development. An unintended but positive outcome was the recognition that safeguarding cannot be a one-off activity; instead, it catalysed a broader organisational shift toward value-based conduct, more consistent leadership engagement, and improved cohesion among partners on standards for preventing SEAH, fraud, and corruption.

All insights and learnings from 5 years of implementing the Power to You(th) Safeguarding policy have informed the development of the Men Engage Africa SEAH Policy (by Sonke) and reinforced the importance of continuous capacity-strengthening, reflective practice, and modelling of ethical behaviours to sustain a safe, accountable working culture.

4.5 Innovation and scale up

Across all PtY countries, the programme piloted and refined a range of models and knowledge products designed to strengthen youth empowerment, accelerate norm change and deepen community accountability. Although innovations varied across contexts, they shared common features: strong youth leadership, cultural and religious anchoring and integration into existing community and government systems. Together, they demonstrate how adaptive design, localization and co-creation can generate scalable responses to complex SRHR and equality challenges.

Culturally grounded and community-anchored innovations

In Indonesia, PtY advanced culturally grounded approaches that embedded Reproductive Health and Sexuality Education (RHSE) within familiar religious and artistic practices. The Nadzom Al Injibia poetic script, Friday Sermon Book on Child Marriage and creative learning tools such as Wayang Botol and digital comics enabled communities, particularly pesantren, to engage with sensitive topics through trusted cultural narratives. These innovations strengthened social acceptance of RHSE and illustrated how contexts rooted in religious structures

can integrate SRHR more effectively when framed through local wisdom and faith-positive messaging.

In Senegal, PtY strengthened multi-stakeholder engagement through platforms such as Cii Laa Bokk, bringing together youth associations, parents, religious leaders and local authorities. Arts-based advocacy, including graffiti and slam poetry, helped break taboos and expand public discussion on SRHR and harmful practices, while the engagement of grandmother leaders demonstrated the influence of respected cultural actors in shifting social norms.

Youth leadership and advocacy models

In Malawi, youth-led advocacy emerged as a defining model. Through small grants, mentorship and targeted capacity strengthening, adolescent girls and young people led community dialogues, radio discussions and policy campaigns, including on abortion law reform and early marriage. Complementary knowledge products, such as fact sheets and youth photobooks, translated advocacy messages into accessible formats. This experience demonstrates that positioning youth as primary messengers, can significantly enhance community acceptance and sustainability.

In Kenya, PtY piloted Human-Centred Design (HCD) to engage men and boys in Migori on FGM and SGBV prevention, resulting in refined tools now positioned for scale. Youth-led safe spaces functioned as hubs where AGYW built agency, practiced leadership, and coordinated advocacy. Complementary innovations such as youth parliaments in Homa Bay and the Food Forest model in Siaya linked civic engagement, climate resilience and SRHR outcomes, showing how structured youth forums and participatory design processes can accelerate social norm change and institutionalise participation.

Design, tools, and adaptive programming innovations

In Ethiopia, the programme applied HCD to address school-related violence, resulting in the “Start the Conversation” gameboard piloted in Amhara. Recognising the impact of conflict on implementation, PtY also developed an adaptive programme

management guideline, an institutional innovation supporting continuity in fragile environments. These examples illustrate how co-creation and conflict-sensitive planning enable meaningful participation even under restrictive conditions.

In Uganda, PtY developed practical toolkits, including the GTA Toolkit and MIYP & Advocacy Toolkit, and piloted the HCD “Safe Haven” model to improve youth access to contraceptives. Knowledge platforms like the PtY Expedition Magazine supported cross-country learning and documentation, while coalition-building and CBO movement strengthening reinforced collective advocacy beyond project structures.

Cross programme learning and constraints

Across contexts, the innovation landscape demonstrates that the most effective models were locally grounded, youth-driven, culturally resonant and embedded within existing community or government systems. Piloting and scaling these models nevertheless faced challenges. Limited financial resources, digital inequities, staff turnover within government and partner organisations affected the pace of scale-up, while cultural resistance in some settings constrained uptake. In conflict-affected environments such as Ethiopia and remote districts in Uganda, maintaining continuity was particularly demanding.

These constraints reinforced the importance of adaptive programme management, long-term capacity strengthening and flexible program design. Despite these challenges, the innovations generated under PtY have produced clear pathways for replication and sustainability. They demonstrate that locally designed, youth-led solutions remain essential for driving gender-transformative change across diverse and evolving contexts.



5. Reaching Scale: Learning, Research and Evidence

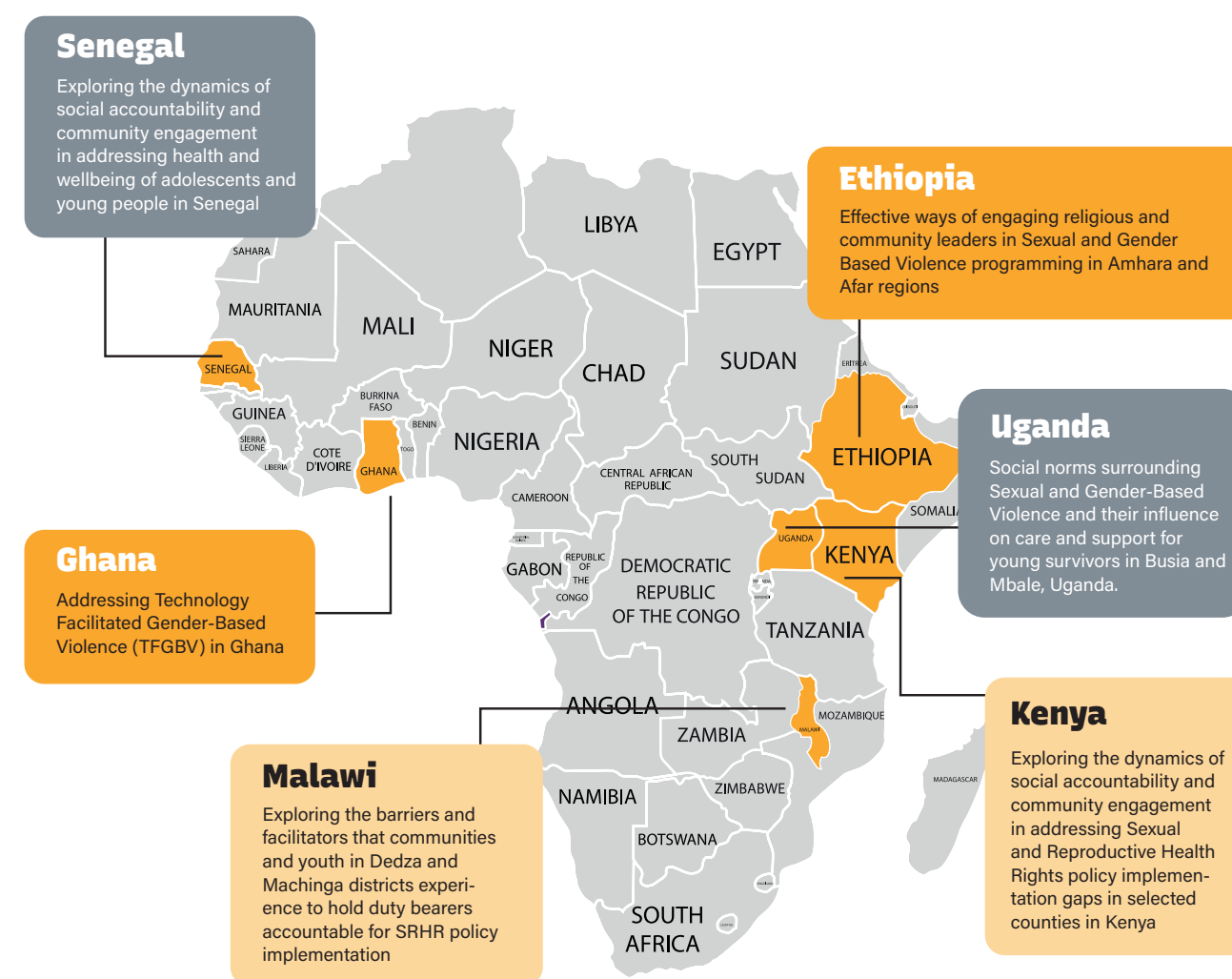
Central Operational Research

In 2025, the Central Operational Research (COR) trajectory focused on finalising the country studies, while strengthening MIYP in research processes. A youth researchers network was launched in late 2024, connecting young researchers across all PtY COR studies to promote peer learning, professional development, and sustainability of youth-led research beyond the PtY programme lifecycle.

Throughout 2025, the network convened monthly sessions focusing on research career development, conference participation (such as the Pan-African Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive

Health and Rights Scientific Conference, held in June 2025), and engagement in webinars and podcasts. Members presented their work at events and participated in the PtY Learning Festival in August 2025, where findings were shared and peer exchange strengthened collaboration across countries. Importantly the network also created a supportive space for youth navigating power dynamics within their respective research environments.

In parallel, an ‘[evaluation of MIYP in COR studies](#)’ was done to understand what enabled or hindered MIYP in research and to generate recommendations for future research and youth engagement strategies. Findings highlighted that training, mentorship,



Countries and titles of Central Operational Research studies

and teamwork are critical success factors. Youth-led coordination mechanisms helped mitigate power imbalances, and consultants familiar with MIYP principles enabled deeper engagement. However, challenges included limited involvement during early research stages, time and logistical constraints, and weak communication with consultants. Despite these barriers, youth researchers played a vital role in representing marginalized voices and influencing local advocacy and policy. Their participation fostered confidence, community recognition, and in some cases, policy change. The country CORs and MIYP in research evaluation can be accessed here: [Evidence and Learning - Power to You\(th\)](#)

End-Term Evaluation (ETE)

The Power to You(th) (PtY) End-Term Evaluation, conducted between January and November 2025 across seven implementing countries and at global level, marked a critical milestone in assessing the programme’s overall performance and outcomes over the 2021–2025 implementation period. The evaluation found substantial progress in advancing youth agency, gender equality, and policy reform related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

By 2025, five out of six core indicators were fully met or exceeded. This included increasing meaningful youth participation in decision-making spaces from zero at baseline to 4561 participants and strengthening 569 CSOs to effectively advocate for youth rights and gender-transformative policies. These achievements reflect steady progression since baseline and mid-term stages and confirm the programme’s continued relevance and alignment to the needs of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) navigating restrictive gender and social norms.

Beyond performance metrics, the evaluation highlighted the programme’s ability to translate advocacy and empowerment into measurable social and institutional change. By the end of the programme, 79.7% of all harvested outcomes were rated as highly significant, up from 70.4% at mid-term, underscoring improved programmatic focus

and alignment with youth priorities. The evaluation attributes this success to PtY’s integrated approach grounded in Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP), gender-transformative action, advocacy, and strong partnerships with civil society and state actors. These strategies not only enhanced youth voices but also institutionalized their participation within policy and governance spaces, enabling lasting impact beyond project cycles.

Key factors that contributed to this progression included robust planning, monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (PMERL) systems; adaptive programming in response to shifting civic and political environments; and the consortium’s commitment to southern leadership and localization. Over the course of 2021–2025, PtY evolved from strengthening youth and CSO capacity to catalyzing policy and normative change through collective advocacy, evidence generation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The evaluation affirmed that PtY’s investments in participatory learning, gender equity, and alliance strengthening were pivotal in shaping more inclusive and accountable systems, leaving behind empowered youth networks, resilient CSOs, and sustained momentum for gender and SRHR advocacy.

Together, these learning and research investments position the partnership to carry forward evidence-informed practice, sustained youth engagement, and adaptive programming beyond the current programme cycle.



6. Partnerships and Synergy

Internal Collaboration and Partnership Performance

In 2025 we closed the programme, and reflected on 5 years of collaboration at the global level (between Amref, Sonke, Rutgers, CHOICE and KIT) and in-country level (between the member organizations of the Country Management Teams and all CSOs and CBOs engaged in the programme). The End-Term Evaluation assessed this collaboration and the performance across five interrelated domains: strategy, connection and cooperation, steering structures, operational processes and learning. Overall performance was high, with an 84% score, which is an increase of 6% on the MTR.

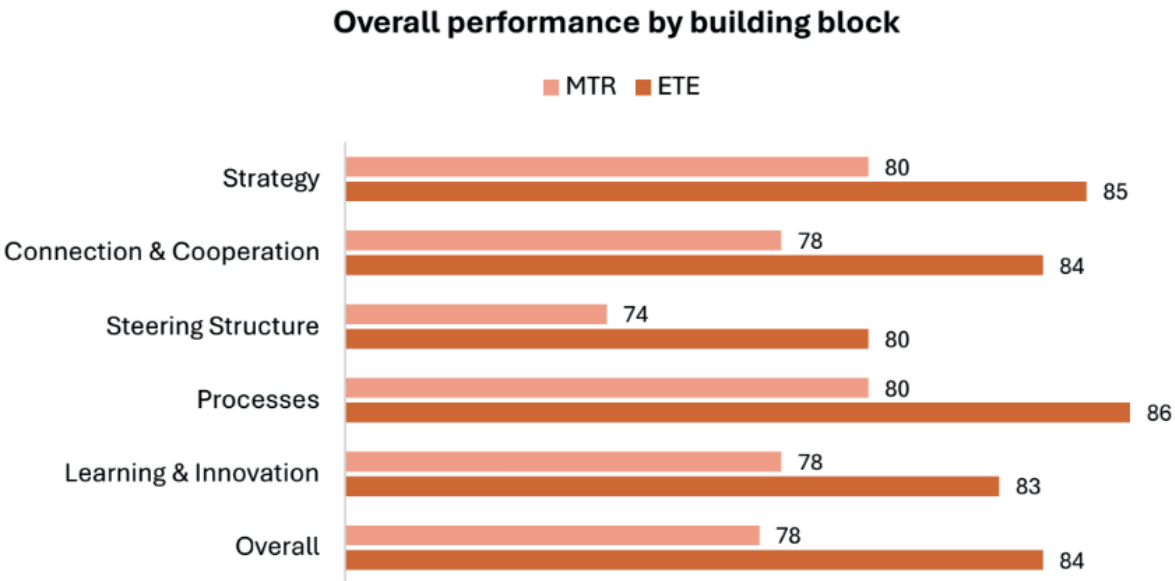
Overall, the ETE reflects on the 5-year journey of collaborating in the partnership. It states that “At baseline, cooperation was present but still marked by limited recognition of each partner’s comparative strengths. By the mid-term, partners increasingly valued collaborative work, although some highlighted the need for greater mutual recognition and balanced workload distribution. At the endline, connection & cooperation is perceived as a defining strength of the consortium, characterized by mutual respect, a strong sense of shared purpose, and a “family-like” culture of collaboration”. Best practices mentioned are joint planning, co-hosted events and harmonised reporting systems fostering trust

and shared ownership. The ETE also concludes that governance structures, including the Global Supervisory Board, Global Management Team and Country Management Teams, functioned with relative clarity of roles and responsibilities. Overall, the consortium demonstrated a high level of strategic clarity and adaptability.

However, there were also challenges. For example, certain communication gaps between global and country levels were identified. Also, technical Working Groups have been effective in creating strategic alignment and development of joint tools, but sometimes faced operational challenges, lack of leadership and struggled with participation. The partnership ETE provides important recommendations that we will take forward in future partnerships.

Southern Leadership One foundational principle of PtY has been ‘Southern Leadership,’ reflected in decentralised programme design and significant decision-making authority vested in Country Management Teams. The ETE states that:

- Southern leadership was intentionally built into the governance model. The programme design explicitly shifted ownership and decision-making towards the Global South, where Pan-African partners and country partners had a clear role in



decision making and the steering structure.

- All country partners played an active role in country programme management and decision-making. 94% of respondents confirmed that CMT partners were actively involved in managing country programmes. The evaluation concludes that this has increased ownership, contextual relevance and trust amongst partners.
- Southern leadership was rated stronger at country level than at global level. Although country representation was built in the global governance structure, (active) participation varied. This was partly due to operational challenges in some TWGs and to high workloads/competing priorities for country representatives.
- The Coordination Lab in Kenya played a crucial role in facilitating communication, organizing virtual and on-site events, and ensuring inclusion - such as attention to translation and interpretation needs in French and Bahasa. Partners appreciated that the Coordination Unit is based in Kenya, enabling smoother engagement, especially for African partners.

Learning and celebration festival

In October 2025, Power to You(th) organized the

‘Learning and Celebration Festival.’ Representatives from all seven PtY countries and from all the global partners participated, to learn, to reflect, to exchange, to discuss and to celebrate 5 years of PtY. We reflected on the results, on what worked and did not work, shared best practices and brainstormed on how we could take insights forward to new programmes and partnerships. During the Learning and Celebration festival, there was special attention for the results of the End Term Evaluation, the outcomes of the Human Centered Design innovation trajectory and the insights from the Central Operational Research. The Learning and celebration Festival was documented in [this magazine](#).

Local Ownership and Collaboration

In the 5 years of implementation, Power to Youth adopted a deliberate localisation strategy designed to strengthen community ownership and embed programme outcomes within existing social and institutional systems. Across Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda, the programme positioned youth, CBOs, cultural actors, grassroots networks and governmental actors as primary drivers of change rather than as beneficiaries of externally led interventions.

At the community level, PtY systematically worked through established governance and coordination platforms to avoid parallel systems and strengthen institutional continuity. Engagement with District Technical Working Groups in Uganda, Malawi and Kenya, village-level forums in Indonesia, youth parliaments in Kenya, and community associations and indigenous governance structures in Ethiopia ensured that interventions were embedded within recognised decision-making mechanisms.

The ETE concludes that in these 5 years, the programme made significant progress in promoting ownership among local communities, youth, and civil society organisations, particularly through participatory programme design and joint planning (like joint ToC discussions and participatory annual planning), strong involvement of youth and youth-led organisations at all levels, capacity strengthening of CBOs and local groups, community-based and participatory approaches (like Human Centered Design, co-creation and youth-led research) and small grants & budgets for CBOs and youth-led groups. The ETE also indicates challenges and lessons learned in relation to local ownership. Organisational capacity gaps among smaller CBOs, leadership turnover and competing livelihood demands limited sustained participation in some areas. Also, the programme was able to boost ownership for organised youth- and women’s groups, but that certain marginalized community members (like youth with disabilities) were less represented.

Being the final year, 2025 marked the **full transfer of ownership to local organizations and government systems**, embedding PtY approaches and strengthening continuity beyond the programme. Many youth-led, women-led and CBO groups formalized their roles and established links with public and private funding sources. For example in Malawi, two youth networks trained under PtY met government standards and were formally registered as youth organizations, enabling them to access funding. In Kenya, platforms such as Husika Dada, youth parliaments, and Adolescent Girls and Young Women cycles evolved into autonomous spaces

that continue to convene discussions and advocacy without programme funding.

Government institutions also adopted PtY tools and structures. Across countries, governments institutionalized PtY models (like Youth Advisory Groups, Community Scorecards, SGBV coordination mechanisms, Village Child Forums, and adolescent health committees) within existing governance processes. In Ethiopia, the Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) Scorecard was endorsed by the Ministry of Health and rolled out with adolescent and youth health councils in Afar and Amhara. In Ghana, district and municipal assemblies incorporated PtY models into their 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans. Toolkits on GTA, MIYP, and SMART advocacy were transferred to government departments, CBOs, youth networks, and schools, while digital innovations such as referral and accountability tools were integrated into institutional systems, enabling local actors to continue and expand PtY’s achievements beyond 2025.

External Partnerships and Strategic Coherence

In the final year, strategic coherence and collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands and other MoFa funded partnerships continued. Joint platforms with programmes such as She Leads, Generation G, Right Here Right Now II, Make Way, Break Free and Awesome enabled harmonisation of advocacy messaging and collaborative campaigns, including International Women’s Day, Menstrual Hygiene Day, International Youth Day and the 16 Days of Activism.

The Netherlands Embassies in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Senegal played a convening role by hosting learning sessions, policy dialogues and coordination meetings. These forums facilitated joint learning and reflection, and alignment on strategic processes such as the East African Community FGM Bill and revisions to the Sexual Offences legislation in Uganda. Embassy engagement in national learning events and programme close-out activities strengthened mutual accountability and underscored the strategic relevance of youth-led advocacy within bilateral cooperation frameworks.



Group discussion during the Learning & Celebration festival

7. Conclusion

Over the period 2021–2025, and culminating in 2025 as its final year, Power to Youth (PtY) demonstrated that sustained, youth-led and gender-transformative approaches can deliver meaningful and durable change even in increasingly complex and constrained contexts. Implemented across seven countries and supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the programme consistently advanced youth agency, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), while adapting to shrinking civic space, political sensitivity, economic shocks and climate-related pressures.

The final year, 2025, marked a deliberate shift from expansion to consolidation and institutionalisation. Building on earlier investments, PTY focused on anchoring results within community, civil society and state systems. Youth participation increasingly translated into leadership, accountability and influence, with young people engaging decision-makers through evidence-based advocacy, social accountability mechanisms and structured dialogue. Civil society organisations showed greater coordination, legitimacy and resilience, enabling them to defend civic space and sustain youth-centred advocacy beyond programme funding. Importantly, governments at sub-national, national and regional levels increasingly adopted, budgeted for and operationalised PTY-supported policies, tools and coordination mechanisms—demonstrating growing public ownership of youth and gender priorities.

Across the full programme period (2021–2025), the End Term Evaluation confirms that PTY achieved substantial progress across all four pathways. Long-term capacity strengthening enabled young people to move from beneficiaries to recognised actors within governance and policy processes. Civil society organisations became more effective intermediaries between youth and the state, amplifying youth voices while navigating politically sensitive environments. At community level, sus-

tained engagement with traditional, religious and societal leaders contributed to gradual but tangible shifts in social norms around harmful practices, gender roles and youth participation. At state level, PTY-supported advocacy contributed to the adoption, improvement and implementation of laws, policies and institutional mechanisms that extend beyond the programme’s lifetime.

At the same time, PTY operated with realism and learning. Persistent challenges—such as economic vulnerability among youth, uneven institutional capacity, backlash against SRHR, and the non-linear nature of social norm change—continued to affect the depth and speed of impact. The programme demonstrated that progress is strongest where interventions are long-term, locally grounded, adaptive and embedded within existing systems, and that short-term or isolated actions are insufficient to address deeply rooted inequalities. These lessons are critical for future programming and reinforce the importance of flexible funding, adaptive management and investment in local leadership.

Overall, Power to Youth shows that strategic, multi-year investment in youth leadership, civil society strengthening and state engagement can generate impact that is both measurable and sustainable. The programme leaves behind empowered youth networks, more coordinated and resilient civil society, and public systems that are better equipped to respond to the needs and rights of adolescents and young people. These foundations provide a strong legacy and a credible platform for future Dutch support to youth-led, gender-transformative and rights-based programming in complex contexts.



Annex 1: Indicator overview 2025 & 2021-2025

PATHWAY	Reference code PtY	CORE INDICATOR	2025 Target	2025 Actual	2021 - 2025 Target (Revised, after MTE)	Actual 2021 2025	Comments on 5 year achievements (2021- 2025)
PATHWAY 1: Strengthening youth to claim civic space	PW1.A2	# of young people (disaggregate by gender identity (f/m/x)) who participate in policy and decision-making bodies (disaggregate type and level) and perceive their participation as meaningful (SRHR A)	193	819	3592	4561	The programme surpassed its 5-year target of 3,592 young people meaningfully participating in policy and decision-making spaces, reaching a cumulative total of 4,561 participants across all implementing countries. This represents 127% achievement of the overall goal. The overachievement reflects strong and strategic efforts by country teams to deepen youth leadership, expand participation to new decision-making platforms, and strengthen the quality and sustainability of youth engagement as the programme concluded. This achievement was driven by several key factors across countries: High-volume participation in Uganda, Kenya's consistent multi-year engagement, Strong youth leadership outcomes in Senegal, Ghana's strategic engagement during a government transition, Ethiopia's meaningful regional-level participation, Indonesia's catch-up efforts, where reinforced training and connections to government structures over the last two years enabled more youth to claim their right to participate in district and village-level decision-making and Malawi's investment in sustainability
PATHWAY 2: Strengthening civil society	PW2.A1	# of CSOs participating in Power to You(th) (SCS 6)	0	30	263	569	The Power to You(th) programme significantly exceeded its 5-year target for CSO participation, achieving 216% of the expected result. This strong overperformance reflects the effectiveness of CSO engagement strategies employed across countries, as well as dynamic opportunities that emerged. Several factors contributed to this exceptional cumulative achievement: 1. Ethiopia, Indonesia, Senegal, Malawi and Ghana focused on strengthening long-term relationships with existing CSOs. These partners participated consistently in programme activities including ToT sessions, GTA review meetings, advocacy platforms, technical working groups, and monitoring initiatives. This sustained engagement ensured continuity, institutional learning, and strong ownership across CSO networks. 2. Uganda substantially contributed to the increased cumulative figure by mobilizing new CSOs during their annual Regional Learning and Celebration Festivals, which served as a platform for cross-learning, innovation sharing, and identifying new actors to strengthen movement-building efforts. This expansion broadened the programme's influence and fostered diverse participation from women-led, youth. 3. Kenya made one of the largest contributions to the 5-year total, ultimately reaching 248 CSOs in 2025, far exceeding its national target. While the initial plan was to maintain existing networks, implementation realities and emerging opportunities allowed the programme to onboard additional CSOs, especially around public participation, county budgeting processes, affirmative action linkages, and advocacy for inclusion of persons with disabilities. These engagements significantly expanded civic space and amplified community-level influence.
	PW2.A2	# of communities, CSOs, and advocacy networks with increased lobbying, advocating, thematic and/or research capabilities (SCS 5, SRHR J)	66	67	676	646	The 5 year target was reached by 96%, as eventually 646 communities, CSOs and advocacy networks increased their lobby, advocacy, thematic and/or research capacities. The slight underachievement was due to a miscommunication on target setting in the Ghana M&E team in the year 2022 and 2023, as the target was set too high, assuming communities/CSOs/advocacy networks that participate several years could be counted again each year. However, to prevent double counting, this was not the case. All other countries achieved or overachieved on the target.
	PW2.A4	# of CSOs who have advanced on using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth (SCS 8)	33	41	358	399	The program surpassed its five-year target of reaching 358 CSOs, with 399 ultimately advancing in applying a Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) lens across the programming cycle (111%). This progress reflects sustained efforts across implementing countries, particularly after the midterm review, which prompted teams to refine strategies and strengthen Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA). The program shifted from one-off trainings to structured capacity strengthening, mentorship, simplified tools, and institutionalization of GESI practices. These adjustments accelerated CSO advancement in the final two years. Country teams increased follow-up support, prioritized sustainability measures such as ToTs, policy development, and action plans, and integrated GTA into monitoring and learning systems. As a result, the program to fully maximize its target and equipped 399 CSOs to sustain gender-transformative programming beyond the project.

PATHWAY	Reference code PtY	CORE INDICATOR	2025 Target	2025 Actual	2021 - 2025 Target (Revised, after MTE)	Actual 2021 2025	Comments on 5 year achievements (2021- 2025)
PATHWAY 4: Policies and policy implementation	PW4.A2	# and type of (inter)national laws and policies blocked, adopted, maintained, improved including the number of detrimental policies which are prevented or blocked from adoption or development to decrease barriers to SRHR and prevent harmful practices and SGBV (SCS 2, SRHR H)	18	12	69	77	Over the five-year period, the programme achieved 77 laws (112%) and policies adopted, improved, maintained, or blocked, surpassing the target of 69 despite the complexity of policy processes across governance levels. Strategic coordination supported the consolidation of key frameworks, integration of gender-responsive approaches in local governance, and stronger implementation of new legislation, helping ensure long-term sustainability. The programme also helped prevent harmful or regressive laws, protecting vulnerable groups and safeguarding SRHR and SGBV priorities. Advocacy and consultation strengthened inclusive governance and advanced social protection and human rights legislation, while regional collaboration supported legal harmonization and stakeholder commitments. Overall, the programme exceeded its target and contributed to sustained policy progress and systemic change.
	PW4.A3	# of (inter) national laws, policies, norms and practices implemented to decrease barriers to SRHR and prevent harmful practices, and SGBV (SCS 1)	20	33	107	138	The program maintained strong momentum over five years, exceeding its target by implementing 138 laws, policies, norms, and practices against 107 planned (130%). Institutions adopted youth participation tools and gender-responsive guidelines, improving services, while communities enforced by-laws addressing harmful practices. Governments also allocated resources and integrated SRHR and youth priorities into development plans and budgets. At the subnational level, the program supported SRHR, GBV, and youth policy implementation across local governments, schools, and religious institutions.



Annex 2: overview per country - summary of the partnership and the main results per country

INDONESIA

The *Power to You(th)* program in Indonesia is coordinated by Yayasan Gemilang Sehat Indonesia (YGSI), in collaboration with 2030 Youth Force Indonesia (2030 YFI), as the primary youth-led engine, initiating KNOMP2A as a key national platform for youth-led child protection monitoring. Strategic local implementation is carried out by 4 CSOs: SEMAK (Garut & Cianjur) focusing on policy advocacy, SuaR & Tanoker (Jember) leveraging community and cultural approaches, and YGSI Lombok transforming social norms through customary law (*Awig-awig*).

“The PtY programme contributed to significant impacts in local governance, youth leadership, community awareness, and student empowerment through school-based interventions. Behavioural changes among young people were evident through their increased confidence in public speaking, ability to engage with authorities, and leadership in advocacy initiatives, including mediating child marriage cases and influencing village planning. Many youth groups transitioned from passive programme beneficiaries to active agents of change. Communities that initially resisted youth participation, particularly young women, began recognizing their legitimacy, often formalizing their roles in planning forums and policy discussions”. Power to You(th) End Term Evaluation - Indonesia

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1:

Strengthening youth to claim civic space

- Empowered over 685 young people to participate meaningfully in local and district-level decision-making processes, including Musrenbang forums, Village Child Forums, and coordination meetings with government stakeholders.
- Youth led evidence-based research on FGM/C in Garut and child matchmaking in Jember, generating data to inform advocacy and policy recommendations.
- Established youth-led platforms such as YAG (Garut) and YAC (Cianjur) to provide formal inputs to local government planning and policies.
- Supported the creation of the KNOMP2A national youth coalition, enabling youth to monitor child protection and SRHR policy implementation across multiple regions.

PATHWAY 2:

Strengthening civil society

- Strengthened 124 CSOs in 6 districts on Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) and youth inclusion, enhancing their advocacy, lobbying, research, and programme implementation capacities.
- Strengthened 240 communities, CSOs, and advocacy networks, enabling them to apply thematic knowledge and evidence-based approaches to SRHR, SGBV, and child protection.
- Institutionalized collaboration between youth-led organizations, local CSOs, and government actors, improving CSO legitimacy and influence in SRHR and child protection policymaking.
- Enabled CSOs to access Village Funds (Dana Desa) to finance local child protection initiatives, reinforcing sustainability.

“When young people are given space, listened to, and assisted, we can show tremendous potential. We are not just beneficiaries — we are the main actors of change.” Inayah, youth leader, Power to You(th) Indonesia.

PATHWAY 3:

Transforming communities and social norms

- Supported the revision of customary rules (Awig-awig) in Lombok and integration of SRHR and child marriage prevention into religious teachings, fostering community acceptance and norm change.
- Implemented culturally sensitive interventions in Jember by adapting the Nazdam - a traditional Islamic teaching method using rhythmic poetic verses - to embed sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information in familiar religious learning settings.
- including community dialogues in Garut, Jember, Cianjur, and Lombok, promoting equitable relationships and inclusive decision-making. Youth champions also engaged men and boys as allies to support women's leadership and challenge harmful gender norms.
- Increased community awareness and engagement in child protection and gender justice through child marriage prevention campaigns, village-level child forums, and advocacy with village leaders, district authorities, and religious figures, translating national and district-level policies into concrete local action.

PATHWAY 4:

Policies and policy implementation

- Contributed to 46 new policies and by-laws supporting SRHR, child protection, and gender equality, including Bondowoso Regency Perda No. 04/2025 on child marriage prevention.
- Achieved implementation of 69 laws, policies, norms, and practices, including the establishment of RHSE Facilitator Teams in multiple Madrasah and Junior High Schools.
- The SETARA/RHSE curriculum saw widespread replication, reaching 452 schools in Garut, 344 in Jember, and 53 in East Lombok, ensuring long-term educational impact. Schools established RHSE facilitator teams to oversee ongoing implementation, while youth clubs and peer educators reinforced learning through interactive sessions, workshops, and school-based campaigns. This approach ensured that SRHR and gender equality concepts were embedded into daily

school activities, creating a sustainable platform for adolescents to gain knowledge, develop life skills, and participate in decision-making around sexual and reproductive health. The replication was achieved by building the capacity of both educators and youth, leveraging local government partnerships, and aligning content with existing school curricula and national education standards.

- Strengthened accountability mechanisms by supporting youth and CSOs to engage duty bearers, operationalizing policies through task forces, school decrees, and village-level governance structures.

Key Lessons Learned

Empowering youth requires shifting from mere capacity building to providing genuine leadership opportunities in advocacy and facilitation. Good organizational governance, as seen in Village Children's Forums, is vital for ensuring leadership transitions and program sustainability. Furthermore, targeting the strategic age group of 13–18 and actively involving parents in the curriculum are proven to build community trust and strengthen the protection of youth rights, as it supports skill development at a formative stage while creating a supportive home environment that reinforces SRHR and gender equality learning.



GHANA

The Power to Youth (PtY) Programme in Ghana (2021–2025) was implemented by a consortium led by Norsaac, in partnership with Songtaba and the Ghana SRHR Alliance for Young People.. The partnership combined strong grassroots implementation in Northern Ghana with national-level advocacy and policy engagement in Greater Accra.

Over the course of implementation, the Youth Initiative Small Grants mechanism enabled the programme to deepen its localisation approach by supporting over 15 youth-led organisations to design and lead community-level actions. This youth-led expansion organically extended programme implementation from the original 10 districts to 14 districts within the same regions, significantly strengthening grassroots reach, local ownership, and community trust. PtY ultimately operated across fourteen districts in five regions, strengthening youth agency, civil society collaboration, traditional leadership engagement, and state accountability to advance gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and inclusive governance.



The programme impact is likely to endure far beyond the its funding cycle because it successfully integrated youth into the formal structures of local governance and social systems. The programme’s ultimate impact is its ability to foster systemic change by shifting power dynamics. It has created a new generation of empowered youth who are not just demanding a seat at the table but are actively leading, collaborating, and shaping the future of their communities. Power to You(th) End Term Evaluation - Ghana.

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1:

- Empowered 79 youth networks, leading to strengthened youth-led and community-based advocacy on SGBV, harmful practices, and unintended pregnancy.
- Empowered over 800 young people, resulting in increased participation in decision-making processes, including town hall meetings, Area and Town Council meetings, and budget review meetings.
- Established Ghana's first-ever Youth Assembly, creating a structured platform that brought young people and policymakers together for collaborative planning and decision-making.
- Facilitated the review of traditional council structures, resulting in the inclusion of youth queen mothers, which further strengthened young people's especially AGYW voices in traditional decision-making

"One of the grantees managed to edge the traditional council to initiate and institutionalise youth Queen Mothers into their traditional councils, therefore having the voice of young people, especially adolescent and young women, more included in traditional decision-making platforms. This outcome stands out because in most traditional councils in Ghana, young people are not even permitted to speak when adults are speaking, so to have the council agree to bring in a young person as an equal decision-making partner was a great achievement." Lamnatu Adam - Youth Representative, Ghana.

PATHWAY 2:

- Established 14 CSO learning hubs across programme regions and districts, enabling joint learning and coordinated advocacy among CSOs.
- Enhanced the capacity of 60 CSOs on Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) and Meaningful Inclusion of Young People (MIYP), resulting in improved application of gender and social inclusion lenses across all phases of the programme cycle.
- Increased recognition of CSOs as agents of

change on SRHR, strengthening their legitimacy and influence.

- PtY advocacy supported the inclusion of CSOs in key government committees, enhancing CSO engagement in SRHR and gender-related decision-making processes

PATHWAY 3:

- Approximately 27 communities declared zero child marriages, child elopements and other harmful practices, as a result of PtY advocacy supporting district- and community-level byelaws addressing harmful practices and SGBV.
- Enhanced gender-transformative practices across 40 PtY communities through the Model Gender Household, promoting domestic role sharing and inclusive decision-making processes.
- Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies championed gender equality and institutionalised PtY approaches, with Tamale Metro, Central Gonja, and Mion integrating PtY's gender-transformative approaches, such as the Model Gender Household, into their 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans

PATHWAY 4:

- Supported the enactment of 31 policies (28 local byelaws and 3 national-level laws) on SRHR and gender, strengthening the policy and legal environment. Examples include:
 1. District-level byelaws on child marriage and SGBV prevention, which set clear legal consequences for early marriage and harmful practices, helping protect girls from early pregnancy and associated health risks.
 2. National-level revisions to Reproductive Health Education Guidelines, which mandate comprehensive sexuality education in schools, ensuring adolescents have access to accurate information about sexual and reproductive health, rights, and consent.
- Enhanced accountability by supporting young people to engage through town hall meetings, Area and Town Council consultations, and budget review sessions. For example, youth

raised concerns about child marriage prevention and access to reproductive health services, ensuring these issues were prioritized in local development plans and district budgets. By participating directly in these processes, young people influenced allocation of resources for SRHR programs, school-based health initiatives, and community protection mechanisms, turning policies and byelaws into actionable measures at the local level.

- Revitalised national dialogue on the Reproductive Health Education Guidelines, as PtY's engagement in addressing resistance to Comprehensive Sexuality Education renewed public and policy conversations on the Guidelines

Lesson learned

The Power to You(th) programme in Ghana has shown that community interventions are most effective when grounded in rights-based, gender-transformative approaches, which are

essential for protecting and empowering young people. Sustainable change requires addressing the root causes of vulnerability, including poverty, entrenched gender norms, and limited SRHR knowledge. Institutionalizing youth engagement has proven critical in amplifying impact, as linking young people to formal decision-making spaces allows their voices to influence policies, programs, and local governance. Practical models, such as the Model Gender Household, have been effective in driving behavior change, promoting equitable domestic practices and gender-transformative attitudes across communities. Finally, strong collaboration with CSOs and government actors enhances the sustainability of interventions and strengthens the legitimacy of youth and gender advocacy. By combining community-level initiatives with supportive structures and partnerships, programs can achieve long-term, systemic impact in advancing SRHR and gender justice.

SENEGAL

Power to Youth Senegal is led by Amref Health Africa in Senegal in partnership with Action for Change (A4C) and 15 district-level civil society organisations, 12 of which are youth-led, implementing activities across 12 districts. The End Term Evaluation synthesis highlights that the Senegal programme deliberately prioritised meaningful and inclusive youth participation by embedding young people in programme governance, coordination, learning, and advocacy spaces, including youth-led learning events, reflection meetings, and Technical Working Groups. These mechanisms enabled young people to actively contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring, and advocacy priorities of the programme, rather than participating solely as beneficiaries, thereby strengthening ownership and the relevance of interventions at district and national level.

"The project has enabled many young people to gain confidence and assert themselves as leaders. Today, we can talk publicly about female genital mutilation and sexual health—topics that were once taboo. The project has broken the silence on these issues."
— Aliou Mbokh, Peer Educator, RENPES Matam

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1:

- Youth participation in local governance strengthened: 149 young people now serve in local decision-making bodies in Senegal,

including 51 elected representatives, exceeding programme targets. The End Term Evaluation (ETE) identifies this as a partly unexpected and

significant result, demonstrating stronger youth leadership and greater recognition of young people as legitimate local governance actors.

- Extensive outreach and capacity building achieved: Over 32,000 young people were reached during the five-year programme through training and engagement activities. According to the ETE, participants gained skills in leadership, advocacy, decentralisation (Act 3), local governance frameworks, social accountability, results-based management, and resource mobilisation, enabling more effective engagement with authorities.
- Greater youth awareness and agency in civic participation: The ETE highlights a shift from passive to active youth engagement in decision-making processes. Young people report improved understanding of local governance and increased confidence to influence decisions affecting their lives, particularly on sexual and reproductive health and rights, harmful practices, and gender-based violence.
- Strong youth engagement in public debate and agenda-setting: Young people played an active role in both digital and offline civic spaces, using social media campaigns, online sessions, and creative digital advocacy alongside public hearings, citizen consultations, and intergenerational dialogues. The ETE confirms this sustained engagement helped raise awareness and stimulate debate on PSJ/SRAJ themes and harmful practices.

PATHWAY 2:

- Establishment and consolidation of five regional CSO platforms committed to adolescent and youth health and participation, bringing together more than 76 civil society organisations. The ETE highlights that these platforms (including Ci Laa Bokk at national level) strengthened coordination, peer learning, and joint advocacy, enabling CSOs to move from fragmented action towards collective positioning on SRHR, harmful practices, and youth participation issues.
- Structured dialogue and communication with local authorities through public and citizen hearings, in which mayors and municipal representatives actively participated, resulted in the

consideration of adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (SRAJ) priorities at local level. The ETE documents that these engagements contributed to concrete follow-up actions in several municipalities, including commitments to integrate youth and SRHR concerns into local planning and budgeting processes.

- Enhanced collective advocacy by youth organisations, replacing fragmented efforts with coordinated action. The ETE notes that this increased visibility, credibility, and responsiveness from local authorities, particularly regarding the needs of adolescent girls and young women..
- Mainstreaming of social accountability within local governance, with CSOs placing accountability for youth and SRHR commitments at the centre of engagement with local authorities. The ETE notes that CSOs increasingly demand accountability through follow-up on public commitments, monitoring of municipal actions, and continued dialogue with decision-makers at community, municipal, and departmental levels.
- Stronger and more legitimate CSOs, supported through organisational development and capacity strengthening on advocacy, governance, youth participation, and gender-transformative approaches. The ETE finds improved internal governance, increased youth leadership, and more sustainable engagement with authorities.

PATHWAY 3:

- Greater openness on sensitive SRHR and youth participation issues, with taboo topics such as FGM, child marriage, early pregnancy, menstrual hygiene, and youth participation increasingly discussed in public. The ETE attributes this shift to intergenerational dialogues, community meetings, media engagement, and youth-led advocacy.
- Sustained public debate through the mobilisation of social media influencers, with the recruitment of 20 influencers as project ambassadors who actively amplified PtY messages online. According to the ETE, these influencers helped keep discussions alive beyond project activities by engaging wider audiences through digital campaigns, live sessions, and interactive content



Graffiti 2023 contest winner concerning raising awareness PtY topics

on youth participation, SRHR, and harmful practices.

- Integration of the “Grandmother Project” strategy (from 2024 onwards), which the ETE identifies as a critical culturally sensitive approach to addressing FGM. By engaging respected grandmother leaders as advocates, the programme strengthened community-level legitimacy for anti-FGM messaging, increased acceptance of abandonment narratives, and reinforced collective commitment to ending the practice, particularly in more conservative contexts.
- Positive community-level change through girls’ clubs and the “New Deal” approach, with reported reductions in early marriages and early pregnancies. The ETE links these outcomes to community commitments, parental dialogue, and empowerment of adolescent girls.
- Community actors and media engaged as norm-shapers, including religious leaders and local media. The ETE notes that radio programmes, sermons, and public discussions helped

legitimise youth-led messages and extend reach to remote areas.

PATHWAY 4:

“Following structured dialogue and advocacy with young people, mayors in the municipalities of Mbacké, Thiès, Fatick, Rufisque, Guédiawaye, and Matam publicly committed to integrating dedicated budget lines for adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health into their municipal budgets.” The End Term Evaluation identifies these commitments as concrete evidence of policy implementation, demonstrating how youth participation translated into institutional and financial decisions at local government level.

- Sustained engagement of parliamentarians as champions, with 45 parliamentarians involved across three legislative terms. The ETE highlights this continuity as critical to maintaining advocacy momentum amid political transitions.
- Increased commitment and awareness among local authorities in the project’s intervention areas,

with mayors and municipal officials demonstrating greater understanding of adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (SRAJ) and the importance of youth participation. According to the ETE, this translated into more openness to dialogue with young people and CSOs and into concrete follow-up actions at municipal level.

- CI LAA BOKK established as a multi-actor advocacy platform, uniting young elected officials, CSOs, parliamentarians, and influencers. The ETE identifies CLB as a key innovation fostering unified advocacy and social dialogue.
- Appointment of five CLB members to the new government, including one Minister of State and four Directors-General, which the ETE categorises as a significant and unexpected result. These appointments positioned former youth and civil society leaders within high-level state structures, where they continue to advocate for youth participation and SRHR priorities from within the government.
- Concrete budgetary commitments by local authorities, with mayors in several municipalities (including Mbacké, Thiès, Fatick, Rufisque, Guédiawaye, and Matam) allocating resources to adolescent and youth SRHR. The ETE documents practices such as the purchase of sanitary towels, provision of free SRHR services for young girls, and support to adolescent/teen counselling centres, demonstrating tangible policy implemen-

tation under decentralised governance.

- Functioning multi-sectoral governance through an Advisory Board, with the participation of the Ministries of Health, Youth, and Education, alongside the National Assembly (via the Health Commission). The ETE highlights this body as a key coordination and accountability mechanism, strengthening coherence between civil society advocacy and state-level policy processes.

Lessons learned

The Power to Youth project was much more than just an initiative; it was a true collective journey of transformation. It strengthened young people's confidence, leadership and participation in decision-making spaces. The programme also consolidated the capacities of local organisations and promoted dialogue between young people, communities and authorities. Thanks to its participatory and co-creation approach, it helped to challenge social norms related to early marriage and pregnancy, with the media and community leaders playing a key role. Experience shows that sustainable change depends on time, collaboration and trust in young people. Finally, Partos has published a book called "The Power to Partnerships": [Cover - The Power of Partnerships](#). This book also includes a great case story of Power to You(th) Senegal - page 36: [Power to Youth - The Power of Partnerships](#).



ETHIOPIA

From 2021 to 2025, Power to You(th) Ethiopia, led by Amref Health Africa in a consortium with Youth Network for Sustainable Development (YNSD) and HIWOT, contributed to strengthened youth-led advocacy and collaboration on SRHR and gender equality in a highly constrained and volatile context. Over the programme period, the Country Management Team consolidated a functional alliance of CSOs, youth groups, community leaders, and government actors, enabling more coordinated engagement in dialogue and policy-influencing spaces. This alliance supported increased trust between actors, more consistent youth participation, and concrete advocacy outcomes, particularly on child marriage and gender-based violence. Through sustained capacity strengthening, joint planning, and adaptive learning, PtY Ethiopia laid the groundwork for continued youth influence and institutional engagement beyond the programme period.

The urgency of strengthening youth agency and leadership is reflected in the lived experiences of adolescent girls reached by PtY. As one young beneficiary explained: "I am only 14 years old but I am married to a 30-year-old man who is abusive, and I am no longer in school. Now I feel hopeless."

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1:

- Youth structures were strengthened through sustained capacity building of over 40 out-of-school and 40 in-school youth clubs, which evolved from activity-based groups into organised platforms for leadership, peer education, and community engagement.
- Youth champions emerging from these clubs increasingly led community dialogues and advocacy on SRHR, child marriage, and gender-based violence, engaging community leaders and local authorities.
- Young people progressed into formal leadership and governance roles, including positions on youth centre governing boards and participation in district-level councils, reflecting a shift from consultative participation to more meaningful youth leadership.

PATHWAY 2

- Targeted training, in-kind support, and accompaniment strengthened the capacity of underserved and youth-led CSOs to engage in structured advocacy and dialogue with government authorities, moving beyond service delivery towards policy-oriented engagement.

- CSOs that were initially gender-blind integrated gender-transformative tools and frameworks (including the Gender Transformation Approach and MYIP) into their organisational systems, resulting in more strategic, gender-sensitive youth advocacy.
- Youth-led organisations, such as Borderless Charity Association, transitioned from issue identification to active policy engagement, including collaboration with government actors on youth rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives.
- Faith-based organisations, notably the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, incorporated youth rights and SRHR messaging into their outreach, significantly expanding the reach, legitimacy, and social acceptance of youth advocacy.
- Dialogue platforms, small grants, and creative initiatives (including youth-led art and media activities) amplified youth voices—particularly in conflict-affected areas—contributing to increased civic engagement, resilience, and social accountability.

PATHWAY 3

An example concerning a pathway 3 result from Ethiopia was a religious leader in Millie Woreda cancelling a forced marriage: while his decision was influenced by PtY sensitization, it was enacted through his own authority.

— Power to You(th) End-Term Evaluation - Synthesis report

- Sustained engagement with religious leaders, clan elders, and community structures led to public acknowledgment of harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage and commitments to ongoing advocacy through sermons, faith-based guidance, and community messaging.
- In Amhara region, community-based organisations (Edir) amended bylaws to explicitly prohibit FGM and child marriage, introducing community-enforced sanctions such as exclusion from social

platforms, signalling concrete normative change.

- Faith-based manuals and teaching guides integrating religious teachings with scientific and human-rights-based knowledge were developed and disseminated, expanding from Bahir Dar to Debre Berhan and reinforcing anti-FGM and child marriage messaging.
- Collaboration with youth art clubs and community committees strengthened youth participation and ownership of change processes, contributing to shifts in attitudes on gender norms and improved protection of girls and other vulnerable groups.

PATHWAY 4

- The Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) Scorecard was integrated into Ethiopia's national MYE guideline, providing a structured framework for assessing and strengthening youth participation in policy development and implementation.



- Through sustained advocacy and strategic engagement, the MYE Scorecard was endorsed by the Ministry of Health, elevating meaningful youth engagement as a recognised national priority.
- In Afar region, adaptations to the family law were initiated, with the revised document prepared for translation and submission to the regional council for approval, contributing to longer-term legal reform processes.
- The Women and Social Affairs Office of Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda adopted the Gender Transformation Approach (GTA) as a district-wide framework, embedding gender-transformative capacity strengthening and advocacy across departments.

Lessons learned

The ETE findings underscore the importance of cross-sector collaboration in addressing complex youth and SRHR challenges. Engaging government actors at multiple levels proved critical for policy

uptake and institutionalisation, while assigning meaningful roles to young people fostered ownership, innovation, and accountability. Strengthening youth agency enhanced resilience and enabled young people to navigate social pressure and restrictive norms more confidently. Finally, investing in youth networks and community structures emerged as a key sustainability strategy, supporting the continuation of good practices and youth engagement beyond the programme period. Overall, the PtY Ethiopia experience demonstrates that a holistic, inclusive, and adaptive approach is essential for achieving lasting, system-level change

MALAWI

The partnership was led by Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), working alongside Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre, Malawi SRHR Alliance, Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education, Amref Health Africa in Malawi and Youth Wave. Together the coalition provided strategic oversight on implementation, policy engagement, and budgeting, ensuring coordinated progress. While highly effective overall, occasional competing priorities sometimes affected timelines and the flow of resources.

Case story: Advocacy resulted in establishing a police unit in T/A Sale in Machinga district.

T/A Sale in Machinga district which borders with Mozambique, has high cases of rape and other SGBV cases. For a long period of time, most SGBV cases have remained unreported and unresolved because the area does not have a police unit. The nearest police station is 47 Kilometres away from the area and the police face transport challenges to attend to SGBV cases in the surrounding communities. This has resulted in SGBV perpetrators fleeing to Mozambique due to the unresponsive SGBV reporting mechanism.

In 2021, PtY Malawi identified and trained youth advocates on SRHR advocacy and social accoun-

tability monitoring (SAM) which enabled them to plan, implement and monitor advocacy initiatives at community, district, and national level. Following this capacity strengthening, young people identified and implemented advocacy issues through engagement meetings with state actors. Through these interface/engagement meetings with the Social Welfare Office, the Police Department and other state actors to advocate for improved access to justice for SGBV cases, the Police Officer-in-Charge committed to establishing a police unit in the area who then launched a mobile police service in July 2022.

In June 2023, Machinga district council through the Police department officially launched the construc-



Meaningful youth participation and intentional inclusion of AGYW amplifies youth voices

tion of the Police unit in T/A sale, and by 2024 the Police unit started operations. The establishment of this police unit has now helped implement and enforce measures to prevent SGBV and ensure that survivors of SGBV in hard-to-reach areas have better access to justice.

"In the past when we report a case to community victim support unit, it would take time for the case to reach the police due to communication and distance barriers, this led to perpetrators fleeing to Mozambique before the police addressing the case, but the launching of this police unit in our area, is a step to end cases of SGBV in our area". Said Happy Myson, a youth advocate.

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1:

- 1,994 young people empowered as youth advocates, with strengthened knowledge and capacity to engage on PtY thematic priorities, and to meaningfully participate in community and policy

advocacy processes.

- Two youth networks formally registered as Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) in Machinga District, enhancing youth leadership, institutional legitimacy, and sustainability of youth-led advocacy at community level.
- Youth-led advocacy contributed to improved responsiveness by district duty bearers, resulting in concrete actions on GBV and SRHR priorities, including the construction of a health centre and a police unit, and the dissolution of a corrupt community committees.

PATHWAY 2:

- 43 CSOs empowered (113% of target achieved) with strengthened capacity in GTA, advocacy, and Universal Periodic Review (UPR 2024) processes, resulting in the compilation and presentation of a Shadow Report before the African Union.
- New partnerships and collaboration drawn to sustain PTY themes advocacy i.e Girls Not Brides, as well as complementary family planning products and service provision arrangements with partners such as PSI Malawi.
- PtY Partner B, Youth Wave, was recognised and

appointed as Co-Chair of the newly reconstituted National Youth Technical Working Group (TWG) alongside the Government of Malawi, strengthening youth representation and civil society influence in national policy dialogue and decision-making processes beyond PtY Program.

PATHWAY 3:

- 5 Empowered and responsive Chief forums, driving community and cultural initiatives to combat HP, CM i.e formulation of by-laws, use of culture to advance education and supporting readmission policy. 163 girls rescued and readmitted in Schools.
- Empowered Parent Teacher Association advancing protection of girls from CM. 3 men imprisoned for raping a young girls reported by parents after a PTA meeting.
- 5 Community MenEngage Networks leading in GBV prevention; rescued and repatriated 19 boys from child labour (Men Engage, Machinga & Mizinga). (Unintended)
- Developed first of its kind Age-appropriate initiation curriculum guide developed using a Human Centered Approach. The guide was validated at both district/Council (Machinga and Dedza) level and is now ready for district-wide rollout, with traditional leaders in both districts expected to adopt and implement it.

PATHWAY 4:

- Policy & legislative support: PTY supported 7 laws & policies reviewed and launched with PtY themes i.e Age of sexual consent raised from 16 to 18, aligning with international statutes
- In 2022, Youth supported by the Power to Youth consortium successfully advocated for the revision of the Community Victim Support Unit (CVSU) Operating Guidelines to include youth representation. Fourteen young people (7 males, 7 female) from Dedza and Machinga participated in the national review process, identifying gaps and proposing solutions. The revised guidelines are now functional national Wide.
- In 2023, the consortium contributed to the amendment of the Penal Code, aligning the legal age of a child to 18 in line with the Marriage,

Divorce and Family Relations Act and the Constitution of Malawi. The amendment criminalizes sexual intercourse with a child under 18 and prescribes life imprisonment upon conviction. PtY Malawi supported the process by facilitating meaningful youth participation to ensure young people's perspectives on SRHR

- In 2025 Pty supported the review and launch of National Gender Policy (2025-2030) to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment. Power to Youth Malawi provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare during the review, consultations, validation, and launch of the policy. The revised policy now provides a stronger and more inclusive framework for mainstreaming gender equality in national development.

"PtY was relevant in the sense that some of the issues that came out such as Menstrual Hygiene Management(MHM) were picked by the government. Through this, the revised SRHR Policy has now included MHM which was a lesson obtained from PtY programme. MHM affects girls' participation in school" (KII with a state actor in Lilongwe). ETE Malawi Report 2025

Lessons learned

The programme demonstrated that leveraging existing community structures and local expertise strengthens learning, improves programme outcomes, and promotes sustainability. Investing in youth-led approaches and capacity strengthening enabled meaningful youth participation and ownership, allowing young people to effectively engage key decision-makers such as traditional leaders, which contributed to increased buy-in and policy decisions, including youth representation in Village Development Committees. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with like-minded CSOs and stakeholders, alongside proactive media engagement, enhanced programme visibility, shaped public discourse, and supported informed community action, thereby reinforcing impact and continuity beyond the Power to Youth initiative.

UGANDA

The Power to You(th) partnership in Uganda is led by Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU), working alongside the Uganda Youth and Adolescent Health Forum (UYAHF) and the Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI). Together, they form a balanced coalition of a movement building & service-oriented organization, a youth-led organization, and a women-led organization.

Since 2020, the consortium has combined its complementary strengths - RHU's technical leadership and movement-building, UYAHF's youth engagement expertise, and EASSI's advocacy and policy influence - to advance gender equality, youth empowerment, and SRHR. Over five years, the partnership has evolved into a cohesive, adaptive, and rights-based alliance whose collaborative advocacy has strengthened community ownership, influenced national and regional policy, and positioned Uganda as a key actor in regional SRHR and gender justice efforts.



Young people participating in a community flash mob during a sports gala to raise awareness about sexual and reproductive health and rights as part of activities commemorating the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

Case story: PtY advocacy against Disco Matanga

For three years, the Power to Youth (PtY) programme led advocacy efforts to end disco matanga, a funeral practice increasingly associated with sexual exploitation, alcohol and drug abuse, and violence against girls and young women. While originally intended to raise funds for bereaved families, overnight disco events evolved into unsafe spaces that disproportionately harmed vulnerable youth.

In Uganda's eastern district of Busia (where teenage pregnancies, child marriage, and sexual violence have sharply increased) girls as young as 14 were coerced into sexual activity during these events, perpetuating cycles of exploitation. Recognising the urgency, PtY adopted a community-driven approach, mobilising religious and political leaders, community members, and local authorities to push for legal reform.

Working closely with district stakeholders, PtY supported the development and adoption of the Busia District Child and Family Protection Ordinance, which formally outlawed disco matanga. The ban was publicly confirmed by the Minister for General Duties, Justine Kasule Lumumba, signalling strong national-level backing for enforcement. Beyond advocacy, PtY strengthened local capacity through trainings and workshops, equipping leaders with the skills to draft, implement, and monitor gender-sensitive laws. Next to this, continued community dialogues ensured the sustainability of change, also beyond 2025.

"This practice has caused immeasurable harm to our communities, and with the new law, we are sending a clear message that we will no longer tolerate the exploitation of our youth. Through collective action, we are building an environment where our children can grow up free from violence and abuse," Semu Okumu, the Community Development Officer for Busia district, emphasised.

Main Results and Achievements (2021-2025)

PATHWAY 1

'Service governance also tightened. Youth participation in HUMICs in Mbale informed commodity forecasting and budgeting (raising the FP vote from UGX 36m to UGX 102m); youth presence on the District AIDS Committee spurred tailored PrEP guidance and an injectable PrEP pilot. In Kalangala, the adolescent health coordination mechanism (DICAH) was revived, with two youth adopted as members linking youth feedback loops to district oversight' Power to You(th) End Term Evaluation Uganda

- Empowered 1314 youth advocates, resulting in increased participation in district, national, and regional decision - making platforms where they contributed to policy formulation and review, budget allocation discussions, and accountability for youth-responsive SRHR policies.

- Facilitated the review of health facility governance structures in Kalangala, Mbale, and Busia, integrating youth representation, consequently strengthening youth influence in health decision-making.
- The programme contributed to youth leadership progression, with one youth advocate elected as a Member of Parliament and another appointed by the President as an Assistant Resident City Commissioner.
- Established Isingiro and Busia district's District Committee on Adolescent Health (DICAHs), bringing together local government leaders, health teams, and youth to strengthen coordinated planning and decision-making on adolescent health.
- 5 district-based networks of empowered youth advocates and champions were established, strengthening youth-led and community-based advocacy to address child marriage, unintended pregnancies, FGM, and SGBV.

PATHWAY 2

- A total of 191 CSOs were engaged through the Power to You(th) programme, strengthening collective advocacy, coordination, and knowledge exchange on youth SRHR and gender-transformative approaches across national, district, and community levels.
- 77 CSOs were strengthened in Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA), advocacy, safeguarding, and Meaningful & Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP), enabling them to effectively advocate for PTY priorities.
- Five grassroots coalitions of CBOs/CSOs were established to strengthen collaboration and youth-centered advocacy. The coalitions continue to coordinate joint advocacy at district level, function as communities of practice, and pursue collective fundraising efforts, with some members successfully securing additional funding to sustain activities. CSO coordination led to district-level bylaws on teenage pregnancy, child protection, disco matanga regulation, highlighting how coalitions acted as bridges that connected grassroots advocacy to institutional action.
- Through the Small Grants Initiative, 16 communi-

ty-based organizations implemented grassroots advocacy that contributed to the development and adoption of ordinances and by-laws at district and sub-county levels to address harmful practices.

PATHWAY 3

'Power to Youth's male engagement forums transformed our home. My once harsh father is now supporting and his relationship with our mother has healed, and the fights have stopped. There is peace now, and even school feels easier.'
Adolescent girl, Isingiro district

- Partnerships with cultural institutions, including the Buganda Kingdom, enabled the joint implementation of Ebyooto dialogues that promoted gender equality discussions and inclusive participation, strengthening institutional ownership, credibility, and sustainability of programme interventions.
- Male Engagement Forums across six districts engaged over 2,000 men and boys in dialogues on positive masculinity, gender equality, and SRHR, contributing to observable behaviour change, including increased shared household decision-making, improved parent-youth communication on SRHR, and the formation of men-led savings groups that strengthened family economic stability and support for women's and girls' rights.
- Observable community shifts were reported in Kalangala, Busia, and Bukwo, including reduced tolerance for child marriage and increased male support for girls' education, with community leaders and male champions actively advocating for girls to remain in school and challenging harmful norms.
- Enhanced digital media engagement among CBOs, local leaders, and young people, resulting in increased visibility of issues affecting adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), wider dissemination of SRHR information, and improved community dialogue and information exchange.

PATHWAY 4

- Supported the review process and dissemination of the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy by translating key messages into local languages and developing animated materials, improving accessibility and understanding and implementation among community members and local government leaders.
- Supported the formulation and adoption of one ordinance and two by-laws at district level including Busia's ordinance regulating Disco Matanga, the revised child-protection by-law in Bufumbo (Mbale), and by-law in Rugaaga Town Council (Isingiro) regulating bar hours, marijuana/mairungi, and gambling; strengthening local protections for AGYW by addressing environments that increase their risk of exploitation, early pregnancy, and other forms of violence.
- Advocacy efforts contributed to the successful re-tabling of the East African Community (EAC) Elimination of FGM Bill (2025) before the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), securing renewed parliamentary commitment toward its passage and strengthening regional momentum to end FGM and protect girls and women from harmful practices.
- Strengthened strategic collaboration with UNFPA, Equality Now, Akina Mama wa Afrika, FIDA, UWOPA, and Amref Health Africa to advance regional advocacy on harmful practices, contributing to collective action and multi-stakeholder partnerships in line with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).
- District Technical Working Groups were strengthened to coordinate and sustain programme interventions at district level, enhancing local ownership and institutionalization of SRHR and gender-transformative initiatives beyond the programme period.

Lessons learned

Key lessons from the programme show that societal actors, when meaningfully engaged, drive faster and more sustainable norm change because they hold local legitimacy. Youth influence deepens when they present evidence, not just demands, reinforcing

the value of data-driven advocacy. Effective change also requires strong CSO coordination mechanisms and formalized youth representation within district structures to sustain their voice beyond project cycles. PtY demonstrated that young people need structured platforms not just information to exercise agency, and that lasting social norm transformation requires consistent, community-rooted efforts rather than one-off activities.

"Youth are not just beneficiaries, we're change-makers. All we need is trust, tools, and a little space to start from." Matovu Atim, Youth Advocate, Kalangala District ETE Uganda country report

KENYA

Case Story: The cut that never was - A community's triumph for Naserian.

At the age of 15, Naserian was being prepared for FGM and early marriage, a common fate for many girls in her village. Her widowed mother felt pressure from extended family to "honor tradition" and secure cattle through dowry. Through community barazas organized by Naret through PtY support, a local peer educator learned about Naserians situation and linked her to a trained Community Child Protection Volunteer (CPV). The CPV, with the help of local authorities and the sub-county children's officer, intervened just weeks before the planned cut.

Naserain decided not to be cut, and fled to a safe space where she received counseling, life skills training, and enrolled in an Alternative Rite of Passage session that celebrated her transition to adulthood without FGM.

As a result, Naserain returned to school in March 2025 and has since become a junior SRHR ambassador, speaking at forums and encouraging other girls to resist harmful cultural pressures. Her mother is now part of a community mothers' support group, advocating for girls' education and protection.

What made it possible:

- Strong community referral system supported by Naret Intoyie Community Based Organisation
- Trained Child Protection Volunteers and peer educators embedded in villages
- Partnership with cultural leaders who offered safe alternatives

Power to Youth (PtY) Kenya was implemented through a strong, youth-centered, and multi-actor partnership anchored in a consortium led by Amref Health Africa in Kenya, with NAYA Kenya and four county-based feminist and youth-serving CSOs (NARET, Siaya Muungano Network, WAWA, and TUNAWWEZA). These partners worked alongside community-based organizations, societal actors, and county governments to address harmful practices, SRHR violations, and gender inequality. County-level partners ensured contextualized programming, community mobilization, and meaningful youth participation, while embedding advocacy within county systems and governance processes.

**Main Results and Achievements
(2021-2025)**

PATHWAY 1

- Empowered 160 youth to participate meaningfully in county decision-making spaces (TWGs, budget forums, policy committees, court users' committees).
- Strengthened youth-led social accountability through training on audits, scorecards, expenditure tracking, and development of petitions and memoranda.
- Established and expanded four major youth engagement platforms: AGYW Cycles, Youth Parliaments, Husika Dada, and MURA.
- Created safe spaces reaching 11,476 in- and out-of-school AGYW and youth with SRHR, advocacy, and accountability training.

PATHWAY 2

- Strengthened CSO participation in RH and Gender TWGs, inter-county coalitions, and social accountability processes. "All partners rated the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms at 4.0, indicating strong performance in establishing and utilizing accountability mechanisms within communities." (PtY Kenya ETE country report).

This included CSO-supported tools such as community scorecards, social audits, petitions, and follow-up with government actors.

PATHWAY 3

- Trained and mobilized religious leaders, elders, nyumba kumi leaders, and media champions to challenge harmful norms.
- Established a Religious Leaders Forum, integrating SRHR messages and youth safety into regular religious programming; churches now host safe spaces for youth counselling.
- Conducted intergenerational dialogues that broke taboos around sexuality, menstruation, and early marriage.
- Leveraged theatre, media collaborations, and digital storytelling to amplify youth voices; societal actors transitioned from resistance to active allies.
- Built strong relationships with media champions for accurate and sustained coverage of PtY themes.

PATHWAY 4

- Supported 20 policies (16 county-level; 4 national) on SRHR, gender, youth, and economic

empowerment. For example, "On March 1, 2023, Homa Bay County launched the Sexual Gender Based Violence Policy that expedited SGBV services." (ETE PtY Kenya country report). This policy was developed through participatory processes, with youth and CSOs actively involved in technical forums and validation spaces traditionally dominated by government actors. As a result, "This policy significantly improved coordination of survivor-centred services in a county long challenged by the 'triple threat' of GBV, adolescent pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS." (ETE PtY Kenya country report).

- Influenced county budget allocations through evidence-sharing forums and technical engagements.
- Enhanced accountability by supporting duty bearers and youth networks to integrate AGYW priorities into CIDPs, ADPs, and county budgets.
- Established and operationalized Kenya-Tanzania anti-FGM taskforces, strengthening coordination among police, immigration, children's officers, chiefs, and community champions.

storytelling and data-driven advocacy amplified youth voices. Overall, the programme showed that combining technical capacity building with ecosystem strengthening fosters adaptive management, cross-sector collaboration, and lasting youth leadership in rights-based programming.

3. Key Lessons Learned

Between 2021 and 2025, the PTY Kenya programme demonstrated that sustained, targeted capacity strengthening significantly enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of youth- and CSO-led advocacy. Investing in practical skills such as M&E, Outcome Harvesting, Gender Transformative Approaches, Meaningful Youth Participation, Human-Centred Design, research, and policy literacy enabled partners and young people—particularly AGYW—to design more inclusive, evidence-based interventions and engage more confidently in policy dialogue and social accountability. The use of ODSS approaches reinforced organizational resilience beyond the project lifespan, while digital



