

ESSENTIAL GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) PREVENTION AND SERVICES PROJECT

Essential Gender Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Services is a United States Department of state funded project through Engender-Health as a prime contractor and a coordinator. YONECO was implementing the project in Chiradzulu (in two T/As Kadewere and Likoswe)

Project beneficiaries

Project beneficiaries were Women and Youth

The project's overall goal

To reduce GBV incidence and increase the coordination of multi-sectoral responders. The project has the following objectives:

Objectives

- To strengthen civil society and government coordination for GBV prevention and response;
- To strengthen linkages between and among multi-sectoral actors and improve overall legal response to GBV;
- To increase the number of men and women reached by GBV prevention programming to address social and gender norms and justification of violence.

Key project impact

- Knowledge and capacity of the community collaborators enhanced to facilitate social norms change in the implementation area
- Successful facilitation of transformational changes against harmful social norms that perpetuate gender-based violence in the communities
- Active utilization of interactive media programs on GBV in the implementing areas
- Improved responsiveness of GBV referral services between and among multi-sectoral actors in the informal and formal justice sector
- Establishment of safe homes in T/A Kadewere
- Improved coordination networking and coordination of GBV stakeholders at the district

Unintended out-comes

- Involvement of the of the traditional healers as GBV champions
- Establishment of safe homes for the GBV survivors
- Raising of funds for safe home construction through community initiatives eg. Mock-weeding

Fighting against Gender Based Violence through the lens of Community Action Groups

Florence Patrick and Stephano Joshua all from the area of group village headman Konga Traditional Authority Likoswe decided to join the Community Action Group-CAG in the fight against gender based violence in their area. The CAGs were established by Youth Net and Counselling-YONECO under the Essential GBV prevention and services in a bid to reduce cases of GBV in their respective communities.

According to Florence and Stephano, they joined CAG after looking at the increased cases of GBV in their area which was impacting negatively on development of the area. Child marriages that came as a result of child neglect where parents would ask a girl child to fend for herself when she reaches puberty saying that she is old enough to support herself. This has forced a lot of girls into marriages which has resulted in increased levels of poverty and GBV since the girls are too young and immature to handle marriage issues. This is just one of the many types of GBV that forced Stephano and Florence to put on their armour to end the vice.

Since their establishment in February this year, The CAG has managed to fight and prevent a lot of cases and these include stopping child marriage, marital disputes and assigning of children to sell products during school hours. Florence and Stephano envisions a community free of violence and abuse where girls can go to school and finish their education instead of rushing into marriage.

Florence said that, during this period they have managed to end 8 child marriages and the survivors will start school the coming academic year. ‘‘At first it was not easy, people used to mock us and asking us to provide for the girls that we have withdrawn from child marriages’’ said Florence. While Stephano said the progress has been made but the culture of silence (not reporting GBV cases) is hindering efforts to deal with GBV. Stephano has since asked for coordination particularly among the youth in dealing with GBV.

YONECO is implementing the Essential GBV prevention in the areas of traditional authority Likoswe and Kadewere with financial support from the United States for the department of State