



**Spotlight
Initiative**
*To eliminate violence
against women and girls*

Trocaire



SPORTLIGHT INITIATIVE EU- UN WOMEN -TROCAIRE FUNDED PROJECT SUMMARY

Executive Director,
Youth Net and Counselling – YONECO,
C/o Youth Leadership Development Centre,
Along Zomba – Lilongwe Road,
Next to Calvary Church,
P.O. Box 471,
Zomba,
Malawi

Tel: +265 1 526 199
+265 88 208 88 43
+265 88 208 88 44
Mobile 1: +265 888 958 726
Mobile 2: +265 999 953 542
Fax: +265 1 525 674
Email 1: executive@yoneco.org.mw
Email 2: director@yoneco.org.mw
Website: www.yoneco.org

Introduction

YONECO implemented the Spotlight project with financial support from EU through UN Women and Trocaire. The project was implemented in Machinga district in TA Nkula and Paramount Chief Kawinga from March to June 2021. The project was an acceleration of efforts towards elimination of violence against women and girls including sexual gender based violence and harmful practices. The project contributed directly to the Organisation's thematic area of promotion of Women and Gender equality where reduction of gender based violence among other is one of the key objectives.

The project directly contributed to Pillar 3 and pillar 6 under the Spotlight project. **Pillar 3** focused on increasing understanding of individual women and girls' rights and strengthen access to GBV and SRHR services. Under pillar 6, the project focused on supporting women's movement that will provide oversight to interventions on ending VAWG, promoting SRHR, and eliminating Harmful Practices at district and community level as key civil society actors.

YONECO supported the programme to reach marginalised groups such as female sex workers and LGBTIQ among others.

Overall Objective:

- To reduce the prevalence of VAGW/Harmful Practices among women and girls in Machinga district in TA Nkula and Paramount Chief Kawinga.

Specific Objectives:

- To increase understanding of individual women and girls' rights and strengthen access to services
- To Increase men and boys' knowledge and understanding of positive masculinities to improve their gender attitudes and understanding of how prevailing social norms negatively affect women and girls so that they are better able to take action to address GBV and monitor service provision.

Project activity

Activity	Target	Achievement	Remarks
Exchange visits for religious and traditional leaders as HeForShe champions regarding access of	80 He for She Champions	80 male champions reached (100%)	Activity aim was to scale up the promotion of positive masculinities for male engagement on EVAWG, HIV, HP, SGBV, and SRHR, including through the implementation of the male engagement strategy and operational guide.

SGBV/HP, SRHR services.			
Conduct T/A platform meetings with key stakeholders- YONECO	40 people targeted	40 people reached (15 females and 25 males) 100%	The objective of the activity was to reach out to various stakeholders and players to support existing national women's and girls' movement that would provide oversight to interventions on ending VAWG, promoting SRHR, and eliminating HP. YONECO managed to conduct two sessions which were done at Traditional Authority level.
Training for Faith and Community Leaders YONECO	20 Community and faith leaders trained	20 faith and community leaders trained. (8 females and 12 males) 100%	Activity focused on building capacity of faith and community leaders to support in addressing violence against women & girls' issues, including sexual gender based violence and harmful practices as well as support the existing national women's and girls' movement that provides oversight to interventions on ending VAWG, promoting Sexual Reproductive Health and rights, Sexual Gender Based Violence and eliminating Harmful Practices.
Capacity building for communities of practice for groups representing marginalized populations including FSW, LGBTI, persons	40 people targeted	71 people reached (31 females and 40 males). >100%	The focused on capacity development of groups representing marginalized populations, including FSW, LGBTIQ persons, PLWD, PWA, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, and other marginalized groups, to develop and implement operational plans on eliminating discrimination and SGBV/HP

with disabilities, persons with albinism and other marginal groups.			and promoting SRHR. This was done through sharing of best practices, discussions and presentations.

Key successes

- **211** people reached with capacity building initiatives (54 females and 157 males). This is against planned 180.
- Improved knowledge of religious and traditional leaders on how to address issues of VAWG. **3708** people reached with messages on ending VAWG in TA Nkula and Paramount chief Kawinga (1895 males and 1813 females) against planned 2000.
- The project has managed to put on spot, VAWG/VAGW; the issues surrounding it and raise the much need dialogues on it
- Empowerment of women. This has been evident in platforms provided such as focus group and radio program where women have freely expressed their views and participated in interventions aimed at ending violence and abuse that also affect them.
- Improved capacity of partners and communities representing marginalised groups to better address issues of VAWG including those affecting the marginalised groups.
- Girls withdrawn from child marriage are back to school hence there is need to encourage their parents on importance of supporting them with education materials.



Pictorial view of community of practice in progress

YONECO CASE STUDY

Hawa vows not to enter into child marriage again



“At first, I thought that those who are married are living a happy life, but alas my lord that is not the case after I faced the reality. Thanks to GVH Mtano for rescuing me from the bondage of child marriage”. Said Hawa while smiling.

Hawa Kassimu is 18 years, and hails from Ngololo village, GVH Mtano, TA Kawinga, Machinga district. She is a second born in a family of five children. Hawa was in a sexual relationship with a man by the name Watison Phiri aged 19. Their relationship started when she was in STD 5. Since then she has been having unprotected sex and never got pregnant. But in 2019 Hawa got pregnant and her mother said that she cannot manage to take care of her and the unborn baby hence she was forced into marriage to a STD 8 boy.

“When my relatives escorted me to Watson, his parents welcomed me and they gave us a small hurt {gowelo} where we were staying. But Watson had nothing as he was also a student, which meant we had nothing including beddings. Watson’s mother gave us some pots, plates, maize flour and some beddings but for us to get relish it was a night mare and sometimes we could sleep in an empty stomach. “It was tough even to get materials for the unborn baby and sometimes I could cry looking at the challenges I was experiencing”. I stayed 1 year in marriage but even a single day I was not happy”. Said Hawa.”

“When GVH Mtano came last month to withdraw me from child marriage I was so happy and I promised to go back to school since my child is now 1 year.” My mother was counselled on importance of looking after my child and she is she is supportive. Thanks to spotlight initiative for training chiefs on concept of SASA and they are really doing a good job of making sure that children are withdrawn from child marriage.

“With the bad experience of what I saw I vow never to enter into child marriage. Currently am in STD 8 at Michongwe primary school and am working hard to make sure that my dream of becoming a doctor should come true. The only challenge is that am lacking some education basic needs and support such as exercise books, school uniform and school development fund since my parents depend on piece work and again to feed my stomach every day is a challenge. Currently, there is nothing to disturb me since the relationship was terminated and am no longer interested with any boy. My advice to girls out there is that, “they should focus on their education and marriage can wait because most girls who were forced into marriage are experiencing a number of abuses such as physical, emotional, economic, and sexual among others”. Said Hawa.

Youth Net and Counselling implemented the spotlight initiative project which aimed at accelerating of efforts towards elimination of violence against women and girls including SGBV and harmful practices with financial support from EU through UN Women and Trocaire. GVH Ntano is one of the chiefs trained by YONECO under the project to help in ending VAWG using SASA faith approach.