



# READY ACADEMY REPORT 3.0

**Beyond the funding crises: Empowering young leaders to hold national governments to account**

Premier Hotel Roodevalley, Pretoria, South Africa, 9 – 14 June 2025



#WeAre**READY**

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## ACRONYMS

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>COC</b>	Cultuur en Onstpannings Centrum
<b>COP</b>	Conference of the Parties of the UNFCC
<b>CSE</b>	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
<b>DAAD</b>	German Academic Exchange Service
<b>DDP</b>	Dignity and Diversity in Policing
<b>DREAMS</b>	Determined, Resilient, Empowered, and AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe
<b>EKN</b>	Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands
<b>ESARO</b>	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
<b>FP</b>	Family Planning
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>ID</b>	Identity Document
<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and other sexual orientations and gender identities
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MSM</b>	Men who have Sex with Men
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>PEPFAR</b>	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<b>READY</b>	Resilient and Empowered Adolescents and Young People
<b>REPSSI</b>	Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community



<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound
<b>SOGIESC</b>	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
<b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infection
<b>SWEAT</b>	Sex Worker Education Advocacy Task Force
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>Y+ Global</b>	The Global Network of Young People Living with HIV
<b>ZAR</b>	South African Rand

## BACKGROUND

Y+ Global and Frontline AIDS hosted the third iteration of the READY Academy in collaboration with Aidsfonds, Young Africa International, Save the Children, UNFPA and UNDP with support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands (EKN) in Maputo through the READY programme. The Academy was hosted at Premier Hotel Roodevalley in Pretoria in South Africa between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2025 and was held under the theme “***Beyond the funding crises: Empowering young leaders to hold national governments to account***”.

The READY Academy applied a unique and pragmatic approach to strengthening the capacity of young leaders in the region through carefully selected course content that aligns with the emerging priorities among Adolescents and Young People in the region. Etched on the READY to Evolve strategy, an emerging movement of adolescents and young people, the Academy aimed to build and promote alternative solutions to realize their sexual and reproductive health rights and contribute to the AIDS response in Africa and beyond.

The Academy was designed in response to the devastating impact of U.S. funding cuts to global health initiatives on young people living with HIV. For young people, who already face barriers such as stigma, poverty, and limited healthcare access, these cuts threaten to disrupt treatment, increase transmission rates, and reverse decades of progress in combating the epidemic. Without consistent access to medication and care, many young people are at risk of deteriorating health, while others may fail to cope, exacerbating the crisis and undermining efforts to achieve an AIDS-free generation.

Through its 3<sup>rd</sup> Academy, READY aimed to equip young people with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to effectively and strategically make policymakers accountable so that they cover the gap through domestic funding. It also sought to build a stronger movement of young African advocates and activists at the forefront of HIV and SRHR issues through a Doing Development Differently framing that harnesses knowledge and expertise towards a global health and rights agenda.

This intense training programme brought together 31 adolescents and young people (18 – 29) from across the region including the READY peer supporters, and allied youth movements representing diversity and inclusion. As a result of the Academy, participants were expected to be equipped with knowledge of approaches and concepts in human rights, gender, SRHR, and HIV programming; to be linked to industry practitioners for sustained mentorship; and to compete for seed funding opportunities through the submission of concept notes on project ideas aligned to the 6-day Academy.

More specifically, the objectives of the Academy were to:

- strengthen participants’ advocacy and programming skills.
- build cross-movement collaboration among young leaders in their diversity.
- strengthen the leadership and strategic focus of emerging advocates working in environments.
- enhance collaboration between EKN-funded grantees and other allied movements.

- develop measurable country action plans for implementation, dissemination, and evaluation of the seed grants.

The Academy took a regional collaborative approach where key partners, including those supported by the Pamunye Programme, played a critical role, including the co-creation of the Academy concept and format, co-development and implementation of modules, learning and innovation through the ethical engagement of young people, and joint visibility and amplification of the READY Academy as an innovative and sustainable platform for building the capacity of young activists and advocates.

## OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

### INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS (HOUSEKEEPING, SAFEGUARDING, SELF-CARE, PRE-ASSESSMENT, AND WELCOME REMARKS)

#### **Introductions:** Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi, and Chola Mumba, Intersex Society of Zambia

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Ishmael and Chola welcomed participants to the Academy and invited them to introduce themselves. They urged participants to include their pronouns on their name cards and to feel free to engage throughout the Academy. Participants went ahead and introduced themselves, their organisations, and their countries of origin. The Academy had a total of 31 participants drawn from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Eswatini and Mozambique. Participants were representatives of key populations, including young sex workers, intersex persons, young people living with HIV, community change agents, peer educators, psychosocial counsellors, peer supporters, community adolescent treatment supporters, advocates, and youth advisory board members. Following the introductions, participants were taken through an exercise to change their seats and interact with people from different countries.

#### **Housekeeping:** Catt Durant and Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS

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Catt led the housekeeping session, showing the participants the location of the emergency exits and restrooms. Participants were advised to keep their mobile phones away from tables and on silent. Catt also informed participants on the different times for teas, lunch and evening activities. A reminder was given for all participants to complete the media release form and to contact faculty members if they were not comfortable with their image being shared online.

Chengetai took participants through the Academy programme for the week. He advised participants that they would not leave empty-handed. He explained the opportunity available to receive \$2,000 seed grants and the role of the different Academy sessions in helping participants prepare their grant proposals. Participants were informed that the concept note pitch session would be on the fourth day, and that they could write and pitch to the faculty as individuals or as groups. Additional highlights included the welcome dinner, games night and site visit.

#### **Safeguarding:** Fairuze Diedricks, Y+ Global

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Fairoze urged participants to treat everyone with respect, after which, she gave guidance on how safeguarding concerns would be addressed during the Academy. Participants were urged to reach out for help if they needed medication or other urgent care and to notify staff when leaving the premises. They were also informed of the available sexual and reproductive health products/commodities for the duration of the Academy.

Participants were encouraged to stay authentic to themselves and to be guided by their own values in navigating the space. She emphasized the importance of being self-aware and aware of those around you, respecting oneself and others, and caring for oneself and others. She highlighted that the faculty would continue doing all they could to make the READY Academy space feel good for everyone, and that the faculty were counting on the participants to do the same for themselves and others.

Participants were introduced to Carol Malata Phiri from Young Africa International and notified that she was the psychosocial support focal person, and they were encouraged to reach out to Fairoze for access to medication where needed. She wrapped up her housekeeping announcements by reminding participants that the faculty members were there to learn from them, just as much as they were there to share their own knowledge and skills.

### **Self-Care Session: Catt Durant, Frontline AIDS**

Catt led a wellness session on the first day of the Academy. Participants were invited to respond to three questions and to share their reflections with the facilitator, and not with the rest of the group. Approximately twenty participants took part in the exercise, with most joining in when the during the course of the exercise.

1. **What brings me here?**
  - Reflect on what has led you to be part of the READY Academy. What experiences, passions or questions are you driving your involvement in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and the HIV response? What does 'being part of this movement' mean to you personally?
2. **How am I feeling in this moment?**
  - Check in with yourself. Before you begin this intense learning journey, take a moment to honestly name how you're feeling-physically, mentally and emotionally. Are you excited, anxious, hopeful, tired? What do you need to feel more grounded and cared for right now?
3. **What do I want to give-and receive-from this space?**
  - This academy is about connection, leadership, and learning. What kind of energy, support or insight do you hope to bring into this community? What kind of growth, wisdom or relationships do you hope to gain?

*Figure 1: Reflection questions for wellness session.*

### **READY Academy Pre-Assessment: Maxwell Katekwe, Y+ Global and Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS**

Maxwell explained the purpose of the assessment and clarified that it wasn't a test, but rather a comprehensive evaluation that would be conducted on the final day as well. Participants were urged to use a code that would be the same for both the pre- and post-assessments. As a proposal, participants were invited to use the first four digits of their ID or passport number and urged to be consistent across both assessments. He clarified that the assessment had to be completed within 20 minutes, and that it was only open for youth participants to take part in

(not facilitators, alumni or chaperons). He also explained that answers needed to be written in English, but that participants wouldn't be assessed on their grammar.

### **Opening & Welcome Session: Lois Chingandu, Frontline AIDS**

Lois Chingandu, the Director External Relations at Frontline AIDS opened by reflecting on her extensive experience in working with young people in sexual reproductive health and rights, emphasizing the importance of the event for the attendees' career journeys. She shared a personal anecdote about predicting her career path ahead of time, including working for USAID, which later came true, illustrating the power of positive affirmations to the universe.

She advised participants to clearly state their desires to the universe and to maintain focus on their goals, using the metaphor of staying on the 'highway' and avoiding tempting 'off-ramps' that could lead them astray. She acknowledged that while off-ramping might sometimes happen, it was always possible to return to the right path. She also emphasized that the current Academy could be an opportunity for participants to redirect their lives back onto the 'highway'.



Lois transitioned to discussing the 'funding crisis,' referencing the impact of USAID funding cuts, particularly on large projects like 'DREAMS'. She highlighted the shock and paralysis experienced by many when these cuts occurred, noting that even in the US, people were afraid to speak out. This marked the end of an era of abundant NGO funding and a shift towards donors, including the Netherlands, prioritizing trade and environmental programs over women's and family planning initiatives.

She challenged the young people to recognize the need for internal funding solutions, urging them to look to their own governments and resources. She emphasized that governments have the means to fund health and development if they reprioritize spending, advocating for young people to hold their leaders accountable for wasteful expenditures, such as extravagant cars, while essential services lack funding.

She shared her personal experiences fighting for antiretroviral drugs during a time when thousands were dying weekly, contrasting it with the current generation's access to these medications. She stressed that nothing comes easy and that young people must fight for their rights, including jobs and education. She also criticized the desire for comfort without contributing to change, calling for individuals to challenge governmental waste and advocate for internal funding before seeking external aid.

Lois urged young people in positions of power, such as MPs, to be different and avoid materialism, defining success by the positive impact they make in their communities rather than by their possessions. She emphasized that change begins with young people who value



different things and challenge the status quo, advocating for a shift from being ‘beggars’ to creating a generation that funds its own development.

She expressed hope that her message would inspire the attendees to present innovative ideas for grant funding, aiming to spark a new movement of fresh thinkers. She questioned the effectiveness of current development models, noting the lack of countries graduating from dependency, and advocated for internal solutions and government accountability. She encouraged the attendees to challenge the language of dependence and opulence, promoting a new era of internally funded health and development.

Lois concluded by encouraging the attendees to pass on this message to future generations, fostering a new movement of fresh eyes and thinkers. She emphasized the importance of changing the definition of success and striving to change families, villages, and communities. She expressed hope that even if attendees’ projects are not selected, they can still implement their ideas and contribute to change, as speaking out and advocating for change costs nothing.

## INDUSTRY THEORY (OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS) & PRACTICE

### Summary of Sessions

The sessions under the theme of industry theory and practice focused on providing in-depth information on key concepts to be explored throughout the Academy including domestic and international financing and its implications on civil society operations, an introduction to concept note writing, and an overview of principles in ethical and meaningful engagement of young people. The sessions also included highlights from the 2024 READY Academy, to help set the scene for the 2025 edition, as well as an impromptu orientation session on SOGIESC inclusion.

INDUSTRY THEORY & PRACTICE SESSIONS	FACILITATOR
<b>Civil Society Engagement in a Changing Funding Landscape</b>	Tumie Komanyane, Unitaid
<b>Exploring Domestic Financing Strategies to Replace the Shrinking Global Health Funds</b>	Yumnah Hattas, Frontline AIDS
<b>Meet the READY Academy 2024 Alumni</b>	Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi and Mamke Dlamini, Eswatini
<b>Introduction to Concept Note Writing Winning Proposals</b>	Ronald Tibiita, Frontline AIDS
<b>We Matter – Value Us. Ethical Engagement of Young People in the Global SRHR and HIV Field</b>	Modester Mangilani, Y+ Global and Priscilla Ama Addo, Y+ Global
<b>SOGIESC Inclusion</b>	Chola Mumba, Intersex Society of Zambia and Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi

Key takeaways from the sessions under this theme were that:

- Young people's advocacy actions, big or small, all hold the potential to influence change in their countries when connected with the actions of other groups and movements working on similar issues.
- Local and human rights-based approaches are the future of effective civil society organising and financing.
- Young people's participation in the READY Academy would be more fulfilling if they engaged themselves fully in each session and applied their learning to the development of concept notes for advocacy work in their countries.
- Successful concept notes and project proposals are developed over time, with sufficient preparation and the inclusion of a unique selling point that sets the concept note idea apart from competing ideas.
- Respecting young people's sexual preferences, gender identities, sexual orientation and other factors of sexuality is key to creating an inclusive learning environment, and to the design of inclusive SRHR programmes.

### **Civil Society Engagement in a Changing Funding Landscape: Tumie Komanyane, Unitaid**

Tumie introduced herself to the Academy participants. She then played a series of videos and invited the participants to pay attention to the details, as they would be relevant for their concept note development. The first video was on the power of civil society, the second was on South Africa's #feesmustfall protests, the third was on Zackie Achmat, and the fourth and final video was of a song by the late Oliver Mtukudzi, titled Todii?

Participants were then asked to share reflections on what they heard and saw. Participants identified that one of the videos was on the fight for the right to education and the disproportionate response from governments. The second video was said to have been sad, disappointing, and heartbreaking, with one participant noting that they almost cried whilst watching it. The last video was noted as being about someone surviving HIV who had no information on what to do due to stigma.



Tumie shared that when she grew up, she used to listen to the song, Todii? A lot, and that people used to dance to it, instead of understanding the message behind it. She asked participants who knew the lyrics to share the message behind the song, and one participant explained that its core message was about living with HIV and the difficulty it presented in a world where people didn't understand how to help you. Following the explanation, Tumie highlighted that until one had seen the video, it was difficult to understand the lyrics. She explained that it was only when the video came out that they understood what it was about; struggle, resistance and overcoming adversity.

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*"In Zimbabwe we do not dance to this song" – Participant*

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She clarified that the second video was about the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa, which resonated with the world when it was launched. She noted that the campaign was a reminder that civil society was everyone, and that civil society happened every day. She highlighted the story of students who came together to run the #feesmustfall movement and spoke to the use of music as a big catalyst in the HIV movement.

She urged participants to fight for justice all the time and to commit to change in small and big ways. She reminded them that they could be part of civil society alone or as part of a larger group. She then defined what civil society was, and what civil society meant for different people including READY+, HER Voice Fund, DREAMS, Knows No Borders, and WeBelongAfrica.

She shared that in 2023 she was part of the COP process in the US, and she identified that young people in the meeting were struggling to connect with the conversations. The organisers then created a WhatsApp group including young people which resulted in a commitment of \$20 million from the US government in 2024. This experience showed that young people needed spaces to talk to one another to catalyse change.

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*“Whether it’s through singing, drama, writing or other action, we can all make change” – Participant*

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She closed the session by encouraging participants to not leave anyone behind. She reminded them that if they did not speak up, no one would, and that they would need to be at the decision-making table in order to make sure that people did what was right for youth.

### **Exploring Domestic Financing Strategies to Replace the Shrinking Global Health Funds:** Yumnah Hattas, Frontline AIDS

Yumnah explained that the objectives of the session were to ensure participants were able to create a quick personal advocacy pitch, understand the shift from global to domestic financing, and explore strategies they could engage with. To start the session, she connected past activism to present needs, emphasizing the importance of addressing oppression and anger constructively. She highlighted the dangers of unresolved anger, referencing situations in South Africa and the USA, and stressed that activism should involve well-thought-out solutions and accountability. She explained that the session aimed to empower participants to shape solutions and engage with strategies for change.

Yumnah criticized the allocation of PEPFAR funding in South Africa, where she oversaw the distribution of \$590 million per annum, noting that only 8% reached the intended recipients, with the majority benefiting American program managers. This inefficiency led to a demand for better geographical mapping and cost assessment of problems, which the existing system couldn’t provide. She emphasized the need to learn from past mistakes in international funding, particularly the PEPFAR program in South Africa.

Yumnah prompted the audience to consider their personal advocacy roles and what they brought to the table, emphasizing a move from global to domestic focus. She advocated for a

shift towards local control and human rights-based strategies, encouraging participants to discuss how they would allocate their national budget for help. She then initiated a group activity where participants discussed how they would allocate their national budget for help, allowing them to use Google for research.

Participants were then invited to work at their tables and do a role play exercise with a representative of the youth, Ministry of Health and the treasury. Each group was asked to come up with a financing strategy and advocacy demand without donor funding. Due to time, only three groups managed to present. The role-plays from the different groups are summarised as follows:

- **Group 1:** A group of activists took issues to the ministry of health highlighting gaps in SRHR service provision. The minister of health then discussed with the lead advocate to understand what their policy options were for consideration in the budget, and they were queried by the minister on the urgency and importance of their request. The minister then engaged the treasury representative to see how to squeeze the budget to meet the needs of the minister by requesting at least 5% of the budget to be allocated to the ministry.
- **Group 2:** A representative of the ministry of health held a consultation meeting with youth, during which youth activists highlighted the need for support for awareness campaigns specifically on CSE, education and training, research and data collection, and involvement in advocacy. The youth highlighted the need for funding of training for health practitioners in hospitals and clinics to improve the quality of their service provision. They pointed out that a lot of young people were affected by STIs because they were afraid to go to health facilities. Youth activists urged the ministry to implement policies that would help introduce health programmes in schools, especially primary and high schools. In response to this, the ministry of health provided information on how they could support the requests of the activists. Treasury then explained that they would work to introduce a new tax regime to reduce out of pocket expenditure, introducing fines that could be diverted to the ministry of health, tuition on school fees. They promised to target cuts in military funding, war veterans' funds, and reallocating emergency funds towards the identified issue.
- **Group 3:** The Treasury representative gave a budget speech in the presence of youth activists in Zumbaland, speaking about a health budget of 8%. Community members then voiced their discontent at government decisions, including the age of the youth minister, the persistence of SRHR challenges, and lack of funding for health needs. Government representatives in the meeting deferred responsibility and made excuses. Youth in the meeting continued to demand a seat at the decision-making table, and



conveyed their needs to the Treasury, including holding government accountable for their negligence of the Abuja declaration.

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*“The big question is, who is going to fill the gap? – the answer lies in domestic funding – when countries fund their own health priorities using their own resources. Instead of relying on international donors, countries can take responsibility for paying their own bills” – Yumnah Hattas*

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Following the group presentations, Yumnah urged participants to adopt a new approach where they would channel their anger into constructive action, demanding control over how things are done. She urged a shift in focus to personal advocacy and bringing resources home to address issues with a human rights-based approach. To help illustrate the need for solution-oriented thinking, she asked the youth to share how they would allocate their national budget to health if they had the power to. Some of their responses are highlighted in the table below.

Ideas for Allocation of National Budget to Health	
Invest in roads and ambulances.	Employing young staff.
We decided to use Abuja protocol (15%), 7% goes to prevention, 5% to care, 3% to support.	Put money towards national survey to understand the needs of the population.
Balancing health care needs with long term strategy maybe by expanding access to clinics and intervening in prevention of diseases.	30% will go to public health and the other percent will go to HIV work, malaria work, maybe 5% to KP work, but we never got to discuss it.
Invest in health infrastructure like building new hospitals, clinics – for those that already have – focus on upgrading infrastructure.	SRH in order to reduce pregnancy, STIs and ensure availability of FP commodities, invest in advocacy as well.

Figure 2: Participant ideas on health budget priorities

**Meet the READY Academy 2024 Alumni:** Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi and Vangile Dlamini, Eswatini.

Ishmael spoke about his experience in the previous year’s READY Academy, which brought together young people from over 10 countries with unique perspectives and local experience. He described the 2024 READY Academy as being live and full of positive experiences and noted that it had helped him become a more confident speaker. He mentioned some of the courses he still remembered, including ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’, which he managed to translate into his work. He appreciated the value of Academy in strengthening youth solidarity, promoting





Pan-Africanism and providing an opportunity for young people from different countries to connect with each other.

Ishmael then shared his experience after winning the \$2,000 seed grant from the Academy for his 'Youth for Diversity' project. He explained that after receiving the grant, he got support from UNAIDS to broaden work in Mangochi District. He then encouraged participants of the 2025 Academy to not feel intimidated and to make it a point to surpass the achievements of the previous two academies.

Ishmael also shared reflections on the theme of the 2025 READY Academy and urged participants to ask themselves what value they could bring to their communities without funding. He challenged them to learn as much as they could, and to commit to going home to implement their ideas for change when they returned to their communities.

He registered his concerns over the changes in the funding landscape, with reduced availability of funding. He identified the urgent need for donor-reliant governments to find ways to generate domestic resources and finance health programmes in their countries. He encouraged those in the room to follow the example of DAAD in Malawi, which is an organisation with income generating platforms that have allowed it to withstand the shocks of donor departures. He also urged youth to generate funding solutions, including finding new ways to monetize services and inviting service providers who have been benefitting from donor funding, to also donate to health programmes.

He reminded the organisers of the Academy to not gather young people for tokenism, but to make the Academy a space where young people could feel that they had contributed to something meaningful. He also urged the organisers to heed calls for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in future iterations of the READY Academy.

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*"10-15 years ago, I couldn't stand up and speak with confidence in front of young people, but now that is different" – Ishmael Phiri*

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Vangile Dlamini shared her experience from the 2024 READY Academy, which she described as a 'Chosen Journey'. She highlighted that it was a journey of empowerment for her, where she gained skills, knowledge and confidence to tackle issues in her community.

She notified participants of the seed grant she won in the previous Academy, and shared photos of her work on the 'Voice of Our Voices' project following the READY Academy. She urged young leaders in the Academy to stand together and speak with one voice. She asked participants to not look down upon each other and to take part in the Academy with an understanding that it is a safe space, with no discrimination or stigma. She closed off her presentation by inviting participants to be open to learning new things from each other, and to finding joy from their Academy experience.

**Introduction to Concept Note Writing Winning Proposals: Ronald Tibiita, Frontline AIDS**

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Ronald started the session by explaining that its objectives were to ensure that young people in the Academy had the opportunity to learn about fundraising strategies and writing winning proposals, as well as to understand basic tips used in writing winning concept notes and grant proposals. He then gave an overview of the expectations from participants in submitting their concept notes, before defining resource mobilisation, its purpose, potential sources, process, strategies and plans.

He explained the purpose of different resource mobilisation strategies and described different resource mobilisation strategies including collaboration, letters of support, grant proposals and integration. He gave different fundraising tips on building partnerships, including identifying appropriate fundraising targets, providing specifics in proposals, being concise, piloting projects with private funding and using external reviewers.

Ronald explained the purpose of a capacity statement and its five core areas (core competencies, past performance, differentiators, organizational data, and contact information), before providing tips for strengthening organizational capacity and resource mobilisation, including mapping current assets and income generating activities. He also described important resource mobilisation tools like stakeholder analysis, resource acquisition strategy, sustainability strategy and resource analysis.

He explained how 'Go-No-Go' decisions are made and gave an example of a framework used for making these decisions. He proceeded to identify situations where organisations have to make difficult decisions on whether to apply for specific grants or not to. To help illustrate this, he gave an example of a recent grant proposal writing proposal, and the preparatory process that preceded its submission.

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*Don't mistake length for quality. The point is not to show how complicated you are but to be understood well enough to receive funding – Ronald Tibiita*

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In terms of unique selling points when selling one's proposal, he explained that proposals can be enriched by showing one's geographical experience, technical expertise, demographic expertise and special resource leveraging. To illustrate this point, he shared an example of how Frontline AIDS maps itself against the different selling points.

Ronald opened the floor for questions and comments and gave answers where possible. One participant gave an example of a collective of organisations in Thailand that had banded together and opened a restaurant to generate income and be self-sustaining. They encouraged the group to think about what they could sell in their organisations in order to generate an income, including selling t-shirts and other merchandise, and asking people in the diaspora to invest in the health sector. Another participant encouraged the group to be careful not to receive funds from questionable donors with unethical business practices, as they could be caught up in controversies related to their donors.

Participants asked to receive the template for the concept note earlier in the programmes, so that they could start to fill it in earlier. They also asked for clarity on the number of indicators

they were meant to include in their project proposal. Faculty members responded to the question by advising participants to include information on the national indicators they were contributing to, and to show indicators that would track the changes they were contributing to.

**We Matter – Value Us. Ethical Engagement of Young People in the Global SRHR and HIV Field:** Modester Mangilani, Y+ Global and Priscilla Ama Addo, Y+ Global.

Modester and Priscilla started the session by clarifying its objectives to build awareness of what ethical and meaningful youth engagement looks like; to help participants recognise harmful practices and common issues in the sector; to equip young people with tools and frameworks to advocate for better engagement; and to support organisations in committing to ethical standards of working with youth. In their session, they discussed the ethical and meaningful engagement of young people, focusing on how organizations can genuinely involve and support young people.

The presenters encouraged participants to provide honest feedback on their experiences during the Academy. Participants shared feedback on various aspects, including food quality, communication timeliness, and accommodation. Some participants praised the READY Academy experience, highlighting the welcoming environment and impactful sessions, whilst others raised concerns about delayed payments and airport pickups. The positive and negative experiences mentioned by participants are highlighted below:

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food is sometimes good</li> <li>• Exploring the campus</li> <li>• Enough time to prepare</li> <li>• Enjoying food</li> <li>• Identification cards make us look smart</li> <li>• Sessions are good</li> <li>• Accommodation is the best</li> <li>• Environment is very welcoming</li> <li>• I feel welcome as an LGBTQIA+ person</li> <li>• Good interaction with peers</li> <li>• Rooms are good</li> <li>• Feel welcomed, loved and cared for</li> <li>• Drivers are friendly</li> <li>• Role play was great</li> <li>• Session on planning was helpful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very overwhelming and demanding</li> <li>• Per-diem is low</li> <li>• Shops are too far</li> <li>• Pick-up driver took a while and scared us</li> <li>• Per diem hasn't come through</li> </ul>

Figure 3: Summary of participant experiences

The session then shifted to defining ethical and meaningful engagement, with participants offering their perspectives. The discussion emphasized the importance of involving young people in decision-making processes, ensuring their safety, and valuing their contributions beyond just their stories. Common issues such as tokenism, lack of compensation, and exclusion of marginalized groups were addressed. The solutions to enabling meaningful youth engagement included involving young people from the start of



projects, compensating them fairly, and actively seeking diverse representation. The importance of providing support, such as per diems and safe accommodations, was highlighted, as was building positive youth partnerships through mentorship and resource sharing.

Participants were then asked to reflect on what they would demand in future engagements to improve the quality of their involvement. Their recommendations are provided below:

What is the one thing I would demand in future youth engagement?	
Such platforms are basically in the urban areas and neglect rural areas – those remote areas are neglected. These platforms must reach youth in rural areas.	
More organisations to come on board, to have adolescents on those platforms because anything that is done without adolescents won't work.	
See youth organisations being entrusted with enough resources.	Safety – when I feel safe everything will just run smoothly. Even when I interact, I will feel safe.
In the future, we forget about the shy ones. How are those who are not brave enough to speak, going to be supported to participate.	More diversity with people with albinism, and persons with disability involved in programming.
Providing access to services for the youth.	Be taught skills in resource mobilisation.
Be included in opportunities where my voice and language add value.	Please invite more intersex men and women in the next READY Academy.
Three years ago, I was involved in the READY+ event hosted by ZNP+, we asked for more diversity, and that diversity is there now with more sex workers for example.	
I'd like the youth to do more advocacy, and from organisations I'd like them to listen to youth more.	Power sharing – a lot of youth don't want to share their ideas; they keep them to themselves.
We are youth, we get bored easily. We should have more energisers for the sessions.	Start my own NGO in my country, an intersex NGO in Eswatini since we do not have one.
Have a suggestion box after every session so that people can contribute.	
Transparency with regards to everything.	Language interpretation.
We should leave no one behind.	Transparency and accountability.

Figure 4: A list of youth demands for future engagement

One participant raised a concern on the sidelining of youth-led organisations like Y+ Malawi in considerations for the lead partner for READY+ in Malawi, in a context where youth leadership was being encouraged. Participants called for reduced funding requirements, and for a shift towards deliberately funding youth-led organisations to implement youth-focused programmes. Chengetai responded to the initial query by explaining the selection process which resulted in the selection of lead partner, and the role that Y+ Malawi had played in the decision on who to work with. He clarified that Y+ Malawi had not applied for the role, but that they had formed part of the country selection team.



On concerns about representation of persons with disability, Ronald took responsibility for the lack of physical disability representation and committed to improving this in the Academies to come. He committed to deepening engagement of young people in their diversities in planning, service delivery, monitoring and delivery in programmes affecting them. Modester then closed the session by reminding participants that they matter and are valued.

### **SOGIESC Inclusion Session:** Chola Mumba, Intersex Society of Zambia and Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi

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Ishmael and Chola facilitated an impromptu interactive session on being SOGIESC-inclusive to help create an inclusive learning environment for all participants. The session started with questions to the participants on how much they knew about the abbreviations SOGIESC and LGBTQIA+, after which, both abbreviations were defined. Participants were then taken through the differences between gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual preferences. Ishmael and Chola used the Ginger-Bread Person illustration to help participants understand the interactions and differences in the different terms.

Participants were then invited to ask questions and discuss their perceptions on SOGIESC and LGBTQIA+ issues. Questions covered included clarification on how a person can transition from one gender identity to another, queries on the different trans types, requests for definitions of what it means to be queer and to be MSM, as well as clarification on what happens when an intersex person has sex with another intersex person.

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*“As people we like to joke around but it’s not ok to joke about sexual orientation” –  
Chola Mumba*

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The facilitators responded to the different questions and reiterated the importance of respecting people’s sexual preferences, gender identities, sexual orientation and other factors of sexuality. Participants identified the need to have had the session in the previous day’s programme, as it was deemed important in setting the scene for discussions on inclusion and diversity in later parts of the Academy programme. Participants were then reminded of Carol’s role as the designated

psychosocial support focal person, available to support them throughout the course of the Academy.

### **Closing Session:** Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS

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Chengetai shared a Mentimeter link for participants to evaluate their experience. The link had several questions tailored to help participants to share feedback on how they were feeling regarding, food, sessions, logistics and other issues.



## EVIDENCE GENERATION & ANALYSIS

### Summary of Sessions

The sessions under the theme of evidence generation and analysis focused on building the capacity of young leaders on how to generate workplans and related budgets, developing monitoring and evaluation plans, exploring how data and evidence drive youth-led accountability, understanding the dynamics of health, gender and power and how to hold governments accountable.

EVIDENCE GENERATION & ANALYSIS SESSIONS	FACILITATOR
<b>Concept Note – Budgeting and Work Plans</b>	Ronald Tibiita, Frontline AIDS
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS
<b>Meet the READY Academy 2024 Alumni</b>	Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi and Vangile Dlamini, Eswatini
<b>Health, Gender and Power</b>	Tanaka Nazare, Save the Children
<b>Case Study - SWEAT and Sisonke Holding Governments Accountable as Part of their Litigation Work</b>	Emily Craven, SWEAT
<b>Fuelling Change - How Data and Evidence Empower Youth-Led Accountability</b>	Dawit Girma, UNFPA ESARO

Key takeaways from the sessions under this theme were that:

- Clear and realistic budgets heighten the prospects for success in fundraising, and any funds raised can improve one's prospects for future funding if used honestly and efficiently.
- Identifying the root cause of any identified SRHR challenge is an important part of the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan, and this can be done by relentlessly questioning why a situation exists.
- Gender stereotypes and associated inequalities stand in the way of young people's full enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive health and rights; addressing them is key to the realisation of a more empowered generation of adolescents and youth.
- Advocating for the full decriminalisation of sex work is a highly recommended pathway to help combat the physical and sexual abuse of sex workers, child sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, as well as to protect sex work as a viable profession.
- Advocacy and accountability efforts led by young people can be significantly strengthened by the use of up to date and accurate evidence on gaps in SRHR programming, as well as opportunities for policy and governance reform.

### Concept Note - Budgeting and Work Plans: Ronald Tibiita, Frontline AIDS

Ronald gave an overview of the session's objectives, explaining that participants were expected to learn about budgeting and work plans, budgeting issues that affect plan implementation, and to understand critical success factors in budgeting by the end of the session.

Participants were then invited to break into groups to discuss different aspects of budgeting and work-planning. A summary of what each group discussed is provided below:

- **Group 1: What would you consider for the selection of a project?**

The group agreed that projects needed to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound (SMART). The spoke to the need for the project to have a targeted audience, an analysis of threats, opportunities, weaknesses and strengths, and an assessment of the political landscape.

- **Group 2: What are some of the budgeting issues that affect plan implementation?**

The group identified budgeting issues related to lack of data, poor research and data analysis. They also pointed out challenges related to overbudgeting and poor communication which leads to miss-spending.

- **Group 3: What are the risks of non-compliance in the budgetary process?**

The group spoke to the risks of strategic misalignment which leads to misalignment of goals and objectives of the organisation. They identified loss of funding, loss of stakeholders and donors, lack of transparency and accountability, and related fines for non-compliance as additional risks.

- **Group 4: What are the critical success factors in budgeting?**

The group agreed on the importance of discipline and commitment, demonstrated by saying no to unnecessary expenses and finding creative ways to save money. They identified the need for monitoring and evaluation and tracking spending in ensuring success in budgeting. The group also agreed on the need for cost-control and efficiency, whilst ensuring flexibility and adaptability.

- **Group 5: What are the characteristics of a good budget?**

The group highlighted the need to have detailed cost estimates for activities, as well as short and long-term plans that are clear, simple and easy to understand and use. They spoke to the need to be realistic, in building a practical and workable budget. They also identified the importance of being flexible, in having a budget that adapts to changing circumstances.

- **Group 6: What are the characteristics of a good workplan?**

The group identified the need to be clear and concise, providing activity details with clear targets, audiences, objectives, goals and resource allocation, with relevant information on assigned responsibilities. The highlighted the importance of having a logical flow and structure, that includes measurable milestones, risk mitigation strategies and a monitoring and evaluation framework. They also noted the need to ensure that the plan is aligned to the broader strategy and objectives of the organisation.

Ronald then spoke through the different elements of budgeting and workplans. He defined budgeting and asked participants to reflect on key concepts like competing alternatives, resource constraints, and competing organisational needs. He defined planning and the importance of linking it to budgeting, after which he provided an example of a budget, with clear costs on what will be spent and how. He described different success factors in budgeting which included timely issuance of expenditure limits, defining outputs and outcomes, identifying key projects and setting medium term objectives. He also explored issues that

affect budget implementation including personnel cost, capital expenditure, reliance on donor funding, as well as transparency and accountability.

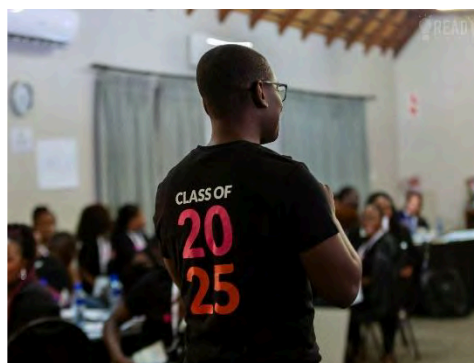
He highlighted the need to focus on accountability as a key element of the READY Academy, so that young leaders would understand what it takes to protect funds from misappropriation. He urged young leaders to not spend money outside of what was agreed with donors, and to be mindful that their lives as activists would be held under greater scrutiny. He encouraged participants to protect their reputations and ensure that their brands remained clean and free from controversy.

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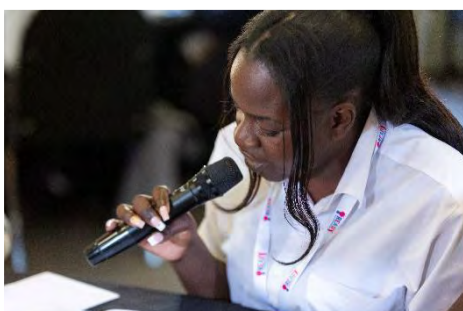
*“Your reputation is what will help you take up the space you need to take up. You don’t know where your next employer is” – Lois Chingandu*

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Lois made an intervention to help reiterate the importance of having integrity as a young activist. In her intervention she shared information on how she supported young women leaders to take up positions of power in the SRHR space. She explained that the young leaders were trained on how to maintain a good reputation, and to be consistent wherever they went. One of the young women who benefitted from the program and was present for the Academy, Saruh, shared her experience in attesting to the value of keeping a clean reputation and leading with integrity.



Following the delivery of the session, participants were invited to share questions and make comments on concept notes, budgeting and work plans. The first question was a query on what to do in a situation where unexpected cost items arise, that are important to address but have not been factored into the existing budget. In response to this, participants were advised to understand donor requirements and agreements, assess the necessity of the desired changes, engage the project manager for guidance, communicate with the donor to determine what changes are possible, and identify thoughtful ways to adapt the plan and budget whilst still ensuring that all planned activities are implemented effectively. Participants were advised to also avoid making requests to alter funding arrangements, in cases where there is a perception of potential benefit to an individual or to individuals in the organisation.



The second question was a query on what to do in a situation where there are funds remaining after the conclusion of a project. Participants were advised to retire the funds, while negotiating with the donor to repurpose the funds for other activities related to the project. Participants were urged to forecast expenditure well in advance, to help in making timely

requests to reprogramme funds before the end of a project.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation: Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS**

To start the session, Chengetai asked participants to translate what the word problem meant in their languages to illustrate the universality of challenges across cultures. He followed up the question by explaining that the purpose of monitoring and evaluation was to help people to track if they were solving a problem.

Chengetai provided a fictional scenario relating to a young person failing to access services and asked participants to provide possible answers for why this was the case. The responses focused on language barriers, health worker capacity and attitudes, unavailability of commodities, and young people's fear of being judged and discriminated against at health facilities. He then explained that asking the question 'why' could help people understand the root cause of a problem. He further explained that once one had identified a problem and its root causes, they could identify actions to take to address the root cause. He explained that monitoring and evaluation helps track if the interventions are addressing the root cause of the problem. He also clarified that a monitoring and evaluation plan provides checkpoints that people can use to track if there is progress in relation to the achievement of set goals.



He then had people across tables carry out group work where they had to identify a problem/situation and write answers to five subsequent 'whys?'. The group work was carried out for five minutes, after which, participants shared feedback.

- **Group 1 – Culture as a key driver of stigma and discrimination:** The first group focused on culture and religion as key drivers of stigma and discrimination. Some of their root causes included lack of information, cultural norms, legal restrictions, resistance to change and the presence of gatekeepers.
- **Group 2 – Lack of SRHR commodities:** The second group conducted a fish-pond analysis focused on the lack of SRHR commodities for young people and resultant challenge. They identified the challenges as teenage pregnancy, school dropouts, HIV and STIs, increased number of orphans and vulnerable children, as well as AIDS-related deaths.
- **Group 3 – Limited LGBTQIA+ information for civil servants:** The third group focused on the issue of civil servants from the army, police and prisons services not having information on LGBTQIA+ people. They identified the possible root causes as a lack of sensitisation, the criminalisation of LGBTQIA+, traditional beliefs, norms and values, and their way of upbringing, which may not allow them to value the LGBTQIA+ community.



- **Group 4 – Poor treatment adherence:** The fourth group focused on poor adherence to treatment in adolescents and young people living with HIV. Some of the root causes they identified include non-disclosure, fear of rejection, stigma and discrimination, lack of reliable sources of information, few peer supporters, and not reaching all young people with information and skills.
- **Group 5 – Defaulting on ARV medicines:** The fifth group focused on the story of a person called Lerato who defaults on anti-retroviral drugs. They identify the possible reasons for this as the lack of infrastructure in the area, misplaced priorities, corruption, lack of accountability and good governance, and distance from the health facility.
- **Group 6 – Inadequate SRHR services and commodities:** The sixth and final group focused on inadequate provision of SRHR services and commodities. Some of the root causes they identified include lack of privacy and respect at health facilities, caused by health care workers not trained to provide youth friendly health services, caused by lack of resources for training, caused by the stop-work order affecting allocation of funding.

Following the group presentations, Chengetai asked participants to discuss the differences between outputs and inputs, as well as activities, outcomes and impact. He then shared a video that explained essentials of monitoring and evaluation, after which he distributed a template to each participant to use in defining their own theories of change. He notified participants that they would need to return the completed theory of change template on the next day and that the assignment would be completed by each group and not as individuals. One faculty member highlighted that some of the groups did not identify a root cause of their problems. He urged the groups that did not identify the root cause to take time to identify the root cause before moving forward to filling in the Theory of Change template.

### **Health, Gender and Power: Tanaka Nazare, Save the Children**

Tanaka started the session by outlining its objectives: to deepen participants' understanding of gender, health, and power—specifically within the SADC regional context; to examine the interplay between these elements and their influence on access to SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) information and services; to consider how gender and power impact the realisation of rights and access to healthcare; and to stress why gender issues must be considered in any discussion of health and power.



Participants were encouraged to sit nearer to the front and to choose seating that made them comfortable, whether on chairs or on the floor. The session focused on the interconnectedness of gender, power, and health, with a particular emphasis on SRHR. The facilitator prioritised a safe, interactive environment where all questions and perspectives were welcome, urging participants to reflect with empathy and consider perspectives beyond their own.



Tanaka provided clear definitions of gender and sex, drawing attention to the biological differences among male, female, and intersex individuals. She explained that, biologically, there are three sexes and highlighted the variations that can exist in reproductive organs, particularly among intersex people. The group then discussed personal experiences and posed questions about intersex conditions and the consequences of early sex reassignment surgeries.

The conversation then shifted to the concept of gender as a social construct, shaped by cultural beliefs, traditions, and religions. Discussion included the fluidity of gender and its variance between societies, with examples such as the matrilineal communities in Malawi and evolving norms in Eswatini. The distinction between sex roles (rooted in biology) and gender roles (shaped by social learning) was emphasised, highlighting how traditional roles can be restrictive—especially for intersex individuals.

Tanaka also discussed the historical context of intersex surgeries and underscored the importance of advocacy for the rights of intersex people, both within and alongside the broader LGBTQIA+ movement. The presentation stressed the need for government recognition of intersex individuals and the abolition of forced sex reassignment surgeries, with Kenya mentioned as a positive example. She highlighted the importance of informed consent, awareness of power dynamics, and the profound influence of societal norms on the well-being of intersex individuals.

At this point, Tanaka invited participants to ask questions about the material covered so far. Questions included the existence of three sexes, the meaning of being intersex, and the risks and challenges that different gender identities face. Participants responded, offering detailed explanations and sharing personal experiences. The discussion highlighted the human rights violations endured by intersex people at birth, the lack of access to gender-affirming care, and the absence of legal recognition in much of East and Southern Africa.

Kenya was commended for its proactive steps in protecting intersex rights, including recognising intersex identities in birth registration, working to end forced surgeries on intersex children, and providing gender-affirming care. South Africa was also acknowledged for supporting intersex people's health needs, with an estimated 10,000 intersex persons receiving services in the country.

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*I feel like governments are being selfish by not letting intersex be legal, so that there is a chance for intersex people to have gender affirming surgery - **Participant***

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Following the discussion, participants were encouraged to talk to intersex persons within the Academy to clarify any further questions. Tanaka also identified the need to do advocacy that makes sense for intersex people without letting go of the home that they have created through the LGBTQIA+ movement.

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*"In the 80s there was a nurse working in a paediatric ward. There was a doctor doing those surgeries. The mothers were even scared of going home because they had to say what the sex of the child was. If you said you can't tell, then the child*

*was at the risk of being killed. As far as the culture was concerned, it was an abomination. Together, the doctor and parent had to decide. They chose based on which organ was most pronounced. The children had to change their names. When the knowledge started emerging, I think about those children and what has happened to them now” - Participant*

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Participants were then shown an image showing a starting line-up of a group of people preparing to race and asked to reflect on it based on what they interpreted it to mean. Some of their reflections are included below:

Participant Interpretations of Illustration on Gender Inequality		
Everyone must go to work, but women must do other tasks before they go to work.	The men are making it almost impossible for the women to start the race.	Women are frowning - complaining to the men, but the men remain focused.
Men and women are running their own races.	I can see patriarchal power at play.	I can see that everyone is sticking to their lane.
The women are staring at the men, but the men are focused on the track.	I see lots of barriers that we face before we go to the finish line.	I see disruption and delays to goals.
I see both women and men are all going to work in the morning - I see the women asking the men for help so that they both go to work	Women are looked down upon - for them they must do other things that men don't have to do.	Everyone is wearing decent clothes - but the women have clothes that they could change into to run.
I see gender equality issues - gender roles are defining who a person is in terms of women they are facing clothes and men are facing a straight path which shows that they are going somewhere - women are facing a barrier.	It shows women are looking at the men and it seems like the men are already on a clear road and women are on a hard road - they are being told to stick to washing and doing laundry and house chores. It shows that the road is already hard for them.	

Figure 5: Participant reflections on barriers to gender equality

In the second part of her session, which took place at the start of the third day, Tanaka commenced by guiding participants through an exploration of gender dynamics and the stereotypes that shape them. She underscored the importance of addressing the fundamental causes of inequality and clearly distinguished between the concepts of equality and equity. By outlining how equity involves recognizing and responding to the distinct needs and challenges faced by individuals, she illustrated its essential role in achieving genuine equality.

To help clarify complex aspects of gender, Tanaka introduced the "gingerbread person" model. This visual tool was used to unpack the differences between sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, reinforcing the understanding that every person is a unique and layered individual. She then defined gender stereotypes as prevailing social beliefs that fuel unequal treatment and perpetuate sexism.

The group discussed various manifestations of these stereotypes, such as expectations about personality traits, domestic responsibilities, and issues related to inheritance. Tanaka drew attention to discriminatory practices commonly encountered by women in employment and housing, with specific examples from Zimbabwe, like job interview questions about marital status or intentions to have children.

She further emphasized the importance of using inclusive language—advocating for terms such as "family well-being" rather than "family planning"—to ensure unmarried women are not excluded. The discussion also addressed the assumptions and challenges single women often face when searching for housing.

Tanaka encouraged participants to integrate a nuanced consideration of gender dynamics into their concept notes and proposals, especially when identifying root causes and developing activities for different community groups. She prompted reflection on how stereotypes not only restrict opportunities for women but also limit men, particularly in areas such as mental health support in the SADC region. Additionally, she cautioned against inflexible budgeting processes that overlook the varied needs within communities, as these can inadvertently exclude key members.



Following Tanaka's introduction to gender concepts, participants were encouraged to reflect on the meaning of power. In their responses, power was described as both authority vested in an individual and the ability to influence outcomes. When asked who holds power within their communities, participants named a range of figures: councillors, chairpersons, chiefs, religious leaders, community leaders, pastors, mothers, and elder siblings. They also identified several factors that contribute to possessing power, including position, experience, corruption, age, wealth, titles, skin colour, physical attractiveness, gender, and family background.

Tanaka then outlined four types of power:

- **Power over:** Typically authoritative or dominant; not inherently negative, but its impact depends on how it is exercised.
- **Power to:** The capacity to enact change or delegate authority, aligning closely with accountability initiatives.
- **Power within:** An intrinsic quality every individual possesses, enabling personal agency and accountability.
- **Power with:** The strength found in collective action and shared purpose within a community.

She noted that groups with less power often included women, children, and intersex individuals.

The discussion then moved to personal experiences of gender biases and power in childhood. Participants recounted how boys and girls are socialized differently from infancy—boys were often steered toward playing football or with cars, while girls were discouraged from similar activities. Tanaka reminded everyone that, by participating in discussions like these, they are already exercising their inherent power to challenge and transform harmful gender norms.

Tanaka also addressed the assumption that service providers inherently understand their roles, cautioning that each person brings their own background and beliefs into their work. She

emphasised the importance of recognizing this individuality when designing advocacy and accountability efforts, as some targeted individuals may themselves perpetuate the very inequalities being challenged.

The session included a case study on gender, power, and health, focusing on condom negotiation. Participants observed that women carrying condoms might be stigmatised as sex workers, while men were expected to carry them without judgment. One participant pointed out that civil society organisations seldom address men's roles in condom negotiation, highlighting concerning rates of sexual and gender-based violence in these contexts, particularly in South Africa.

To conclude, Tanaka shared a video on the concept of consent, using the analogy of offering tea to illustrate its importance.

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*"Sex is the beautiful thing we don't want to talk about and yet we enjoy it" -  
Participant*

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### **Case Study - SWEAT and Sisonke Holding Governments Accountable as Part of their Litigation Work: Emily Craven, SWEAT**

The session focused on the decolonization of sex work in South Africa, led by the Sex Worker Education Advocacy Task Force (SWEAT). Emily discussed the organization's 25-year struggle for decriminalization, highlighting both successes and ongoing challenges. Key topics included the importance of language, defining decriminalization, different legal models (full decriminalization, partial decriminalization/Nordic model, and legalization), and strategies for achieving full decriminalization.

Emily emphasized the importance of building consensus among civil society, political parties, trade unions, and government structures through lobbying, research, media engagement, and public campaigns, to support decriminalisation. She also stressed the need for government accountability, particularly concerning commitments made by the African National Congress (ANC) and inclusion of decriminalization in national strategic plans.

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*"There's no point in having the legal right to own a bakery, in a place where it's  
illegal to buy bread" - Emily Craven*

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Emily shared practical advice on engaging with government, shifting public discourse, and building broad coalitions. In this regard, she recounted a recent successful, low-cost campaign where SWEAT set up a mock office at the Department of Justice, costing only ZAR40,700, which led to a renewed commitment from the department to produce a decriminalization bill. Pitfalls and warnings were also discussed, including the slow pace of legal change, the loss of political allies, and the ongoing controversy surrounding sex work.

Participants were invited to share questions and comments at the end of the session. Questions focused on understanding the right terminology to use in referring to sex workers, and clarifying the different pathways to decriminalisation, including legalisation. Emily explained that appropriate terminology for sex work was different across countries, and that legalisation was not a preferred pathway to decriminalisation as it came with intensive government control.

### **Fuelling Change - How Data and Evidence Empower Youth-Led Accountability: Dawit Girma, UNFPA ESARO**

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Dawit started the presentation by providing an overview of the session's objectives, which were to ensure that participants had an understanding of youth-led accountability, the importance of evidence for accountability, sources of data and evidence, how to apply evidence for youth-led accountability, common challenges in data and evidence use, and ethical considerations for responsible data use.

Dawit's presentation focused on data accessibility, accountability, and ethical considerations in youth engagement and activism. Discussions revolved around identifying reliable data sources, addressing challenges young people face in utilizing data, and ensuring responsible data usage. The importance of accountability from governments and organizations towards young people was emphasized, along with strategies for enforcing accountability and promoting youth empowerment. The presentation also touched on the significance of evidence-based advocacy and the need for humility and knowledge in driving accountability.

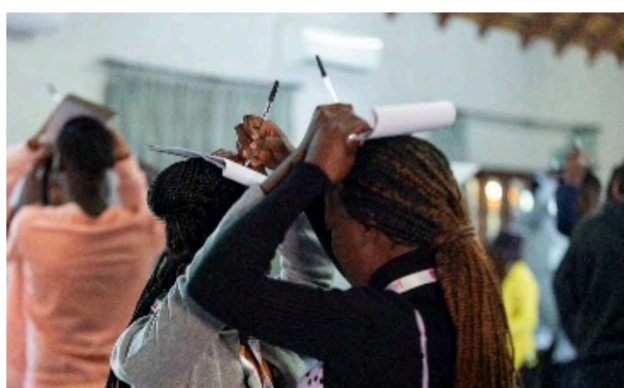


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*"In doing no harm, when working with key populations, the anonymity of subjects is very important - some governments use that data to attack people" – Dawit Girma*

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The presentation highlighted the difficulties in obtaining accurate data and the ethical dilemmas encountered when using it. As part of the session, participants shared experiences related to data usage, particularly in the context of gender-based violence and refugee support. The ensuing discussions underscored the necessity of baseline data for effective advocacy and accountability, as well as the importance of engaging young people meaningfully in decision-making processes. The need for governments and organizations to be responsive and





accountable to the needs of young people was a recurring theme. The session also explored the role of evidence in advocacy and accountability, emphasizing the importance of moving beyond opinions to facts.

Participants discussed the challenges of working with vulnerable populations and the need to tailor interventions to specific contexts. Their discussions highlighted the importance of humility and knowledge in empowering young people to drive accountability and create positive change. Following the discussion, Dawit identified the common challenges in data access as: limited access to data; lack of data literacy and skills; resource constraints; safety and security constraints and tokenism.

The presentation concluded with a brainstorming session on identifying data sources and sharing experiences related to data usage. Participants identified the following sources of data:

- o National Human Rights Commissions
- o Government data sources at district level
- o Clinic registers and organisations
- o One-on-one interviews
- o Focus group discussions to connect with lived experiences of individuals and groups
- o Society as a primary source of data
- o ChatGPT
- o Community data collection
- o Administrative data
- o Databases
- o Academic and research institutions
- o Civil society organisations
- o Media reports and investigations but we have to be careful of this source because of bias
- o Private sector data

### **Closing Session**

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Chengetai shared the marking scheme for the concept note, to help participants to prepare for their submissions later in the week. He explained each segment and invited participants to seek out faculty members for guidance on how to respond to the concept note questions, including on feasibility, appropriateness of methods, clarity and detail of procedures, relevance and significance, the theory of change, potential for impact and resource availability, summary of relevant information, clarity and professionalism.

Participants were notified that they would all get a mentor to assist them throughout the process. Chengetai reminded the participants that the seed grant was not free money, and that it was something they would be held accountable for, through auditing. Participants were then invited to share questions on the concept note. Questions focused on the minimum/maximum size of groups for submission of concept notes, the difference between individual and group submissions, the role of faculty members in advising on concept notes, and how to apply as the only individual from a country. Chengetai responded to all the questions, and invited faculty

members to stand, so that participants could identify them and seek them out during the course of the Academy.

Chengetai then followed up on some of the housekeeping requests and assured participants that their housekeeping concerns would be addressed. The sessions ended with participants completing a Mentimeter to review their experience.

## LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY

### Summary of Sessions

The sessions under the theme of leadership and accountability focused on building the capacity of young leaders on: how to advance comprehensive sexuality education in their countries, adopting gender transformative approaches, dealing with anti-gender movements, using drama as a tool for advocacy, understanding how to engage in local advocacy, integrating climate change in SRHR advocacy, and exploring the future of advocacy in the context of the funding crisis.

LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY SESSIONS	FACILITATOR
<b>Comprehensive Sexuality Education</b>	Diana Amanyire, Save the Children and James Tumisime, UNFPA
<b>Gender Transformative Approaches and Anti-Gender Movements</b>	Yumnah Hattas, Frontline AIDS
<b>Learning through Drama</b>	Tumie Komanyane, Unitaid
<b>Building Local Capacity to Engage in Advocacy</b>	Saruh Rusike, Y+ Global
<b>Future of Advocacy in Light of Funding Crises:</b>	Loyiso Saliso, and Zintle Tsholwana, Sisonke National Sex Workers Movement in South Africa

Key takeaways from the sessions under this theme were that:

- Young leaders are uniquely placed to influence the decisions of the governments and communities to support the provision of CSE, because they are directly affected by the lack of CSE provision.
- The Gender Continuum Tool is a useful framework for youth-led organisations and groups to follow as they move away from gender-blind responses to design and deliver SRHR programmes that are more gender transformative.
- Social and behavioural change can take place more effectively through the engaging theatrical tools that allow communities to reflect on how they use their power in oppressive ways, and to identify how to use this power in safer and more empowering ways.
- Using localised data and adapting advocacy efforts to local contexts increases the effectiveness of youth-led SRHR advocacy work.

- Incorporating climate change advocacy in broader SRHR programmes can improve young people's health outcomes, advance their human rights and help create a gender transformative society.
- Young leaders working on sex workers rights need to identify funding innovations, create and join movements and hold their governments to account to help ensure that their work continues to be funded

### **Comprehensive Sexuality Education:** Diana Amanyire, Save the Children and James Tumisime, UNFPA

Diana started the session by giving an overview of its objectives, which were identified as: understanding the fundamentals of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE); recognising the benefits of CSE in health and well-being; navigating policy frameworks and global commitments; addressing myths, misconceptions and pushbacks on CSE; appreciating the effective approaches to CSE delivery; and exploring the role of young people in delivering CSE. She explained that the session would focus on CSE, its fundamentals, benefits, policy frameworks, addressing misconceptions, effective delivery approaches, and the role of young people.

Participants were invited to share the names used to define CSE in their countries. Some of the responses included 'ukufunziza etemacansi', 'elshi', 'life-skills based sexuality education', and CSE. Dianat then described the core characteristics of CSE as age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and scientifically accurate information. She explained that in all countries there are different levels of CSE according to age ranges (10-14, 15-19, and 20-24 years). Participants were taken through the benefits of CSE, including delayed sexual initiation, increased use of contraception, and promotion of positive attitudes, supporting healthy relationships and self-esteem.



Diana discussed the challenges and pushbacks against CSE, particularly in Africa, and strategies to overcome them, including knowing country-specific frameworks and guidelines. She addressed the opposition to CSE, which she explained was often rooted in cultural and religious beliefs, before outlining strategies to respond to this opposition strategically and persuasively. She then highlighted the need for CSE to be delivered in both formal and informal settings, reaching

vulnerable groups, and promoting sexual and reproductive health rights.

She gave an overview of the core components of CSE, including human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behaviour, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, and rights and responsibilities. She shared examples from various African countries,

such as Eswatini, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Uganda, to illustrate the different approaches and challenges in implementing CSE. She then emphasized the need to adapt CSE to local cultural contexts while upholding human rights and health standards

Participants were then invited to stand in the middle of the room and make a line to the end of the room. Diana read some statement out and invited participants to pick a side, between true and false - with some staying in the middle.

#### **Statement 1: CSE encourages young people to have sex**

All participants said it was false. When asked for the reasons for their response, they explained that if CSE really encouraged young people to have sex, then there would not be any young people having sex to begin with in areas that did not receive CSE. They highlighted that CSE gives young people information to make informed decisions, including the ability to negotiate how many children one wants to have and to plan their future.

#### **Statement 2: Parents should be the sole/only educators of children on sexuality**

Most participants said no, whilst three were in the unsure and stood in the middle. When asked for their reasons, they explained that parents were not the only people to teach children about sex as some children were orphaned and relied on guardians and other people for information instead. One participant highlighted that parents were too old to engage with young ones in discussions on sexuality and that it was better to give peers a chance to communicate with them instead. Once participant stood in the middle because they felt that parents should be the teachers of their young ones, but that they were not meant to be the only teachers.

#### **Statement 3: Sexuality education disregards or imposes cultural or religious values or morals (forces you to take on different values and morals)**

Most participants said no, and a few were unsure and stood in the middle. When asked for their explanations, one participant stated that when CSE first came to Africa, Africans had their own values and way of doing things. They explained that it included more of Western culture than African culture. One participant highlighted that CSE did not incorporate indigenous sexuality education tools and practices, and that it focused on Western culture, which was not bad per se, as it allowed youth to understand more about their sexual rights. They explained that some Western values in CSE were good to hold on to, and that some were not. Other participants described CSE as a form of civilisation, as a way of helping adolescents to discover their rights and learn where they stand.

The session concluded with a focus on the role of young people in advancing the CSE agenda, including peer education, policy engagement, local and digital activism, and community-led programming. Diana encouraged participants to use their influence to transform their communities and to package CSE appropriately for their specific contexts. She also stressed the importance of continuous improvement and evaluation to ensure that CSE programs are effective and responsive to the needs of young people.

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*"If it doesn't align with the definition of what CSE is and global standards, then it is not CSE" – Diana Amanyire*

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### **Gender Transformative Approaches and Anti-Gender Movements: Yumnah Hattas, Frontline AIDS**

Yumnah started the session with a group activity, a race, to illustrate certain concepts on gender transformative approaches. She sought volunteers to represent various roles and concepts, such as family members (father, brother, mother, wife), professions (job manager, police, religious leader), societal issues (stigma, violence, unemployment), and abstract ideas (marriage, policies). The race was designed with obstacles, where some volunteers acted as barriers embodying concepts like washing, cooking, studying, and negative societal elements, hindering the progress of the racers representing gender identities (male, female, LGBTQIA+). The goal was to have the racers navigate these obstacles to reach a designated endpoint. Instructions were given to the volunteers on how to perform their roles as barriers, emphasizing that they should act according to the concept they represent, but without causing harm.



Following the exercise, participants were reconvened to discuss the implications of the exercise in respect to achieving gender equality and broader development outcomes. The discussion covered examples of gender-blind, gender-sensitive, and gender-transformative approaches using the Gender Equality Continuum Tool as a foundation. Participants were reminded that people's decisions were influenced by different factors, including gendered restrictions. Yumnah explained that in SRHR programming like that on condom use,

it was necessary to advocate for community-based distribution of male and female condoms with training on negotiation skills for women to address power imbalances.

The conversation shifted to the concepts of equality, equity, and justice, emphasizing the need to remove obstacles to achieve a just society. A participant raised a point about the anti-rights movement, suggesting that its target is primarily white women and that its rhetoric often does not align with the realities of black and brown women, who have historically had to work and not had the privilege of being stay-at-home mothers. The discussion touched on the classist and racist nature of the nuclear family ideal, and how race was a significant barrier to be overcome in the quest for a just society.

To close the session, participants were shown a video about a girl who is subjected to child marriage and subsequently adolescent pregnancy. They engaged in brief discussion to explore the possible causes for this, and ways to address the causes through advocacy work.



## Learning through Drama: Tumie Komanyane, Unitaid

Tumie started the session by outlining its objectives, which were to explore Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, understand the concept of Activism, and to use drama as a tool for community engagement and advocacy.

She then gave an overview of Unitaid's work in health innovation, particularly in making medication more accessible and palatable, such as alternative forms of medication for those who dislike pills and innovations in oxygen access in communities. Tumie highlighted the importance of community involvement in technology and health innovation, referencing the excitement around the PrEP ring and the need for technologies that allow individuals to access health solutions without intimidation or permission. The challenges with the female condom were also discussed, emphasizing the need for user-friendly designs that consider women's preferences and experiences.



Following the introduction to Unitaid, Tumie gave an overview of the pedagogy of the oppressed, emphasizing the importance of not becoming oppressors when in positions of power and advocating for respectful engagement with marginalized communities. The use of violence to maintain oppression was explored, including subtle forms of violence such as exclusion and undermining. She touched on the dehumanization of individuals in various settings, such as meetings and social interactions, and the importance of self-reflection and accountability in community work. She then shared examples of oppression and discrimination, underscoring the need for fairness and justice, and

Tumie introduced the concept of "praxis", emphasizing the importance of reflection and action in liberation. She then highlighted the importance of education as a tool for empowerment in enabling individuals to recognize and fight for their rights. Based on the above, she highlighted the importance of the use of drama, theatre, and art as tools for communicating difficult messages and promoting change, with reference given to the Theatre of the Oppressed and various theatrical techniques. Tumie shared personal anecdotes and examples of using drama, theatre and arts as communication tools to illustrate key points and engage the audience.

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*No matter where you go in the world, when you are working with communities, those are human beings that need to be respected always – Tumie Komanyane*

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Tumie explained that working with young people required one to always think about whether they were being fair or not, and doing what was right for everybody. She noted that violence was often used to maintain oppression, and that violence manifested itself through words and actions that cause harm. She highlighted that the violence that defines oppression was

sometimes hard to see, and that the role of theatre was to unearth the different faces of violence.

She noted that to get to the root of violence and oppression, people needed to discuss what is and isn't humane, and to know what is right versus what is wrong. She identified self-reflection as an important tool in navigating these conversations, so one could hold themselves accountable for the possible harm they were causing to the communities they work with. Theatre was highlighted as a powerful medium to provoke self-reflection, and to provide accessible tools for communities to explore difficult issues.

Participants were then taken through different types of dramatizations like tableaux, skits, role-play and improvisation. Tumie then split participants into groups for 12 minutes to come up with a skit that engaged the audience directly. Three groups were initially created for the exercise, but participants decided to create two groups instead.

- **Group 1:** The first group showed a family, in which, one partner was abusing the other for not feeding the children. The neighbours intervened and called the police, who in turn said they couldn't attend to the scene because they didn't have money for fuel. Once the police arrived, the abused partner started making excuses for their abuser and tried to get their neighbours to not pursue the matter further. One of their close friends who had observed the abused intervened and shared the correct story with the police, asking them to call a social worker. The social worker was then called in, and they took the abused partner and children to a safe house after collecting evidence at the scene.
- **Group 2:** The second group set their scene at 'United Mission Hospital's Youth Friendly Clinic'. The facility had sex workers, patients, nurses, a security guard, a doctor and a receptionist. In their act, a young pregnant sex worker went to look for services at the clinic and was met by a security guard who blamed her for being pregnant and called it a taboo because she had a child whilst young. Another sex worker went to the same facility to have an STI treated, and the security guard was very judgemental towards her as well. An intersex man went to the same clinic and experienced stigma from the guard. The receptionist and nurse in the facility were also judgemental and not very welcoming of the clients. A client with a TB infection came into the facility and was stigmatised by all the clients. The doctor refused to take care of the needs of the clients and shamed them in public for having an STI, being pregnant and having diarrhoea. An intersex man who came in seeking condoms was mistreated and decided to stand up for their rights.

Participants were then asked to share reflections on the two skits. They agreed that both dramatizations were good in that they reflected different issues. They noted that using a mode of communication that captured people's emotions could influence change. One participant expressed gratitude for the use of a theatre as a learning tool and noted that it was a welcome relief after sitting for a long time. Another participant criticised the methodology as being more Eurocentric than Afrocentric and encouraged the use of tools that made use of existing knowledge in communities.

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*“Always show up in a room as your most authentic self. The only person you will ever be is you. Be very proud of who you are and what you represent” – Tumie Komanyane*

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Tumie closed the session by reminding participants of the benefits of using drama for advocacy. She highlighted that drama is a powerful tool for change and that the pedagogy of the oppressed approach fosters critical reflection. activism empowers communities. Participants were encouraged to make use of the methodology in their own work, to help people understand that we must not oppress the same people that represent where we have come from. Tumie invited participants to share ideas with the faculty on how the pedagogy of the oppressed could be presented in future academies, and any other solutions on what they would like to change in future academies.

### **Building Local Capacity to Engage in Advocacy: Saruh Rusike, Y+ Global**

Saruh introduced the session by highlighting the importance of understanding the impact of climate change on the African context. She emphasized the need to include Africa in global climate change strategies and policies, given its role as a provider of raw materials. Vanessa, a 28-year-old advocate, was mentioned as an example of someone actively bringing Africa's perspective to the world stage.

She then engaged the participants in an interactive exercise where they were asked to mention policies they knew, ranging from HIV prevention to sexual and reproductive health. Participants shared various policies from different countries, including the HIV Prevention Act of 2018, the criminal quantification act in Zimbabwe, and the termination of pregnancy act in Zambia.

The session shifted to defining key terms related to policy and advocacy. Participants shared their initial thoughts on the word 'policy', with responses including 'government', 'direction', 'law', 'punishment', 'management', 'authority', 'guideline', 'accountability', and 'power'. Saruh then provided a technical definition of policy as a set of coherent decisions with a common long-term purpose.

Saruh emphasized the importance of starting advocacy efforts at the local level, highlighting that it is community-led. She explained that advocacy can begin in various local settings, such as villages, cities, and townships, and stressed the need to engage local authorities, school boards, and community leaders to drive policy changes. Following this, she discussed three approaches to policy advocacy: persuasion, mobilization, and denunciation. Persuasion was described as the act of seduction, trying to get decision-makers on the same page. Mobilization was described as rallying stakeholders to influence policy change, whilst denunciation was said to refer to publicly condemning existing policies.

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*“Whatever you want to do, you need to find a policy for it so that it governs your next step” – Saruh Rusike*

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Participants were asked to simplify the term 'policy advocacy', and their responses focused on doing something practical to make a change in laws and make a difference in the lives of people. They mentioned that policy advocacy often followed some kind of regression in the policy landscape, which brought about the need to amplify the voices of silenced communities. Saruh then outlined key principles of policy advocacy, including patience, clear messaging, meaningful involvement, flexibility, and accountability and emphasized that policy advocacy is a long-term process that requires patience and persistence. She also stressed the importance of being flexible with approaches and adapting to changing circumstances.

Following discussions on what makes advocacy successful, participants emphasized the importance of using localized evidence and empathetic stories to support advocacy efforts. They highlighted that evidence can be in the form of stories from people who have lived experiences. One participant noted that using data from the local context helps to paint a picture and bring the story home for leaders and the people being convinced.

Saruh advised participants to be flexible with their approaches to policy advocacy, adapting their plans as needed while keeping the end goal in sight. She emphasized the need for participants to be accountable to themselves and consistently follow through with their advocacy efforts.

In closing, Saruh encouraged participants to use the definitions and phrases discussed in the session in their concept notes, and when engaging with their communities. She advised participants to figure out how to persuade people, mobilize them, and condemn existing issues in their advocacy action plans. She urged them to meaningfully involve people in their advocacy efforts, ensuring they will actively contribute to achieving the desired outcomes.

#### **Climate Change: Yumnah Hattas, Frontline AIDS**

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The session began with an interactive discussion about the difference between weather and climate. One participant defined weather as a short-term expectation and climate as a long-term result of a particular setting. The discussion shifted to recent weather changes and their impacts. Participants shared observations about temperature variations and seasonal shifts, noting the impact on their activities and health. One participant mentioned the challenges of conducting activities on rainy or windy days and the impact of stormy weather on remote work signal strength. Another participant living in a rural area highlighted difficulties in accessing care due to travel limitations caused by severe weather.

The facilitator then introduced the concept of climate change, explaining how climate patterns shift over time, referencing a 20-year cycle taught in schools. The discussion touched on global warming and the melting of ice caps. Participants were then divided into groups representing the Southern and Northern Hemispheres to discuss how they know the climate is changing, how it is changing where they "live" (in their assigned hemisphere), and what causes climate change.

The Southern Hemisphere groups identified increases in temperature, changes in rainfall seasons, increased flooding, prolonged hot seasons, rising sea levels and scientific reports as ways they knew climate was changing, and how it was changing where they live. They noted

that the changes were due to deforestation, carbon emissions from industries, population growth and irresponsible production.

The Northern Hemisphere groups identified unpredictable weather patterns, rising sea levels, temperature increases, wildfires, heatwaves, flooding, extreme storms and shifts in seasons as ways in which the climate was changing, and how it was changing where they live. They noted that the changes were due to air pollution from burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, global warming and a drop in photosynthesis levels.



Yumnah then shared a video on climate change and greenhouse gases and invited participants to share their reflections on it. They highlighted that it helped them learn how to contextualise data and relate to farming aspects when it came to the overgrazing of livestock. They said it helped them understand how they contribute to climate change, and that the areas producing the most emissions were not the most affected.

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*“The policy is not about stopping it but about preparing for it and thinking into the future in case adverse climate events continue” – Yumnah Hattas*

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Participants were then asked to discuss in groups how the changes in the climate were affecting their health and intersecting with issues of human rights and creating a gender transformative society. Discussions surfaced by climate change was causing health-related illness such as fainting, heat stroke and heat rash. Climate change was said to be affecting the right to food and healthcare through its negative impacts on agricultural productivity leading to food insecurity, and related water scarcity. Participants noted that it led to asthma, brain damage, waterborne diseases, mental health challenges, malnutrition, skin cancer and other health challenges. Participants highlighted that it increased the risk of human rights abuses, disruption of access to essential services, displacement from homes, safety concerns, gender-based violence, and gender inequality.

Following the exercise, Yumnah reminded participants that climate change is a policy issue because it affects our lives directly. She urged participants to adopt strategies and actions that slow down climate change, and to include these strategies and actions in their policy advocacy.

**Future of Advocacy in Light of Funding Crises:** Loyiso Saliso, and Zintle Tsholwana, Sisonke National Sex Workers Movement in South Africa

The session, led by Sisonke, a sex worker-led movement, addressed the funding crisis affecting sex worker rights advocacy due to geopolitical shifts and the rise of anti-rights movements. The presenters highlighted the dependence on donor funding in Africa and the negative impact of funding cuts on community organizations and access to essential services like healthcare. Loyiso and Zintle emphasized the need to adapt advocacy strategies, address stigma and



discrimination against sex workers, and advocate for decriminalization despite funding limitations and lengthy law reform processes.



The session explored the intersectional nature of the sex work community, including LGBTQIA+ community, people living with HIV, and people with disabilities, and the importance of addressing their specific needs. The anti-rights and anti-gender movements were identified as significant obstacles, influencing government policies and donor priorities. The example of Uganda's LGBTQIA+ situation was cited as a case where the government prioritized anti-rights agendas over the well-being of its citizens.

Strategies for sustaining advocacy efforts, including engaging local resources and empowering young people, were discussed. The impact of funding cuts on access to healthcare services, particularly in rural communities, was raised as a major concern. The discussion further delved into specific instances of how funding cuts have impacted sex workers, such as the closure of clinics and the resulting lack of access to healthcare services. The facilitators highlighted the South African government's inadequate response to these cuts, particularly concerning HIV prevention and condom shortages. They emphasized the need for African organizations to become more self-sufficient and less reliant on foreign aid, while also acknowledging the value of past donor support.

Young people were identified as key to finding solutions and driving change. Loyiso and Zintle urged them to acquire advocacy skills, understand their countries' policies, and hold governments accountable. They stressed the importance of including young people in decision-making spaces and utilizing digital platforms for advocacy. Participants then shared ideas on how to address the crisis, including through exhausting local remedies, empowering youth through corporate social responsibility initiatives, and mobilizing domestic resources.

Participants were invited to ask questions and share comments on the session. One participant asked for guidance on how to deal with sexually exploited children who pose as sex workers but are below the age of consent. Loyiso explained that at Sisonke they don't provide any support to anyone under the age of 18 in sex work, they clarified that they treat it as child exploitation, but that it was at times difficult to handle as some were not always honest about their age. Participants noted that in many cases, sexually exploited children came from homes where either or both of their parents were sex workers, and that their safety needs were often compromised in the quest to meet the financial needs of the family.

The session concluded with a call for unity, intersectionality, and strategic action to combat the challenges faced by sex workers and other marginalized communities. The need for uncomfortable conversations and behavioural changes within communities was also highlighted as essential for building a stronger movement.

Following the closure of the session, participants were given a session evaluation form and asked to respond to the questions highlighted below.

### Section 1: Workshop Objectives and Outcomes

\*Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements (1 – Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1. The workshop effectively shared information on donor-funded programs for key populations.
2. The session provided a clear understanding of anti-rights and anti-gender movements and their impact on funding opportunities in the Global South.
3. I now better understand the environment of key population programming and how it has changed due to the funding crisis.
4. I feel more equipped to discuss how anti-gender and anti-rights movements affect our everyday lives and funding opportunities

### Section 2: Open-Ended Feedback

5. What was the most valuable insight or takeaway from today's session?
6. What challenges or gaps remain in your understanding of donor-funded programs or anti-rights movements?
7. How do you plan to apply what you learned today in your work or advocacy?
8. What additional topics or support would you like to see in future workshops?

### Section 3: General Feedback

9. How would you rate the overall workshop? (poor, fair, good, very good, or excellent)
10. What could be improved for future sessions? (e.g. content, facilitation, duration, format).
11. Any other comments or suggestions?

The most relevant responses linked to the session were in relation to question 5 on the most valuable insight or takeaway from the session. Responses to the other session evaluation questions have been incorporated into the evaluation section of the report. Their responses to question 5 are summarised below:

- **Importance of youth leadership:** Participants mentioned the importance of fighting for their rights as young people and finding innovative ways to do so. They highlighted that young people needed to take back their power, advocate to own their rights and stand for themselves. They spoke to the need for youth to innovate in responding to anti-gender and anti-rights movements, including making the use of social media platforms for their advocacy.
- **Sex workers' rights:** Participants highlighted that they recalled the necessity of respecting sex workers and their rights. Some participants acknowledged learning about the rights of sex workers, and their experiences of exclusion for the first time. Participants acknowledged sex work as legitimate business and the inviolability of their rights.
- **Innovations in funding:** Participants identified the need to find new solutions to the funding crisis, including through funding themselves. They noted the importance of being resilient and defiant in the face of funding cuts, and to use the new funding context as an impetus to identify local funding sources.

- **Hold government to account:** Participants agreed on the need to hold their governments accountable for health sector funding. They identified the need for intensified youth-led advocacy to unlock domestic resources for health and hold governments accountable for existing funding commitments and allocations for health. They agreed with the calls for increased transparency among aid agencies, so that it would be easy to track any misspending.
- **Create movements:** Participants spoke to the need to form coalitions and movements to aggregate their efforts and create change at a broader scale. They agreed with calls for unity and for strategic action for change.

## Closing Session

Ishmael invited participants to use one word to describe how the sessions had gone. Participants characterised the sessions as awesome, splendid, superb, delicious and positive. Chengetai then shared a Mentimeter link for participants to use in rating their experience of the sessions, and to identify areas to improve for the rest of the Academy. He encouraged participants to complete the Mentimeter, as on the previous day there were only 8 people who completed it. Participants were then asked to decide on how they were planning to pitch their concept notes and to share the information with faculty members so that an appropriate time allocation would be given for the pitch session.

## PROGRAMMING & IMPLEMENTATION

### Summary of Sessions

The sessions under the theme of programming and implementation focused on building the capacity of young leaders on how to use storytelling to help generate evidence, the rights of young people with disabilities, the use of digital platform and AI for advocacy, movement building strategies, lesson learned from the implementation of seed grants from the 2024 READY Academy, monitoring and evaluation. The sessions closed out with a practical pitch session, to test the ability of participants to share their concept note ideas ahead of making written submissions.

PROGRAMMING & IMPLEMENTATION SESSIONS	FACILITATOR
Storytelling for Data Gathering	Maxwell Katekwe, Y+ Global and Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS
Young People: Disability and Rights	Diana Amanyire, Save the Children
Strengthening your Digital Voice - Communication Strategies for Young Advocates and the Use of AI	Modester Mangilani, Y+ Global, and Priscilla Addo, Y+ Global
Panel - Current Context of Funding for SRHR and Youth	Joao Chongo and Nick Veldwijk, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Movement Building Strategy and the READY to Evolve Strategy	Saruh Rusike, Y+ Global

<b>Seed Funding Projects Implementation - Lessons from the Alumni</b>	Chola Mumba, Intersex Society of Zambia, and Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi
<b>Pitch Session</b>	Open

Key takeaways from the sessions under this theme were that:

- The use of mixed data collection methods can help young leaders to gather comprehensive data on their advocacy issues, which in turn will help them craft compelling advocacy narratives.
- It is the responsibility of young leaders and the organisations they work in to ensure that they design disability-inclusive programs, that challenge misconceptions about persons with disabilities, and create accessible spaces and services for all young people to benefit from.
- Digital media campaigns on SRHR need to adapt to the changing requirements of different platforms, whilst ensuring the safety of all users.
- The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, like a few other development partners, is shifting its focus to localised responses, working in partnership with governments and communities to improve SRHR outcomes of young people. Youth-led organisations with an interest in working with such partners need to ensure their proposals speak to these themes.
- Movement building is a powerful tool that young leaders can use to influence social change through amplifying marginalised voices, building collective power and enhancing unity for young people's SRHR.
- The \$2,000 seed grants may seem like a small amount of money; however, they can convert into significant impact when coupled with the right partnerships and with scalable ideas for change in the SRHR field.
- Simplicity and clarity are key in creating monitoring and evaluation plans for small projects.

#### **Storytelling for Data Gathering:** Maxwell Katekwe, Y+ Global and Chengetai Dziwa, Frontline AIDS

Maxwell started the session by outlining its objectives, which were to ensure that participants familiarised themselves with data collection methods, and that they understood the importance of data collection and evidence building. Participants were asked if they had received the concept note template, after which they were taken through the concept note template sections and invited to ask questions for clarity. Participants without access to computers given papers to allow them to submit written concept notes and advised to take at least 15 pages to write on.



Participants were reminded that funds would be sent to a fiscal host, and that they wouldn't be receiving the money in their individual bank accounts. Participants were notified that a background check would be conducted on the details provided and that the deadline for submission would be 12

midnight on Thursday 12 June. Those submitting handwritten concept notes were asked to submit them to Fairoze by midnight, whilst those submitting typed concept notes were asked to send them to Chengetai's email address. Participants were also notified that they could use online search tools but were advised to maintain originality to score higher marks.

Participants were advised to follow the SMART approach to identifying objectives, and to write a maximum of three objectives. Chengetai notified participants that faculty members would be available to help them understand the concept note elements and key concepts learnt throughout the week. Participants were encouraged to write concept notes that link to the theme of the READY Academy 'Beyond the funding crisis: Empowering young leaders to hold national governments to account'. He explained that concept note ideas could include holding decision makers accountable, ensuring meaningful youth engagement and providing opportunities for youth to benefit from their experiences and expertise.

Maxwell provided participants with further detail on how to approach budgeting as they developed concept notes, before walking them through the fundamentals of data collection. He urged them to be very specific in providing evidence on the situation in their localities when making advocacy cases in their concept notes. He described different data quality standards that include validity, timeliness, accuracy, consistency, relevance and completeness, and informed participants of the importance of having a complete data set when implementing, so that all the needed details would be available.

Participants were notified of the differences between primary and secondary data collection, as well as data collection methods. Maxwell gave examples of the different data collection tools like observations, tests, qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys. He reminded participants of the existence of the READY Log, created to help track youth-led advocacy efforts, before taking them through types of storytelling and why they are used, including story circles and participatory methods. Participants were then shown an infographic on the effects of the USA stop work order on funding across the globe. At the close of the session, participants were taken through an online game on Kahoot! The game was conducted as a quiz to assess what participants remembered from the session.

### **Young People: Disability and Rights: Diana Amanyire, Save the Children**

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Diana started the session by giving an overview of the objectives. She explained that the purpose of the session was to ensure that participants were able to: understand disability and the different types of disability; explore the barriers that persons with disabilities experience; understand disability rights, including common violations; explore disability inclusive language and terminologies; explore myths and facts about disability and persons with disabilities, including their consequences; understand the barriers to SRHR/HIV access for persons with disabilities; explore strategies to promote disability inclusion; and make personal commitments to advance disability inclusion.

She noted from the onset that she would have preferred to co-facilitate the session with a representative of persons with disabilities, and assured participants that this would be factored into the next Academy. She highlighted that the session would be focused on disability and health, with the aim of defining disability, exploring different types of disability,



understanding barriers faced by persons with disabilities, discussing disability rights, and addressing misconceptions.

Diana explained that disability includes long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that interact with various barriers, preventing full participation. She then discussed attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers, stressing the importance of enabling policies and communication strategies like Braille and sign language. She covered the evolution of disability-related language, advocating for respectful, people-centred terminology while encouraging the audience to reflect on stigmatizing language used in their communities. She underscored the significance of collaborating with organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure authentic representation and understanding. She re-emphasized the importance of inclusive language and terminology and highlighted the need for personal commitment in designing inclusive interventions and programs.

The second part of the session focused on disability inclusion, human rights, and strategies for advocacy. The discussions covered legal frameworks, accessibility, common violations of rights, and myths surrounding disabilities. As part of the discussions, participants explored ways to promote inclusion in various settings, from local communities to broader policy initiatives. The session included interactive elements to challenge misconceptions and encourage proactive engagement.

Participants were given different statements and told to either sit down (if true) or stay standing (if false).

- ***Persons with disabilities are not interested in sex:*** Everyone stayed standing to register disagreement with the statement.
- ***Persons with disabilities are dependent:*** Participants gave mixed answers, with some saying persons with disability needed help to move around, and that they are made dependent in appropriate provisions are not made for accessibility and inclusion.
- ***Persons with disabilities should not have children:*** All participants stood up because they disagreed with the statement.
- ***Disability is always visible:*** Most participants stood up to disagree with the statement. Only one person sat down to agree, however, upon further discussion, it emerged that they didn't understand the question.
- ***Disability means inability:*** All participants stood up to disagree with the statement.
- ***Persons with disability are less likely to contract HIV:*** A few participants professed neutrality, and when asked, they noted that everyone had the same risk of contracting HIV regardless of the state of their ability.

Following the exercise, Diana emphasized the importance of understanding national disability laws and ensuring that policies are inclusive. She pointed out common violations of human rights, such as discrimination, denial of opportunities, and reproductive rights violations. She highlighted the need for accessible and reasonable accommodations in education, employment, and healthcare, and outlined strategies for promoting disability inclusion, including using legal tools for advocacy, documenting cases of exclusion, leading community-based initiatives, and conducting accessibility audits. She also underscored the importance of providing accessible information and services.

Diana then facilitated an interactive session addressing common myths about disabilities, such as the misconception that persons with disabilities are not interested in sex or relationships. She clarified that such myths lead to exclusion from SRHR programs and increased vulnerability to HIV. She also discussed the harm of forced sterilizations and the exploitation of disabled individuals for begging.

Participants were shown a video on 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' and asked to share what they learnt from the video. Their reflections focus on the need to ask before you assist someone, so that you don't invade their privacy; respecting persons with disabilities by using language that they are comfortable with; not assuming that a person with disability needs help; and not referring to persons with disability by their disability.

Diane shared information on the common violations of human rights for persons with disabilities, including forced sterilisation, political and civic exclusion, violence and abuse, and barriers to access to SRHR services. She explained that in every population, 15% were persons with disabilities, and that they were not a small group/segment of the population. She urged participants to challenge any myths or misconceptions they had about persons with disability, and to facilitate their inclusion in health programming.

She concluded the session by assigning participants the task of identifying ways to promote disability inclusion in their communities, starting with small, local actions. Her take home message for participants was on the need for them to focus on strategies to promote disability inclusion, which include using legal tools for advocacy, leading community-based initiatives, using storytelling and media awareness, and strengthening self-advocacy tools. She also emphasized the role of youth-led coordination and collaboration with disability rights organizations. She then shared a personal anecdote about educating friends on family planning methods, illustrating the impact of grassroots advocacy.



### **Strengthening your Digital Voice - Communication Strategies for Young Advocates and the Use of AI:** Modester Mangilani, Y+ Global, and Priscilla Addo, Y+ Global

Modester outlined the session's objectives as to equip young advocates with effective communication strategies to amplify their digital presence; explore how social media platforms and AI tools can elevate content creation, storytelling, engagement, and influence; and understand basic principles of online safety and how to protect their digital well-being while advocating.

She invited participants to share which social media platforms they were most active on and if they were already following the READY platform. She then asked them to define digital advocacy in their own words. Their definitions focused on the amplification of the voices of the

silent using digital platforms, and the use of media platforms to share what you want, like coming up with a campaign. She explained that in the digital age, people didn't need to be in the same room to share messages, and that they could now get their messages out to a wider audience in a short timeframe.

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*"I know we want to get all the likes, and there is certain content that always gets all the likes, but don't be afraid to build momentum slowly so people see that you are saying something consistently" – Priscilla Addo*

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Priscilla informed participants on the importance of having a digital voice, as well as the importance and effectiveness of digital advocacy. She introduced key strategies for digital advocacy and provided tips on selecting the most appropriate approaches. She advised participants to plan their posts in advance, and to avoid posting every day, in order to protect against content fatigue and overstimulation. She encouraged them to use images and videos with good scenery in their content, and to explore the use of creative and humorous messaging approaches.

She notified participants that the use of hashtags on some platforms like X led to the deprioritisation of their content and urged them to not change their usernames often as it led to brand confusion. Participants were urged to demonstrate the real-life impact of their work and to tag and share posts from the READY platform to help grow the movement online. Priscilla proposed the use of subtitles in videos, livestreaming for real-time conversations, and adopting different approaches for different social media platforms. She reminded participants that it wasn't always about posting their faces but about finding creative ways to engage their audiences.

Participants were taken through online safety for advocates and invited to discuss their thoughts on what they thought it was. Priscilla explained to participants that sometimes when they want to post something on social media, they needed to make considerations for their safety, and that of any tagged persons. She then discussed the value of AI platforms like Gemini, Black Box, Meta and ChatGPT, reminding participants that it was a helpful tool that shouldn't replace their voice, but should enhance it instead.

Priscilla invited participants to create a campaign post using AI tools using the theme for the year and then improve it so that it aligns to their values and advocacy objectives. Participants were then asked to design a social media post on Canva using images captured from the academy, use Instagram story tools and tag the READY Academy.

#### **Panel - Current Context of Funding for SRHR and Youth: Joao Chongo and Nick Veldwijk, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

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The panel discussion focused on the current funding context for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and youth programs, particularly in light of recent budget cuts and shifts in priorities by the Netherlands government. Joao, the coordinator of a regional program at the Netherlands Embassy, provided an overview of the situation, highlighting both the challenges

and opportunities for youth advocacy and innovative solutions. He emphasized the importance of localization, strengthening local organizations, and fostering dialogue with governments to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups and the continuation of essential services.

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*“Health remains a priority. The Netherlands is still committed to reducing maternal and child mortality, health innovation, reduction of harmful practices, access to safe abortion, and more focus on HIV responses that are locally led - focusing on adolescent girls and young women, and key populations” – Joao Chongo*

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The discussion highlighted the shift in the Netherlands' development cooperation policy, which includes a reduction of 2.5 billion euros in development aid. Despite these cuts, Joao clarified that their health budget would remain the same until 2027. He explained that the Netherlands was shifting its geographic focus to West Africa, including the Sahar region, and the Horn of Africa. One of the key changes involved reducing investment in UN organizations and international NGOs, with a greater emphasis on localization and supporting local organizations. He highlighted that the shift aimed to foster a trade of expertise between countries, allowing young people to share their knowledge and concerns in person.

He clarified that there would be a change in terms of geographic focus, with a focus on West Africa, MENA and Sahel region. In terms of civil society, they would be reducing their programme support targeting civil society and ending their support for lobbying and advocacy. He explained that they would be focusing more on dialogue, in trying to learn more about the perspectives of different countries on various policy positions. He emphasized that the Netherlands remained committed to key topics such as reducing maternal and child mortality, access to safe abortion, health innovation, and mental health. Their focus would be on SRHR and HIV, with an emphasis on prevention and supporting the capacity of local organizations, particularly those serving adolescent girls, young women, and key populations.

Young people from various African countries shared their experiences and concerns regarding the impact of funding cuts on their work and communities, particularly in accessing medication, condoms, and SRHR services. They also raised questions about the future of SRHR and youth advocacy and sought assurances of continued support from the Kingdom of Netherlands. Nick Veldwijk, the First Secretary of HIV and SRHR and Coordinating Policy Officer at the Embassy, reinforced their commitment to youth engagement and encouraged young people to leverage their unique perspectives to influence policy and donor directions.

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*“People united can never be defeated. If we can unite as youth across the country, we can hold the government accountable and ensure that the funding gap from US funding is bridged” - Participant*

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The meeting concluded with a call for collaboration, innovation, and hope in the face of uncertainty, with a focus on empowering young people to drive change and advocate for their needs.

### **Movement Building Strategy and the READY to Evolve Strategy:** Saruh Rusike, Y+ Global

Saruh started the session by asking participants to share their thoughts on what they associated with the term 'movement building'. Their responses included words like connections, activism, grassroots, teamwork, big voice, and moving forward. She explained that the session focused on movement building, and that it would explore its definition, importance, origins, and examples. She highlighted that the session would explore the cyclical nature of movements, from initial rise to sustained impact, the importance of shaking up the status quo, as well as the role of social change, shifting mindsets, and policy changes in driving successful movements.

Saruh then guided the attendees through a structured discussion, dividing them into groups to define movement building, explain its importance, and provide examples. Participants discussed the characteristics of successful movements, emphasizing the need for a common goal and adaptability. Examples like #MeToo, #SheDecides, and #BlackLivesMatter were discussed to illustrate different facets of movement building. Discussions further explored the origins of movements, attributing them to social and economic factors, as well as issues related to equality, justice, and public health.

Saruh emphasized that movement building was a community-centred approach to social change, focusing on qualitative and long-term strategies. She highlighted the importance of movements in fostering change, enhancing unity, amplifying marginalized voices, and building collective power. She highlighted that successful movements are organic, have a common goal, and are not linear, requiring different approaches and adaptability. She also highlighted the importance of changing mindsets and perceptions, pushing for accountability, and causing a shift in policies to bring about social change.

Participants were split into groups and given a scenario to discuss. They were asked to create fictional movements, with a clear goal, identified allies, set targets and a plan for sustainability.



#### **Group 1: Youth Voices Matter**

- Goal: Ensure young people have access to essential services, Combat stigma and exclusion.
- Allies: local healthcare providers, human rights officers, community rights organisations, and civil society groups.
- Targets: Government officials responsible for healthcare funding and policy makers.



- Sustainability: Keeping engagements with community so that the movement engages community and keeps momentum. Equipping everyone to voice out. Include government officials from within the community.

#### **Group 2: Enough is Enough - for stigma and denial of services**

- Goal: see adolescents and youth to have a safe space to access every service in schools, communities and facilities.
- Actions: Mobilise, sensitise and educate young people on how to address stigma. Equip them with skills.
- Targets: Young people living with HIV.
- Allies: Adolescents from the community and advocates, school head teachers, facility.

#### **Group 3: Rise Up**

- Goal: Youth voices being heard is the main one.
- Actions: Young people should be engaged in meaningful conversations and pushing youth-friendly services by engaging community and service providers which includes NGOs, councillors and human rights activists, using social media, marches and campaigns.

#### **Group 4:**

- Goal: Create non-judgmental environment for the community.
- Action: Building alliances with other movements like Black Lives Matter.

#### **Group 5: ENOUGH Movement**

- Goals: People facing discrimination - sisters' movement.
- Actions: Use of digital space for rallying allies.
- Targets: Ministry of Health.
- Allies: Organisations already working on SRHR and advocacy campaigns.

#### **Group 6: Youth Is Power**

- Goal: Access to proper health services.
- Actions: Mobilise young people and sensitize them.
- Target: young people living with HIV.
- Allies: Young people collaborating, global youth centred organisations.

Following the group presentations, Saruh invited participants to read the READY to Evolve Strategy, which she explained was available in English, Portuguese and French on the Y+ website. She explained that the strategy included all the key elements of movement building.

**Seed Funding Projects Implementation - Lessons from the Alumni:** Chola Mumba, Intersex Society of Zambia, and Ishmael Phiri, Y+ Malawi.

Chola gave an overview of the 'Breaking the Silence' project that won a seed grant in the previous READY Academy. The project's objectives were to facilitate sensitization workshops with media, healthcare providers and community members. Through their activities, they introduced intersex awareness in spaces where it was previously absent and saw positive shifts in attitudes and increased openness to dialogue. They managed to improve facilitation and

session planning tools, strengthen connections with key sectors and to build community trust through direct engagement and support.

Through the intervention they learnt that they had to always centre their advocacy on the lived experiences of the people they were advocating for, to ensure they were the ones sharing their stories and interfacing with decision-makers. They also learnt that combining support and education had the potential to yield better outcomes. In terms of next steps, Chola explained that they were currently focusing on exploring the adaptability of their project across different community contexts.



Ishmael then shared on the outcomes of their Youth for Diversity Youth Engagement project. He reminded participants that he had already presented on what the project intended to achieve and stated that they were looking to reach more young people. He noted that they had been offered the opportunity to scale up the project to global level and were exploring collaboration with UNAIDS on breaking barriers to access to SRHR services. He acknowledged that \$2,000 was not a lot of money, but that they had managed to make an impact through being strategic and engaging allies. He closed off the presentation by noting how his idea had turned into a concept note, which in turn had resulted in change for young people in Malawi.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation: Maxwell Katekwe, Y+ Global**

Maxwell notified participants that the session was the final one for the day and that they would be given time to work on their concept notes. They were informed that following the session, they would have to return to pitch their concept note ideas. He explained that the purpose of the pitches was to assess the originality of their ideas and to help participants to have more chances to have their concept notes considered for funding. In their pitches, participants were asked to include information on their core idea (what and how), who they were targeting and what their geographical location was.

Maxwell informed the participants that each pitch would be limited to 2 minutes and 30 seconds to present. He encouraged participants to combine everything they had learnt in their concept notes, as the scoring of the concept notes would incorporate an assessment of how well they linked their ideas to the sessions they had learnt. He urged the participants to avoid allocating large proportions of their budget to the purchase of physical items.

In closing, Maxwell shared an overview of the learning journal, which would be used for capturing feedback from the participants. He encouraged them to fill in the learning journal so that it would be possible to understand how their learning journey had gone.

### **Pitch Session**

Participants were all invited to pitch their ideas according to the guidelines that had been provided earlier. A summary of each of the concept notes is provided below.



1. A country-wide advocacy campaign in Eswatini focused on addressing stigma faced by adolescents and young people living with HIV in their diversities.
2. Starting an intersex company in Eswatini called Intersex Alliance of Eswatini because of the absence of any such platform in the country. The company would be based in Manzini and Mbabane, as the areas have a lot of organisations working with key populations. The goal of the project would be to make sure intersex people feel free to be who they are.
3. Providing essential health services to key populations in Mabvuku and Epworth in Zimbabwe, who had been abandoned following funding cuts. The project targeted young female and male sex workers aged 18-24 years.
4. Voice of Our Voices young poverty fighters project addressing issues faced by LGBTQIA+ people and young sex workers through income generating projects that supply goods to shops, schools and other platforms. The goal of the project was to give young sex workers and LGBTQIA+ people alternative sources of income so that they could continue to meet their health needs in the wake of funding cuts.
5. Kill Two Birds with One Stone Project focused on climate change and unemployment. The project addressed challenges faced by young people in Kariba, Zimbabwe, where there are high rates of unemployment and poor waste management. The project focused on 10–25-year-olds and well as persons with disabilities. Through the project, trainings would be conducted on income generation from waste products, in collaboration with the Environmental Management Agency, Ministry of Health and other stakeholders.
6. Beyond the Red Umbrella Project, focused on taking care of the children of sex workers in mining areas like Ngozi Mine in Bulawayo and Mazowe district, both in Zimbabwe. The project was focused on increasing access to education, reducing stigma and providing psychosocial support. The project expected to reach 100 sex workers and at least 50 of their children.
7. Empowering 30 young female sex workers through economic skills, life skills and psychosocial support targeting 18–29-year-olds. The project was designed in response to the challenges faced by sex workers in accessing SRHR services.
8. Leveraging social media to promote health education in young people targeting 500 young people in Zambia in Chipata and Gubi areas. The project focused on generating and sharing SRHR content on social media platforms, including through live feeds.
9. Push Movement on SRHR focused on advocating for the establishment of safe spaces and strengthening community participation through youth engagement in Kajele in Malawi. The project targeted people living with HIV, persons with a disability and key

populations, and sought to ensure that they had access to ART and SRHR services in safe and private spaces.

10. Return to Life Project focused on reducing HIV infection. The project was set to be rolled out near health facilities, running group and online sessions to provide SRHR information that addresses treatment adherence and school dropouts due to pregnancy.
11. Empowering Youth Project in Epworth, Zimbabwe, targeting vulnerable youth aged 13-24 years affected by poverty and with limited access to SRHR services. The project sought to provide life skills and livelihoods training, including on making sanitary pads and dishwashing liquid. The project was also set to conduct sports activities and provide linkages to other organisations for additional services and information.
12. Community-based HIV care to enhance provision of services and reduce patient dependence on healthcare facilities. The project focused on ensuring access to health services for sex workers and treatment defaulters aged 18-25 years. Patients in our community are dependent.
13. Voice of Change Zambia Project focused on supporting adolescents and young people living with HIV and persons with disabilities. The project was set to be implemented in Matero sub-district where the HIV prevalence for women aged 15-19 years was at 1.9% and for males aged 18-24 years was at 1.8%. The focus was to identify and address barriers faced by young people with disabilities and young people living with HIV.
14. Young Change Initiative school-based project focused on empowering 100 students in Beitbridge Urban District, Zimbabwe, aged 13-17 years with SRHR information over six sessions. The project would be implemented with support from Family Support Trust and Save the Children, with the goal of increasing knowledge and reducing cases of adolescent pregnancy.
15. Empowerment and Rights of Sex Workers Initiative addressing lack of access to education and promoting sex workers rights. The project was set to start with 50 young sex workers, with implementation taking place in KwaZulu Natal and in Northern Cape.
16. Empowerment through Innovation Project focused on integrating youth friendly SRHR services with technologically and environmentally friendly information. The project was focused on improving access to non-judgemental SRHR information for 15-24-year-olds by creating a hub that enhances young people's access to youth friendly SRHR services.
17. Young Fathers – Gudla Inhloko project focused on training young fathers to address their needs and promote responsible parenting. The target audience for the project was set as young fathers aged 18-29 years in Eswatini.
18. Youth-led Creative Media Company using storytelling to shine a light on deep social issues affecting young people. The goal of the project was to inform, inspire and activate communities on mental health issues, targeting young people aged 15-30 years. Local communities would be reached through community screens and platforms.
19. Empowered Futures Project in Zimbabwe focused on reducing adolescent pregnancies through SRHR interventions. The project targeted 50 adolescent mothers aged 13-24 years in Makoni District near headlands where there was a reported high rate of teenage pregnancies and early marriages leading to poverty and school dropouts. Through the project, adolescents and youth would be linked to SRHR interventions like

contraceptives and given support to start income generating projects that also promote food security.



**20. Safe Space Program** targeting young people in Mpumalanga, South Africa with SRHR information through health talks provided by peer ambassadors in high schools, with referrals provided for health services.

**21. Ending teenage pregnancy** in Mwanza District, Malawi, through community dialogues led by respected leaders, that discuss the possible impacts of teenage pregnancy. The project targeted policy makers, teachers, parents and other decision makers, in order to build community support for CSE.

After the session, participants were invited to share their reflections on the pitches. Most participants reported feeling nervous before presenting, but that the feeling went away after they were done. They cited that they were afraid of having people laugh at them, but that they felt liberated and relieved after being able to present successfully. Following the discussions, Chengetai advised participants to reduce the number of targeted districts and targeted audiences because of the limitations of the grant amount. He reminded them of where and how to submit their concept notes and notified them of an extension to the deadline to allow them ample time to prepare, consult and submit. He warned that any submissions made after the deadline would not be considered.

Ronald then gave an overview of the following day's programme and expected guests. Yumnah followed up with an invitation to participants to be involved in preparing content for the International Conference on Family Planning by submitting videos for posting on social media. Fairuze concluded the session by asking participants to attend a wellness check-in at 8:30 am on the following day.

## PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Summary of Sessions

Young leaders and faculty members visited a local organisation, Sisonke, and the community it works in to learn more about the context of their work in advancing the rights of sex workers in South Africa. As part of visit, participants engaged with representatives of the South Africa Police Service, the staff of Sisonke as well as sex workers in their places of work.

Key takeaways from the field visit and related discussions were that:

- Partnerships with law enforcement agents can help reduce the incidence of violence against sex workers, provided that law enforcement agents are adequately trained on providing non-judgemental services and supporting diverse professions including sex work.



- Any efforts to support the decriminalisation of sex work need to include work to address discriminatory and stigmatising attitudes and beliefs in the communities where sex workers operate, including among essential service providers like health workers and police officers.
- Child sexual exploitation is an often-overlooked challenge that exists within the sex work industry, that needs urgent advocacy attention targeting policy makers, social services, and law enforcement as key partners.

### Field Visit: Sisonke

Sisonke, the National Sex Workers Movement South Africa hosted participants at their offices to learn more about the context of sex work in South Africa, including relations with law enforcement and the journey towards decriminalisation. The site visit was structured to have the full group interact with the Sisonke staff and stakeholders, before going to three sex worker sites in downtown Johannesburg.

The office visit started with a panel discussion involving representatives of the South African Police Service (SAPS) and Sisonke staff members. The National Coordinator of the Dignity and Diversity in Policing (DDP) program introduced the initiative, highlighting its engagement with key populations since 2021, including sex workers and the LGBTI community. He explained that the program was developed in response to concerns raised by key populations on the abuse and harassment they encountered at the hands of police members. The speaker emphasized the program's focus on addressing these issues and advocating for the rights of marginalized groups.



The speaker discussed the difficulty in changing deeply ingrained prejudices within the police force, particularly among officers with long tenures. They noted that it was challenging to alter behaviours and attitudes that had been reinforced over many years, but was hopeful that despite these challenges, they had received management support and funding from COC International to design a manual in partnership with civil society organizations, aimed at promoting respectful and non-discriminatory

policing practices.

The speaker addressed common misconceptions about the program, such as the belief that it promotes sex work or recruits individuals into the industry. They clarified that the program's primary focus was on advocating for the rights of sex workers and other marginalized groups, ensuring they were treated with respect and dignity. The speaker emphasized that the program aimed to educate police officers and the public about the importance of human rights and non-discrimination.

The speaker elaborated on the challenges of dealing with religious and cultural biases within the police force, noting that many officers held strong beliefs that could influence their

attitudes towards sex workers and the LGBTI community. They emphasized that changing these mindsets would take time and required ongoing education and engagement. The speaker shared an experience from a session in KwaZulu Natal, where inviting sex workers to share their experiences led to resistance from some officers who viewed sex workers as criminals.

Despite the initial resistance, the speaker noted that some officers later expressed interest and sought contact details for present-day organizations. This highlighted the potential for the program to gradually change perceptions and promote understanding. The speaker stressed that the goal was not to change personal beliefs but to ensure that police members treated every person with respect, regardless of their background or identity.

Another of the SAPS officials, Captain Silemela, discussed his role in the program, emphasizing the importance of human rights for all individuals, including sex workers. He highlighted the need for police officers to recognize sex workers as service providers and to respect their rights. The captain shared that the program had provided valuable information and changed attitudes among police officers, promoting a more inclusive and respectful approach to policing.

The captain stressed the importance of knowledge and training in changing judgmental attitudes and promoting respectful treatment. He explained that by providing police officers with accurate information and challenging their biases, the program helped them to develop a more positive and understanding attitude towards marginalized communities. The captain emphasized that this change in attitude was essential for ensuring that all individuals were treated fairly and with dignity.

One of the participants raised concerns about how cases of violence against sex workers were handled, given the criminalization of sex work. The captain's response emphasized that police officers were expected to handle such cases without discrimination and to follow standard procedures for reporting and investigation. It was noted that organizations like Sisonke played a vital role in supporting victims and ensuring they had access to the resources they needed.

Another participant asked about the presence of any landscape analysis regarding policies affecting marginalized populations. The panellists' response clarified the existence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for arresting and detaining sex workers, the LGBTI community, and people who use drugs. They explained that the SOPs aimed to ensure that all individuals were treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their identity or background.

Following the question on available policy frameworks, panellists took time to explain in detail about the existing SOPs that guide police officers on how to arrest and detain sex workers, the LGBTI community, and people who use drugs. They explained that the SOPs included specific guidelines on how to treat transgender individuals and ensure their safety and dignity during arrest and detention. They emphasized the importance of these SOPs in promoting respectful and non-discriminatory policing practices.

Sihle Buthelezi, the National Director of Sisonke, addressed the importance of training and empowering youth to represent and assist marginalized communities. She emphasized that sex workers comprise various key populations and that the training helps create a safe space for

individuals to disclose their identities. The director advocated for the review of SOPs and highlighted the need to treat sex workers as human beings, recognizing their work and rights.

The director emphasized the importance of decriminalizing sex work to forge stronger partnerships and prevent exploitation and trafficking. She explained that decriminalization would allow sex workers to be recognized as workers, enabling them to access labour rights, open bank accounts, and save their money. The director also highlighted the need to address the stigma and discrimination faced by sex workers and to promote their rights as human beings.

The director concluded by emphasizing the importance of continued support for sex workers and their activities. She encouraged attendees to support sex worker campaigns in their provinces and to challenge negative perceptions about sex work. The director also expressed hope for stronger partnerships with the police and other stakeholders in the future, working together to prevent exploitation and promote the rights of sex workers.

### **Sex-Worker Site Visits: Sisonke**

Following the panel discussion, participants were split into three groups to visit different sex worker sites in downtown Johannesburg, accompanied by staff from Sisonke. The Sisonke staff provided details on the services they provided in the different spots and explained that they used the provision of condoms and lubricants as entry points to interact with the sex workers. The locations of the sex worker sites were identified as high crime areas, as such, visits were brief without detailed conversations with the sex workers themselves. Most of the details on the nature of Sisonke programs, risks associated with sex work, and recommendations for future improvements were provided by Sisonke staff accompanying the different groups.

### **Participant Reflections**

Participants reconvened at the Academy venue to debrief from the field visit. They were asked to share reflections on what they enjoyed and didn't enjoy from the trip, as well as any key takeaways that could inform their work in future. Participant reflections focused on themes of equity, inclusion, self-love, and advocacy, particularly for LGBTQIA+ and persons with disabilities. Participants shared personal insights and commitments to action, emphasizing the importance of youth engagement and challenging discrimination.

Several participants highlighted the importance of equity and inclusion, with one participant making a commitment to more equitable practices upon returning to their country. Another participant shared their learning experience related to LGBTQIA+ issues and their intention to encourage and not discriminate against any people. Participants also voiced the need for an international movement to foster community.

Self-love and personal empowerment were recurring themes of the discussion. One participant emphasized the importance of self-love, whilst another shared their intention to stop procrastinating and pursue their goals and dreams, particularly in advocating for young people. The power of youth to hold those in power accountable



was also highlighted, emphasizing the need to demand respect for youth agency.

Several speakers focused on specific actions they would take, with one participant mentioning plans to teach young LGBTQIA+ people on SRHR advocacy in their country. Another participant committed to advocating for the intersex community and promoting unity. One of the participants shared their intention to change discriminatory practices towards people with disabilities in their community, whilst another committed to using social media to advocate for young people's rights and create safe spaces.

Ronald lauded the participants' progress and adaptability, noting their improved confidence and engagement. Special recognition was given to Sisonke for hosting the group and providing snacks and gifts. The presence and engagement of police officers, including a colonel and captain, were highlighted as a unique and positive aspect of the site visit.

## COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING

### **Teambuilding/ Soft Skills Session: Modester Mangilani and Maxwell Katekwe, Y+ Global**

Modester and Maxwell led participants through a series of team-building exercises and games. The session was voluntary, and a total of 16 participants showed up for it. A significant proportion of participants had already left the Academy and travelled back to their homes at the time that the team building exercises were conducted. Participants were led through various games that emphasized collaboration, focusing on results and making use of the diverse strengths of different team members to solve problems.



## GRADUATION AND CLOSING CEREMONY

### **Summary of Sessions**

The final sessions of the Academy included reflections from the different partners involved in delivering the third edition of the READY Academy, the delivery of certificates of participation to all participants, the announcement of seed grant winners, the presentation of an accreditation certificate to REPSSI, and closing remarks.

Key takeaways from the final sessions were that:

- The collaborative partnership between Frontline AIDS, Y+, Save the Children, Sisonke and Young Africa produced a unique learning experience for young leaders at the Academy, and equipped them with the tools they needed to navigate the funding crisis.
- The provision of seed grants following the training provided a practical return on investment for young leaders at the Academy, as well as a way for them to assess how applicable the skills they had gained were in helping them secure funding for their projects.

- Youth leadership in its different shapes and forms is a bastion of hope for African communities as they seek innovate solutions to their SRHR challenges, and to hold governments to account for the delivery of health services.

## Partner Reflections

Ronald, on behalf of Frontline AIDS, extended his appreciation to various individuals and groups who contributed to the success of the event, including the logistics team, faculty members, alumni, the hotel staff, and the participants themselves. Partners who sponsored the young people were also recognized for their contributions, including providing flights and ensuring the participants' welfare. Ronald also acknowledged team members who were not present at the meeting, such as Gabriel, Nicole and the finance team.



Diso, on behalf of Save the Children, extended his gratitude to Frontline AIDS and READY for creating the READY Academy. He admitted that they were hesitant to invest at first but realised that READY Academy 2025 was essential. He explained to the participants that the week of pressure brought by the Academy was intentional, as it mimicked real life and provided a unique learning opportunity for them. He cited that they were excited to hear all the concept note ideas that participants had come up with and urged them to go ahead and implement their ideas regardless of whether they won the \$2,000 seed grant or not.

A young leader representing Young Africa shared her appreciation to the organisers for making the Academy possible. She encouraged fellow participants to tap into their inherent power, and to not accept any limitations. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet young leaders from different countries and backgrounds, as well as different partner organisations.

Y+ Global were not invited to give remarks. Following the statements from different partners, all participants were given certificates of completion by representatives of the different organisations supporting the 2025 READY Academy.

## Announcement of Seed Grant Winners:

Chengetai explained the process it had taken to score the concept notes and highlighted that 6 assessors had looked at 22 concept notes using the provided marking grid with points given

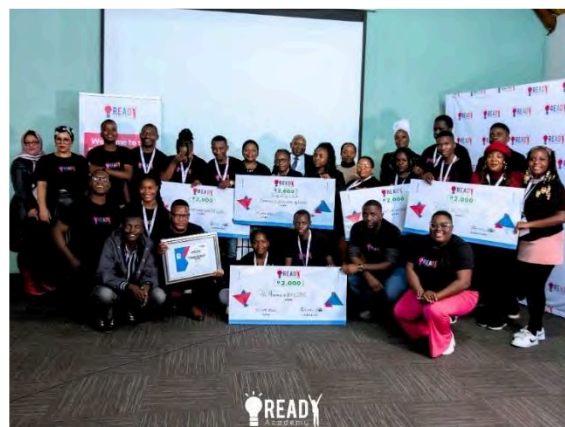


out of 100. He highlighted that after the initial assessment, there was a discussion phase, followed by a consideration of all facts related to the concept notes. Chengetai emphasized the meticulous nature of the process and attributed the delays in the day's program to this. He thanked the assessors for their work, especially given the extensive time commitment from 9am to 3:30pm. The marking scheme and scoring grid are included in Annex 8.

The five selected winners in order of their scores from highest to lowest were 'Beyond the Red Umbrella', 'Young fathers engaging on SRH issues', Push Movement on HIV and SRHR', 'Return



to Live', and 'Young, strong and safe: Empowering Young Sex Workers in Lusaka, Zambia'. Each group of winners was invited to the stage to collect their check, take photos and give an acceptance speech. The winners acknowledged how difficult it had been to write the concept notes and present them to fellow participants. They appreciated the faculty members for selecting their proposals and expressed optimism for the work they had ahead of them. Most of the winners expressed their feelings of gratitude, shock and joy, and appreciated the validation of having their ideas selected for funding.



#### Participant Reflections on Seed Grants

I lost my night trying to write this. Now I won and I am happy. It will not be same.

This is not only for me because all the presentations I learnt other things from my colleagues. I have to say thank you and this is for all of us as READY Movement

I have been praying for this, and it has come. This time we have made it. I am ready for this.

It is close to our hearts because most of the sex workers children are left out. We just want this for the children.

We are grateful for this, we don't take it for granted. We can't wait to go into the community and do the work.

Figure 7: Reflections of seed grant winners

#### Presentation of Certificate to REPSSI

Lois led a session for the presentation of an accreditation certificate to REPSSI. She explained that the decision had been made to incorporate this into the Academy programme as an opportunity to invite REPSSI, a READY+ consortium member, to experience part of the READY Academy. She praised REPSSI for their hard work in meeting the accreditation requirements and invited them to accept their accreditation certificate.

Lewis, the REPSSI representative, expressed his appreciation for being invited to attend the final day of the READY Academy, and for the long-awaited accreditation. He notified participants that REPSSI was a part of the READY+ consortium responsible for providing mental health support, and that they were a READY+ lead in Mozambique. He registered appreciation for their collaboration with Frontline AIDS in different areas, and the capacity building support they had received from them.



#### Closing Remarks

Lois gave the closing remarks for the Academy. She highlighted that Frontline AIDS took responsibility for both successes and failures and emphasized the importance of learning from

both. She acknowledged the need to manage diverse personalities and potential conflicts due to the broadened number of partners involved in this iteration of the Academy. She thanked the partners for their continued support and expressed appreciation for the behind-the-scenes work of various teams and individuals.

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*“Young people were leading the process, and you are demonstrating young people’s leadership. It’s great to know that the world is in a safe place and Africa is in safe hands” – Lois Chingandu*

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She expressed gratitude to the participants for their engagement and willingness to learn and shared her hope that the knowledge imparted during the program would be retained. She thanked those involved in the concept note selection process, acknowledging the competitive nature and the excellence of all concepts presented, even those not selected for funding due to limited resources. Participants were encouraged to continue seeking resources for their projects.

Lois praised the Frontline AIDS team led by Ronald for ensuring the program's sustainability and highlighted Tumie's contribution to the program's growth over the years. She thanked the donors for their continued belief in the program and expressed her hope that their support would continue. In her final statement, she encouraged participants to positively impact the world using their newfound knowledge and skills.

### **READY Academy Post Assessment**

After the closing remarks, participants were asked to complete the post assessment, as well as the final Mentimeter survey to share their views on their READY Academy experience. The results of both the daily Mentimeter surveys and the pre and post assessments are presented in the evaluation section of the report.

## **READY ACADEMY EVALUATION**

### **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation of the READY Academy was conducted using a range of data collection tools including documentation of sessions, interviews with participants and staff, a participant learning journal, a faculty evaluation survey, daily Mentimeter surveys, session evaluations, and a pre- and post- test questionnaire. All the data collection tools are included in the annexes for reference. A total of 16 participants and faculty members were interviewed, 19 participants completed the learning journey form, 11 faculty members completed the faculty survey, 28 participants completed the pre- and post- tests, 24 participants completed the daily Mentimeter and 14 completed the academy evaluation. A negligible number of participants completed evaluations across the different sessions. The long-term impact of the READY Academy will continue to be tracked through success stories and case studies that profile how participants will have applied learnings post-Academy.

The evaluation focuses on assessing effectiveness, relevance of content and delivery, logistics and administration. In terms of effectiveness, the evaluation assesses learning outcomes, data from learning diaries, skills and knowledge gained, and demonstration of skills and knowledge gained. In terms of the relevance of content, the evaluation assesses the appropriateness of the curriculum, gaps and areas for future learning, as well as most and least recommended content areas. In terms of relevance of design and delivery, the evaluation assesses the quality of teaching methods, experiences of safeguarding, provisions for diversity and inclusion and considerations for meaningful youth engagement. Regarding logistics and administration, the evaluation assessed the quality of collaboration between partners, resolution of logistical issues, travel arrangements, and the quality of the meeting venue, accommodation facilities, food and amenities.

## EVALUATION FINDINGS

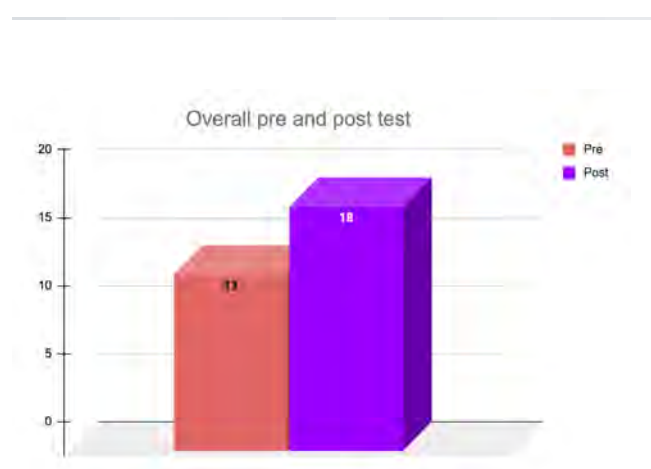
### Effectiveness

**Participants experienced a 20% increase in knowledge during the Academy, with gains differing across learning areas.**

Participants scored an average of 13 marks out of a possible 25 marks in the pre-assessment and increased their average to 18 marks out of a possible 25 marks. This represented a 39%<sup>1</sup> relative increase in knowledge from their starting level, indicating a significant positive impact.

Knowledge gains were not uniform across different content areas, as participants did not increase knowledge gained in section 1 of the test, scoring an average of 7 marks for the section in both the pre and post-tests. Knowledge increases were only registered in section 2 of the test, which saw an increase from 6 marks in the pre-test to 11 marks in the post test, representing an over 90% gain in knowledge (from a baseline of 6).

This indicates that participants learnt more from certain sessions than they did from other sessions, and the possible reasons for this are explored in the findings on the relevance of content design and delivery.



<sup>1</sup> One participant did not complete the post-test after completing the pre-test.

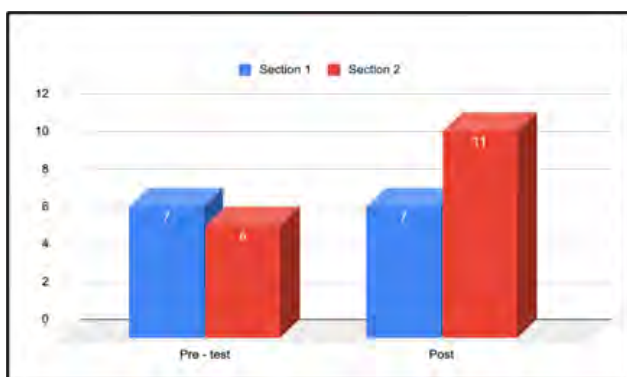


Figure 9: Pre- and Post- Test Average Scores According to Sections

**Participants reported gaining knowledge across a range of delivered sessions, showing strong recollection of information from different topics.**

Participants recalled detailed information from sessions related to inclusion, meaningful and ethical engagement of youth, advocacy, pedagogy of the oppressed, gender transformation, concept note writing and power. They were able to speak to key concepts related to the sessions and recommendations made by facilitators on how to apply the information to their work. They gained the most knowledge on sessions related to inclusion, a thematic area which cut across multiple sessions including gender, power and health, domestic financing strategies, gender transformative approaches and pedagogy of the oppressed. Participants noted that the most impactful topic they learnt about was on the experiences and needs of intersex persons, which were explored through an impromptu LGBTQIA+ awareness session on the second day, and as a core part of the gender, power and health session.

Participants recalled limited information on sessions related to data collection, communication, resource mobilisation, CSE, accountability, climate change, movement building, budgeting, theory of change and digital activism. Interviewed participants made mention of a few details relating to these sessions but did not provide detailed information on the concepts explored and recommendations from the facilitators.

**Participants gained the most skills in concept note writing, advocacy, communication and budgeting.**

Participants reported gaining skills in concept note writing and budgeting and were confident in their ability to use the skills gained in future. They reported knowing how to write a clear and concise concept note plan and understanding how to develop the accompanying budget. This finding was largely attributed to the Academy requirement for all participants to submit a concept note. Additionally, faculty members provided information on how to create concept notes, and they provided additional support to help participants develop their concept notes after sessions.

Participants reported gaining skills in advocacy, including how to harness the popular power of young people, and how to use social media platforms for advocacy. They expressed confidence in tackling policy issues related to CSE, and in running public campaigns that increase young people's information on their sexual and reproductive health and rights and strengthen government accountability. Participants demonstrated some of these skills during the

Academy through advocacy role plays, a practical social media advocacy exercise, and an interactive panel discussion with donors.

Participants reported gaining skills in facilitation and communication. They gained these skills primarily through observing the faculty members' facilitation and identifying facilitation styles they felt would be most useful in their work. They also gained the skills through participating in role plays and interacting with their peers. Participants reported being confident to communicate with different stakeholders and people of diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as delivering training sessions for fellow young people. Participants also reported gaining teamwork skills, which they ascribed to their augmented communication skills.

### **Participants demonstrated clear intentions to use their skills and knowledge in tangible ways following the Academy.**

Participants reported being adequately prepared to equip other young people with skills and information on SRHR related issues following the Academy. They conveyed a readiness to teach their peers how to navigate the funding crisis, how to take care of their sexual and reproductive health, how to be self-employed, and how to conduct policy advocacy activities. They reported being ready to train people on CSE and to use the interactive facilitation methods they had learnt to do this. They registered a commitment to sharing SRHR information within their broader community, including through civic education, one on one sessions, group activities, and sensitisation campaigns.

Participants reported being ready to advocate against discrimination in their countries, with a focus on LGBTQIA+ people, sex workers and persons with disabilities. They expressed their preparedness to create stigma free communities by countering myths and misconceptions, engaging in advocacy for the change of discriminatory laws and policies, and sensitising service providers in health facilities. They also committed to engaging their peers to challenge discriminatory attitudes and beliefs.

Participants reported being prepared to build movements that advance youth inclusion because of the Academy. They described their plans to create and connect with youth groups that promote the rights of youth, and to build movements and coalitions that amplify the voices of youth. They expressed a commitment to design and run advocacy campaigns on youth participation, and to engage duty bearers to involve young people in decision-making processes.

Participants who won the seed grant competition reported being ready to implement impactful projects in their countries. They described plans to use the information and skills gained during the Academy to address challenges facing young people. The winning participants highlighted that their projects would improve the wellbeing of the children of sex workers, intersex people, and sex workers, as well as counteract the harm done by anti-rights and anti-gender movements. Participants who didn't win the seed grants reported being prepared to write more concept notes in the hope of securing funding for the ideas they presented during the Academy.

Participants committed to strengthening in-country accountability as a follow up to the Academy, especially regarding the allocation of domestic resources. They expressed a



readiness to hold their governments to account for reckless expenditure and for reneging on commitments to increase health care funding. When asked about their level of confidence to engage policymakers and government officials for accountability following the Academy, all participants reported being comfortable, with over 80% reporting that they felt very confident in their abilities.

Participants expressed their readiness to practice gender-transformative approaches in their personal lives and in their work because of the Academy. They shared their commitment to practice equity over equality, to never discriminate against anyone, and to be more inclusive of persons with disabilities in their work. Participants also reported being prepared to lead and communicate effectively, improve their pursuit of personal and professional goals, and to engage in social media advocacy because of the Academy.

## Relevance of Design and Delivery

**Interactive sessions, involving group work and engaging participants in creative exercises, were the most beneficial for participants.**

Sessions that involved less formal and academic delivery were highly ranked by participants. They enjoyed sessions that involved role plays, dramatisation, and outdoor work, and responded well to facilitators that took their time to explain difficult concepts. Participants reported enjoying the gender, health and power session and attributed this to the facilitation style of the facilitator. They reported enjoying the pedagogy of the oppressed session because of its use of theatre in helping them understand power and oppression. They also appreciated the sessions on CSE, the future of advocacy in light of funding crisis, and on exploring domestic financing strategies because of the energy of the facilitators as well as their use of interactive facilitation methods.



Participants did not enjoy sessions that involved sitting at their tables for extended periods of time. They reported not learning much from facilitators who were not friendly, dictated most of their information and who crammed a lot of complex concepts into short sessions. Some sessions were identified as being repetitive and sometimes contradictory.

**Participant engagement benefited greatly from the diversity of youth present.**

Participants reported enjoying their learning experience because of interacting with diverse young people from different backgrounds and with different experiences. They noted that the Academy had helped bring them out of their comfort zone and that the learning environment had helped them to be free to participate. They also appreciated the presence of alumni members and the experiences they shared from the previous year's Academy.

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*"We managed to also get a good diversity of young people in the room. Having previous alumni present was a good addition" – Participant*

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### Young people's participation was negatively affected by lapses in safeguarding and inclusion, and related gaps in the meaningful and ethical engagement of youth

Regarding safeguarding concerns, some participants reported feeling unsafe and experiencing discrimination during the Academy. They noted observing segregation against certain groups of participants, hearing stigmatising comments passed against some participants and wanting to leave the Academy at some point because of the psychological harm they had experienced. Some participants were observed only interacting with people from their cliques, and some were observed ignoring participants who identify as sex workers. Some participants reported the learning environment as being judgemental, and that there were inconsistencies in the learning experience that faculty members promised, and what they delivered. In one instance, participants were assured that 'there were no wrong answers', however, during a group exercise, some groups were praised for giving the 'right' answers whilst the other groups were said to have given 'wrong' answers.

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*"I didn't like the thing of taking away our phones. I need to be able to contact my family and tell them how I am feeling" – Participant*

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Regarding gaps in inclusion, some of the direct quotes from participants on inclusion and safeguarding concerns during the academy are highlighted in the table below:

Participant Reflections on Inclusion	
I don't feel safe. The judgement I feel it so much.	I called my project manager and told them that I don't want to be here.
Some have selected teams and don't interact with others.	There was lots of segregation and discrimination, as some people didn't interact with others for the entirety of the academy.
The academy was not sex-worker inclusive.	Comments were passed that were bad and spoken against sex workers.
My lowest point was segregation against certain groups. Some were welcoming and others were not. Those only working with children were not welcoming.	

Figure 10: Participant reflections on inclusion, diversity and safeguarding

Faculty members observed that alumni members were participating more than new Academy members, and that this was excluding new Academy members from sharing their thoughts and building confidence. They also noted that some participants did not have access to computers to write their concept notes, and that this had possibly impeded their ability to submit competitive concept notes. They identified that none of the five seed grant winners had submitted a handwritten concept note and raised speculation that participants without access to computers may have been disadvantaged.

A few gaps were identified in the quality of participant engagement, especially regarding disrespect for participants and insensitivity to some



of their needs and rights. These gaps undermined the learning experience of some participants and affected their ability to fully and freely engage with the Academy programme. Participants reported feeling frustrated at being treated like children instead of adults and being upset at having their phones taken away without their consent on the first day. They noted that they were not given enough room to engage on some days, and that adequate accommodations were not made for participants to take part in some of the activities like concept note writing. The identified gaps did not align with the Y+ Global's [guidelines](#) on meaningful and ethical engagement of young people.

Interventions by faculty members helped to address some of the safeguarding and inclusion concerns, and to address some gaps in inclusion. Facilitators shared feedback on safeguarding during daily debrief sessions and efforts were made to improve the learning experience for young people present. Chaperones and safeguarding focal persons managed safeguarding cases in real-time and helped create space in the Academy programme for participants to share recommendations for improvement. One participant shared their appreciation for how the faculty members had intervened when they realised that they were not coping well and noted that this had helped them to participate better in the Academy. Some of the remarks from faculty members on safeguarding and inclusion are highlighted below:

Faculty Reflections on Safeguarding
The mental health of young people is the most important than the schedule.
We need to hold ourselves to account as adults on the experience of participants.
Safeguarding of young people could have definitely been done better; it needs to be top priority from all organizations present.

Figure 11: Reflections from faculty members on safeguarding and inclusion

### Time constraints reduced the quality of session delivery and impeded on participants' ability to understand complex issues.

Participants raised concerns on the management of time during Academy sessions, with some sessions being rushed and some topics not being allocated enough time for participants to understand the concepts presented. Participants reported that the Academy programme was too crowded and that there was not enough time to engage during the sessions. Participants noted that sessions on gender, power and health, CSE and concept note writing did not get enough time, even though the participants identified them as very important sessions. Some participants highlighted that most of the topics were new for them and that they needed more time to understand them.

Participants noted that some sessions went on for too long, and that in many instances they had to forgo their refreshment breaks and delay having lunch because of this. They reported being upset by the failure of faculty members to keep to time during their sessions and identified that there were noticeable tensions between faculty members on time management that affected the flow of sessions. There was general agreement amongst participants that the Academy programme should either have been delivered over a longer period or shortened to cover



fewer topics within the allocated time. Participants also attributed the time-constraints to the reduced number of training days from the previous year, partly caused by having some participants leaving a day earlier than others.

## Logistics and Administration

**Travel arrangements were largely well-coordinated, with a few exceptions regarding per-diems and airport delays.**

Most of the participants reported receiving their per diems on time and were happy with their airport pickups. They reported that their drivers were friendly, their flights were good, and that they received adequate communication and support ahead of travel and once they arrived in Johannesburg. One participant noted that they had not yet received their per-diem, and another that their airport pickup had delayed significantly. These were the only participants that reported experiencing challenge with their travel arrangements, the rest of the interviewed participants were satisfied with the support they received for their travel.

**Participants had mixed reflections on the appropriateness of the meeting venue, accommodation, food and amenities based on their differing learning needs.**

Some participants reported being happy with being in a remote location, close to nature and in comfortable rooms and said this helped them enjoy their learning experience. They were happy with the different types of food and the availability of different sexual and reproductive health commodities in restrooms. A part of the participants did not agree with the selection of the venue and raised concerns on the quality of the hotel amenities and staff. They highlighted that the hotel was very far from any shops, and that this made it difficult for them to buy things that they needed in case of emergencies. They noted that the Wi-Fi connection at the hotel was poor and impeded on their ability to communicate with the families and friends after sessions, as well as to complete their Academy assignments. Both faculty members and participants experienced theft in their rooms, losing money and other valuables when their rooms were unattended. Participants highlighted that this negatively affected their ability to engage with the sessions.

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*“Some of us are sex workers and we want to be able to work after the academy sessions, however, the remoteness of the location made it difficult for us to do that” - Participant*

---

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Content

**Provide adequate learning materials before, during and after sessions to reinforce learning:** Participants should be provided with learning materials for complex topics before the

Academy starts, as well as supportive material during and after the sessions to help them remember important information. The material provided during and after sessions should be available in print form as participants are less likely to engage with content provided in digital format.

**Plan and review content ahead of time:** Facilitators should submit their presentations before the Academy for review and streamlining to avoid duplication and contradictions in content. Topics related to gender, sexuality and advocacy are at the highest risk of duplication and contradiction, as such, facilitators for these sessions should consult each other's content to streamline delivery. Content review can be led by a standalone team that should also take responsibility for the consistency of the curriculum and its alignment to different themes. Each session should have clear SMART objectives, that it is also evaluated against.

**Increase the breadth and depth of content provided:** all sessions should provide in-depth information on the subject matter and be allocated all the time needed for learning to occur. The following considerations should be made to improve the range and depth of the different content areas:

Participant Recommendations for Content in Future Academies	
CSE to include examples of dynamics of CSE content and delivery in different countries.	Provide information on prevention strategies for adolescent pregnancy
Share information on child marriage and its disadvantages.	Explore practical strategies on how to respond to funding cuts as youth-led organisations.
LGBTQIA+ and SOGIESC information session required early in the programme.	Explore gender norms and sex roles in relation to power and equality.
Share evidence on the drivers of sex work, and its different dynamics including drug users and persons with disability who are sex workers.	Share practical advocacy experiences including successful and unsuccessful advocacy efforts, with reasons for both.
Provide guidance to youth groups on how to respond to anti-rights and anti-gender movements.	Share information on family planning access for young people.
Provide more training on concept note development.	Provide more information on family planning
Explore funding and programming strategies for sex work interventions, including income generating activities, decriminalisation, and programmes for sexually exploited children, sex workers with disabilities and sex workers taking drugs.	Teach participants on how to facilitate learning sessions like those provided during the Academy and involve them where possible in the delivery of sessions as part of this learning.
Detailed information on movement building, including measurement and evaluation of the success of movement building.	Provide details on key population work, its benefits and how to navigate programming in the area.

Figure 12: Content considerations for the next READY Academy

**Balance the content to reflect different identities and experiences:** deliberate efforts should be invested in analysing course content and ensuring that it reflects diverse identities and experiences of young people without focusing on any specific group of youth. Examples on the marginalisation of youth should reflect different groups of young people and avoid over-emphasizing any identity or experience of exclusion.

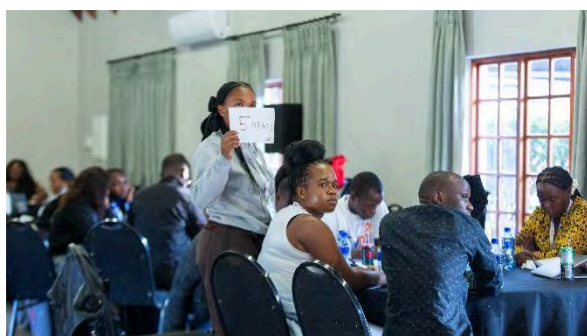


## Relevance of Design and Delivery

**Reduce the number of sessions per day to allow more interactions with content:** maximise the amount of time that participants have to interact with session content, to ensure that they understand the concepts taught. Priority should be given to core sessions that have remained consistent across the three Academies, and to sessions that define and explore big concepts like gender, sexuality, human rights, climate change and CSE.

The design of the curriculum must ensure that there is a limit to the number of sessions delivered per day to avoid over-stimulating learners. The learning hours per day should not be longer than 8 hours inclusive of breaks in line with conventions in educational practice and typical working hours.

**Increase the amount of time for the Academy:** The Academy programme needs to run for at least five and a half days in line with conventions in the last two years of the Academy.



Considerations need to be made for the inclusion of an online preparatory sessions for learners ahead of the start of the Academy and potentially extending the number of days from seven to 14. Each READY Academy has surfaced the need to allocate more time for the Academy to avoid rushing important sessions and to incorporate enough content to significantly increase the knowledge and skills of

participants.

**Train faculty members on meaningful and ethical engagement of young people before delivery of sessions:** All faculty members must have similar levels of knowledge and skills in meaningfully and ethically engaging young people. Faculty members who ordinarily work with children need to be reoriented on the dynamics of working with young adults that are experienced and carry significant knowledge into their learning sessions. The [principles of adult education](#) need to be applied in training young people in the Academy, whilst balanced with the Y+ [guidelines](#) on meaningful and ethical engagement of young people. The competence of facilitators on the meaningful engagement of young people will need to be evaluated/assessed before they are considered ready to take part as facilitators.

The inclusion of diverse participants, including young people with disabilities should be non-negotiable. This was a noticeable omission in the 2025 Academy and was called out in the previous Academy as well. This needs to be prioritised in the next Academy, with adequate considerations made for accessibility and inclusion of all invited participants from their invitation, transportation, accommodation, and participation in the Academy.

A participant-led norm-setting and values clarification exercise should be incorporated into the start of the Academy, to ensure that learners set the standards for their engagement and are empowered to hold the faculty accountable for delivering on the same. Additionally, the Y+

Global team should be supported to lead monitoring and accountability for the meaningful and ethical engagement of young people during the Academy.

Mobile phones and other personal items should not be confiscated by adults without the consent and prior agreements of all participants. The rights of participants must not be violated. As rightsholders, participants are the only actors that can decide what to do with their rights, including their rights to information and expression.

Faculty members should not be selective in their provision of post-session support to participants. Even though some participants may be sponsored by the organisations represented by faculty members, faculty members should not use this factor to bias their support to learners. Learners pick up on preferential or differential treatment provided to any group of participants, and this undermines efforts to create an inclusive learning environment. Where possible, faculty members should be assigned to support a random selection of participants in a uniform and transparent way to avoid the appearance of bias.

**The safeguarding of participants should be prioritised:** throughout the duration of the Academy, regular safeguarding check-ins should be conducted with each participant to help identify and address emerging issues in good time. Staff at the venues selected to host the Academy should be oriented on the Academy's expectations for safeguarding and ensure that their staff are adequately trained and prepared to host young people from diverse backgrounds. The faculty team should convene daily to discuss safeguarding concerns and agree on accommodations that can be made to improve the learning environment. In cases where there are heightened and widespread safeguarding concerns, learning must be suspended until such a time that participants feel that the environment is sufficiently safe for them to continue learning. The needs of young people must be at the heart of decision-making on the Academy without exception.

**Ensure all sessions incorporate interactive elements in their delivery:** Facilitators must adapt their delivery to allow more engagement from young people, with less monologues from facilitators and more dialogue with participants. To the maximum extent possible, youth leaders should be directly involved in delivering session content to their peers. The Academy programme should minimise the number of online sessions and prioritise in-person sessions instead for more engagement. During the delivery of sessions, facilitators should create a learning environment that limits the use of online resources and challenges participants to engage with content based on their lived experiences.

Ensure that faculty members and alumni are restrained from engaging as participants and taking up space created for learners: All faculty members and alumni must be oriented on their roles during the Academy and restricted from engaging with content as participants. The involvement of alumni members needs to become less prominent as the Academy progresses, to allow more space for new learners to take on voluntary leadership roles in the programme like timekeeping, moderating and co-hosting some sessions. Chaperones should also be assigned clear responsibilities during sessions so that they do not impede on the learning experience of participants by sharing their own reflections during sessions.

**Provide more opportunities for participants to socialise outside of the Academy sessions to build connections and help them settle into new environments:** socialisation is a core component of learning and should be intentionally built into the learning experience of participants. Supporting participants to socialise outside the Academy will help them gain a sense of belonging, learn more from diverse perspectives and reinforce learning after sessions. Tea, coffee and lunch breaks should be respected and not converted to working sessions as this will undermine efforts to socialise participants, especially within the first few days of the Academy. After initial splitting of individuals into groups with people from different countries, no further action must be taken to separate them from their newfound friends as this will also harm efforts to help them gain a sense of belonging. When there are lapses in participation, instead of taking punitive actions that harm the socialisation of participants, faculty members should refer to group norms and values and affirm participants' ability to self-regulate as adults.

**Incorporate one-on-one feedback sessions for new faculty members to ensure alignment with Academy values and address any flaws in their delivery of sessions:** In cases where new partners and faculty members join the Academy, they should be provided with constant feedback on their sessions. New facilitators need additional oversight to ensure that their sessions are delivered in line with the standards and expectations of the Academy. Where possible, new faculty members can be paired with experienced faculty members to co-deliver their sessions.

## **Logistics and Administration**

**Convene the READY Academy during warmer months of the year to cater for participants with health complications that are aggravated by cold weather:** The organisers of future READY Academies should factor in weather forecasts and consider holding the Academy in warmer months of the year between September-March. Extreme weather conditions like the cold front that welcomed participants to the Academy location should be avoided as they cause discomfort to learners and distract them from sessions.

**Choose a facility that is close to amenities like shopping malls and pharmacies:** Learners do not thrive in isolated learning environments as this has a negative impact on their mental health, social interaction, as well as motivation and engagement. Future Academies should be held in locations that are not far from public transport, shopping malls pharmacies and other amenities. Decisions on the location of the Academy should not make assumptions on young people's ability or inability to self-regulate in a connected and accessible location.

**Provide equal access to technology including Wi-Fi and computers to complete assignments:** participants should have an equal learning opportunity including access to the technology required to complete their assignments. If participants do not have access to computers to complete assignments like concept notes, then accommodations must be made to provide them with computers through the hotel facility or other means. Where possible, tablets should be availed to all participants to help equalise participation. The selection of the Academy

venue must also ensure access to high quality and consistent internet connection across the facility.

**All participants should have similar logistical arrangements including leaving on the same day and taking part in all learning sessions in the program:** when arranging participant logistics, all participants should arrive and depart on the same day to ensure that they take part in all the sessions and have a similar experience. This will help ensure accuracy in the assessment of learning outcomes by eliminating the variable of number of days and sessions attended. Sponsor organisations should commit to following the standard logistical arrangements for all participants, including per diem provisions, travel arrangements and meals, to further strengthen uniformity in participant experiences and reduce imbalances in learner engagement.

**Make strong considerations for participant safety in site visits, especially when held in areas with a high crime rate:** Future site visits should provide additional security in cases where participants are expected to visit locations with high crime rates. When participants fear for their safety, they are less likely to engage comfortably and to ask questions that can aid their learning. Additionally, efforts should be made to give participants the opportunity to interact directly with service users and to learn from them, as opposed to having hosts dominate conversations as was the case in the 2025 Academy.

**Daily debriefs should focus only on reviewing the day's sessions and how to improve the next day's sessions:** the daily debrief sessions are necessary in helping faculty members to course-correct in real-time and prepare for upcoming days and sessions. The debrief sessions should be focused on providing a summary of each day's proceedings and making recommendations to improve the next day's sessions. The daily debriefs should not be very lengthy or attempt to resolve broader issues on the design of the Academy and collaborating partners. A final debrief should be organised for this purpose on the final day instead, to complement the faculty survey in providing recommendations for the design of future Academies.

**Faculty members should ensure that internal disagreements do not affect the delivery of sessions:** collaborations amongst different partners are prone to generate disagreements over time. The Academy should have a protocol for addressing conflicts amongst faculty members in an amicable way. The existence of a conflict management system will help avoid situations where conflicts affect the delivery of sessions and the learning experience of participants. The introduction of a code of conduct for faculty members will also help mediate potential conflicts.

## ANNEXES

### 1. READY Academy Pre- and Post-Assessment Questionnaire

#### Instructions

*Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey. The form has a total of 18 questions. Please complete the following assessment to the best of your ability. This assessment will only be used to evaluate the training process and measure knowledge level for READY ACADEMY as a group, only, and will not affect you in any way. A post-assessment will be done again at the end of the training. **There are no penalties for incorrect answers, so just be as honest as you can.** The pre-survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.*

#### Participant information

Respondent's Unique Identifier:	
Date:	

#### Section 1: True or False questions

1. Gender transformative talks about addressing harmful norms and inequality.



- True
  - False
2. As young people, we do not have the power to change social injustice
    - True
    - False
  3. Advocacy is only for professionals or experts
    - True
    - False
  4. Advocacy is only political
    - True
    - False
  5. Monitoring and Evaluation is not necessary for advocacy work done by young people.
    - True
    - False
  6. There is no link between anti-gender movement and the HIV response, especially in Africa
    - True
    - False
  7. Effective advocacy is best achieved in numbers with other stakeholders.
    - True
    - False
  8. Young people have the ability to hold governments accountable
    - True
    - False

## Section 2: Question and Answer

1. Why is Monitoring and evaluation important?

2. What is your understanding of accountability?

3. What are the steps and processes involved in advocacy?

4. What is the role of stakeholders in effective advocacy?

5. What are three things you need to consider for a good budgeting and concept note/proposal writing?

6. What is your understanding of creative problem-solving skills, and why are they important?

7. What is your understanding of Comprehensive Sexuality Education?

8. What is your understanding of gender transformative approaches?

9. What is your understanding of Movement Building?

10. What is your understanding of SRHR funding in the current context of the funding crisis?

**Additional comments**

- Please provide any additional comments or information that is relevant to your training needs.

**You have come to the end of the assessment. Thank you!**

## 2. Participant Interview Questions

### **Experiences and quotes from young people:**

1. How do you feel about your Academy experience so far? (Are there any highlights or low points? What have you enjoyed most/ least?)
2. In a few words, how would you like to be introduced/profiled in the READY Academy report?
3. What do you expect to achieve/do because of your participation in the READY Academy?

### **Deeper insights into learning experience by participants:**

#### *Content and delivery*

4. Was the content delivered in a way that was easy to engage with and learn from? (What type of session delivery did you enjoy most/least?)
5. Which session was the easiest/most difficult to engage with and why?

#### *Knowledge and skills gained*

6. What knowledge have you gained so far?
7. Is there anything more you want to learn that hasn't been taught so far?

#### *Use of skills during the academy*

8. What new skills have you gained so far?
9. Have you used any of these new skills during the Academy? (if yes, how?)
10. Did you attend any self-care sessions? If yes, what was helpful or not helpful about them?

### 3. Faculty Survey

1. How do you feel the READY Academy went? \*

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2. What aspects of the READY Academy were particularly successful? \*

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3. What aspects of the READY Academy were not successful? \*

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4. What would you do differently next time? \*

Based on the responsibilities you had in facilitating the delivery of the READY Academy

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#### Trainer Self-Assessment

Rate your performance as a trainer, providing scores for all your sessions combined.

5. Created a comfortable and inclusive learning environment \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

6. Used a presentation style that was appropriate for the content and the audience \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High



7. Periodically checked participants' comprehension of the content \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

8. Gave adequate and appropriate explanations of new concepts \*

Mark only one oval.

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Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

9. Set up activities within the session to give participants a chance to practice what was learned during the presentation \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

10. Provided feedback to participants on their group-work activities \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

11. Answered all participant questions during my sessions and/or gave participants my contact details for further information \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

12. Presented all the content from my sessions as planned \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

13. Made adjustments to presentations according to the participants' pace of learning \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

#### Recommendations on Content and Style of Delivery

What considerations should be made to improve content and the style of delivery for the next READY Academy

14. What changes can be made to improve the range and quality of 'CONTENT' of the next READY Academy? \*

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15. What changes can be made to improve the style of 'DELIVERY' of presentations in the next READY Academy? \*

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#### 4. Alumni Interview Questions

1. What three key things did you learn from your READY Academy experience?
2. What is one learning or skill you applied when you got back to your country?
3. How well have you been able to navigate and thrive in an ever-challenging anti-rights landscape, because of the READY Academy?
4. What was the most significant change you experienced as a result of the READY Academy?
  - a. Why made that change significant to you?
  - b. What difference will that change make in the future?
5. What would you have done differently if you could participate in the READY Academy again?

## 5. READY Academy Programme

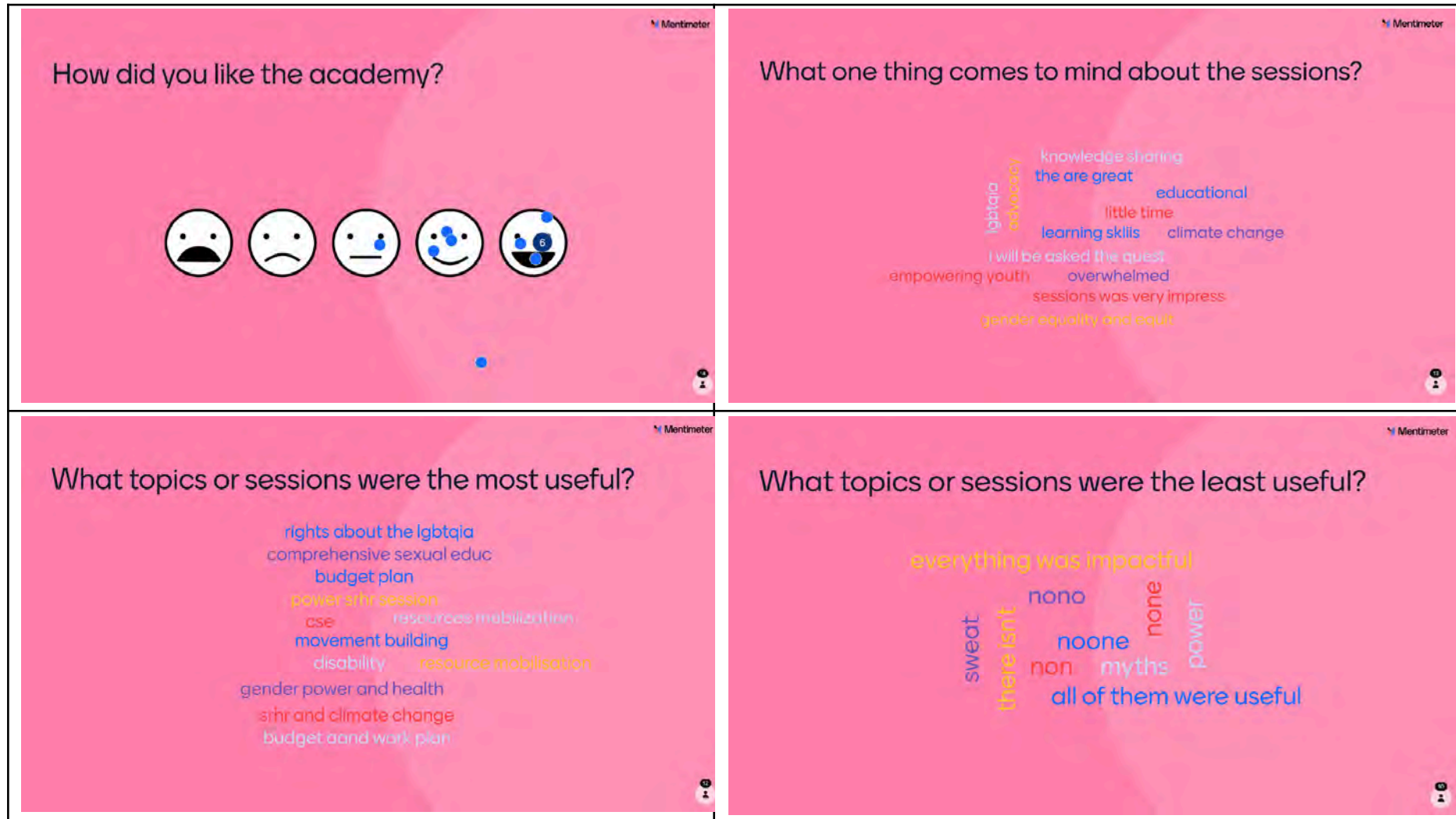
<b>DAY 1</b> Monday 09 June Industry theory (operational definitions) & practice	<b>DAY 2</b> Tuesday 10 June Evidence generation & analysis	<b>DAY 3</b> Wednesday 11 June Leadership & accountability	<b>DAY 4</b> Thursday 12 June Programming & implementation	<b>DAY 5</b> Friday 13 June Partnership & community engagement	<b>DAY 6</b> Saturday 14 June Communication & messaging
<b>Self-care Session</b> 08.00 - 08.30  Details TBC			<b>Self-Care Session</b> 08:00 - 08:30  <b>Details TBC</b>		<b>Self-Care Session</b> 08:00 - 08:30  <b>Details TBC</b>
<b>House keeping</b> 08.45-09.30  <b>Introductions</b> Ishmael Phiri and Chola Mumba  <b>READY Academy Pre-  Assessment</b> Chengetai Dziwa and Maxwell Katekwe	<b>Housekeeping &amp; daily  recap.</b> 08.45 - 09.00	<b>Housekeeping &amp; daily  recap.</b> 08.15 - 09.30	<b>Housekeeping &amp; daily  recap.</b> 08.45 - 09.00	<b>Housekeeping &amp; daily  recap</b> 09.00 - 09.30	<b>Housekeeping &amp; daily  recap</b> 09.00 - 10.30

<b>Opening &amp; Welcome Session</b> 09.15 - 09.30 Lois Chingandu	<b>Core Session 3</b> 09:00 - 10:00  Concept note: budgeting and work plans Ronald Tibiita	<b>Core Session 7</b> 08:30 - 09:30  Comprehensive Sexuality Education Diana Amanyire and James T.	<b>Core Session 11</b> 09:00 - 10:00  Movement-building strategy and the READY to Evolve Strategy Saruh Rusike	<b>Field Visit</b> Nokwanda Gambushe 10.00 - 12:30  1. Dignity Diversity in Policing Training is conducted in collaboration with South African Police Service as best practise for SA. This will include partner organisations on the programme for LGBTIQ person and People who use or inject drugs as the programme is a immoral regeneration programme. The site is at 21 Kruis Street, Marshalltown, Johannesburg  2. Hotspots (indoor and outdoor) in Johannesburg	09:30 - 11:30  <b>Outside Teambuilding/Soft Skills Session</b> Carol Phiri, Modester Mangilani and Maxwell Katekwe
<b>Thematic Session 1</b> 09.30 - 10.30  Exploring domestic financing strategies to replace the shrinking global health funds Yumnah Hattas		<b>Core Session 8</b> 09.30 - 10.30  Gender Transformative Approaches and anti-gender movement Yumnah Hattas	<b>Thematic Session 8</b> 10:00 - 11:00  Young people: disability and rights Yumnah Hattas and Diana Amanyire		<b>Free Time and Travel</b>
<b>Tea Break</b> 10.30 - 11.00	<b>Tea Break</b> 10.00 - 10.30	<b>Tea Break</b> 10.30 - 11.00	<b>Tea Break</b> 11.00 - 11.30		
<b>Thematic Session 2</b> 11:00 - 12:00  Civil society engagement in a changing funding landscape Tumie Komanyane	<b>Core Session 4</b> 10:30 - 11:30  Monitoring and Evaluation Chengetai Dziwa and Maxwell Katekwe	<b>Core Session 9</b> 11:00 - 12:00  Monitoring and Evaluation Chengetai Dziwa and Maxwell Katekwe	<b>Core Session 12</b> 11:30 - 12:15  Strengthening your digital voice: communication strategies for young advocates and the use of AI Modester Mangilani and Priscilla Addo		
<b>Thematic Session 3</b> 12:00 - 13:00  Meet the READY Academy 2024 Alumni Ishmael Phiri - Malawi Vangile Dlamini - Eswatini Chola Mumba - Zambia	<b>Thematic Session 4</b> 11:30 - 13:00  Health, gender and power Tanaka Nazare	<b>Core Session 10</b> 12:00 - 13:00  Learning through drama Tumie Komanyane	<b>Thematic Session 9</b> 12:15 - 13:00  Panel: Current context of funding for SRHR and youth Joao Chongo and Nick Veldwijk(Moderated by Ishmael Phiri)		
<b>Lunch</b> 13.00 - 14.00	<b>Lunch</b> 13.00 - 14.00	<b>Lunch</b> 13.00 - 14.00	<b>Lunch</b> 13.00-14.00	<b>Lunch</b> 13.00 - 14.00	



<b>Core Session 1</b> 14:00 - 15:30  Introduction to concept note writing winning proposals - Ronald Tibiita and Chris Kalume (Online)	<b>Core Session 5</b> 14:45 - 15:30  Evidence Based Accountability Meron Negussie	<b>Thematic Session 6</b> 14:00 - 16:00  Climate Change Yumnah Hattas	<b>Concept Pitching Session</b> 14:00 - 15:30	<b>Graduation and closing ceremony</b> 14.00 - 16.00	<b>Free time and travel</b>
<b>Tea Break</b> 15.30 - 15.45	<b>Tea Break</b> 15.30 - 15.45	<b>Tea Break</b> 16.00 - 16.15	<b>Tea Break</b> 16.00 - 16.30	<b>Tea Break</b> 16.00 - 17.00	<b>Free time and travel</b>
<b>Core Session 2</b> 15:45 - 16:45 Ethical engagement of young people in the global SRHR and HIV field Modester Mangilani	<b>Core Session 6</b> 15:45 - 16:45 Building local capacity to engage in Advocacy READY focal points, Saruh Rusike	<b>Thematic Session 7</b> 16:15 - 17:00 Future of advocacy in light of funding crises Loyiso Saliso and Zintle Tsholwana	<b>Core Session 13</b> 16:30 - 17:00 Seed funding projects implementation - Lessons from the Alumni Alumni - Ishmael Phiri and Vangile Dlamini	<b>READY Academy Post Assessment</b> 16.15 - 17.00	
<b>Free time</b> 17.00 - 18.00	<b>Free time</b> 17.30 - 18.00	<b>Free time</b> 17.00 - 18.00	<b>Free time</b> 17.00 - 18.00	<b>Free time</b> 17.00 - 18.00	<b>Free time and travel</b>
<b>Welcome group dinner</b> 19:00 - 21:00	<b>Consultation with faculty</b> 18:00 - 18:45	<b>Consultation with faculty</b> 18:00 - 18:45	<b>Consultation with faculty</b> 18:00 - 18:45	<b>Braai and games night</b> 18:00 - 21:00	<b>Free time and travel</b>

## 6. Mentimeter Evaluation Results



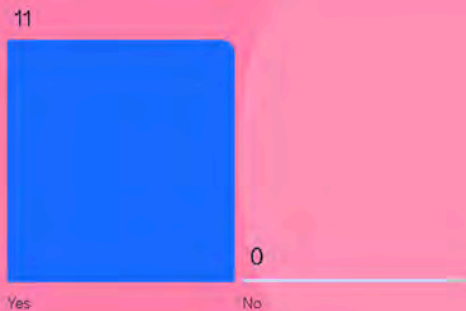
What topics or information were missing that you would have liked presented?

how to start a movement a  
i think everything was ok  
non  
enterpurship  
how can we convince public  
lgbtiq we didn't go deepe  
teenage pregnancy  
everything was covered  
training the youth

Case studies were relevant and useful?

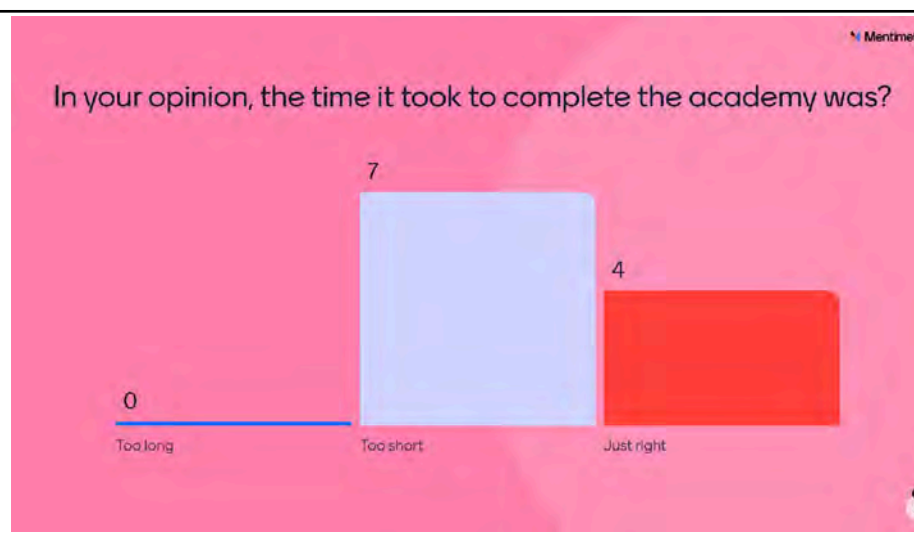
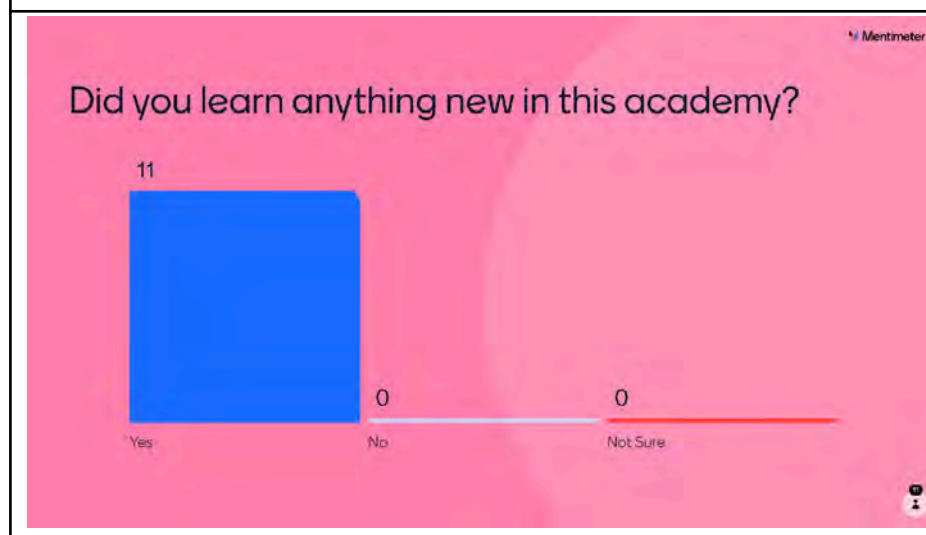
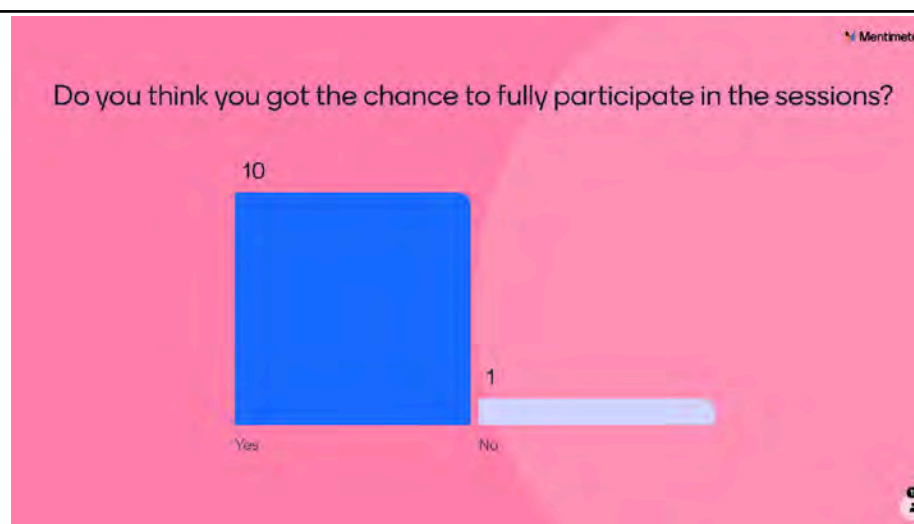
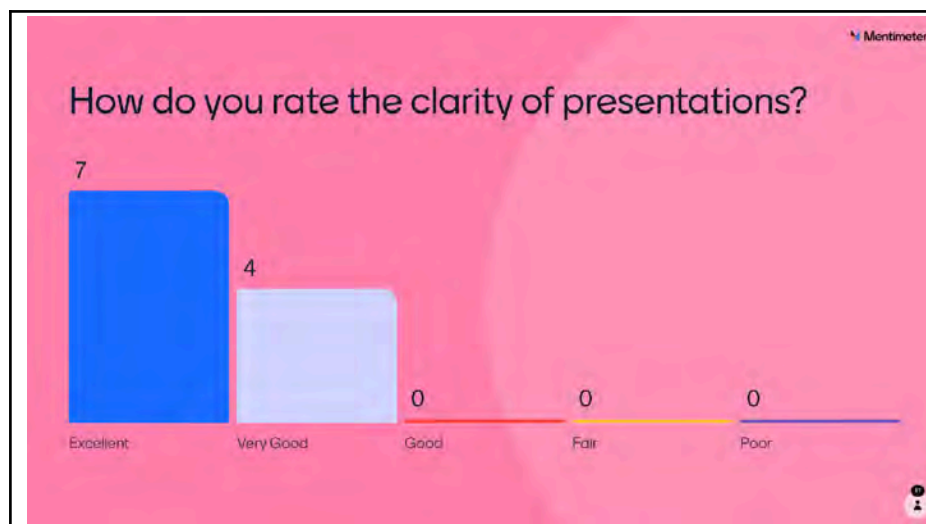


Mixed media used (graphics, videos, images etc.) reinforced the course content and were useful?



The academy provided consistently clear explanations and instructions??







## What can we improve for the next academy?



## What specific things can we do to improve academy sessions?

Everything was okay

Everything was okay

Not picking the same people who were answer even choose those weren't raising there hands so that they should still participate because you always say every answer is correct

Not picking up the same people who were answer even if they want to answer but picking those who aren't raising there hands because you said every answer is correct

The venue was soo far from reality the hotel food wasn't soo good Some facilitators were rude and intimidating

Some facilitators were very judgmental especially with issues that had to do with sex workers

For m it might be good if each and every country contribute the same number of participants and also if you can include some participants with physical disability it can be wonderful 😊

Almost every presentation and session was just good but some presentations have only few time it might be good if some presentations can be given much time next time

## What specific things can we do to improve academy sessions?

It might be good if you can include some two or three out door session so that can learn through games and the like

Having enough games and some out door sessions

Group presentation must be presented at the stage not just staying at the group coz by standing at the front help one to build confidence

Consider to disability people to attend 2026 academy

Disability people must included

Give pamphlet or soft copy to the learner in time. Give learners time to prepare for concept note Don't be too harsh to the learners

Add more LGBTIQ people

Make sure that every session has enough time

## What specific things can we do to improve academy sessions?

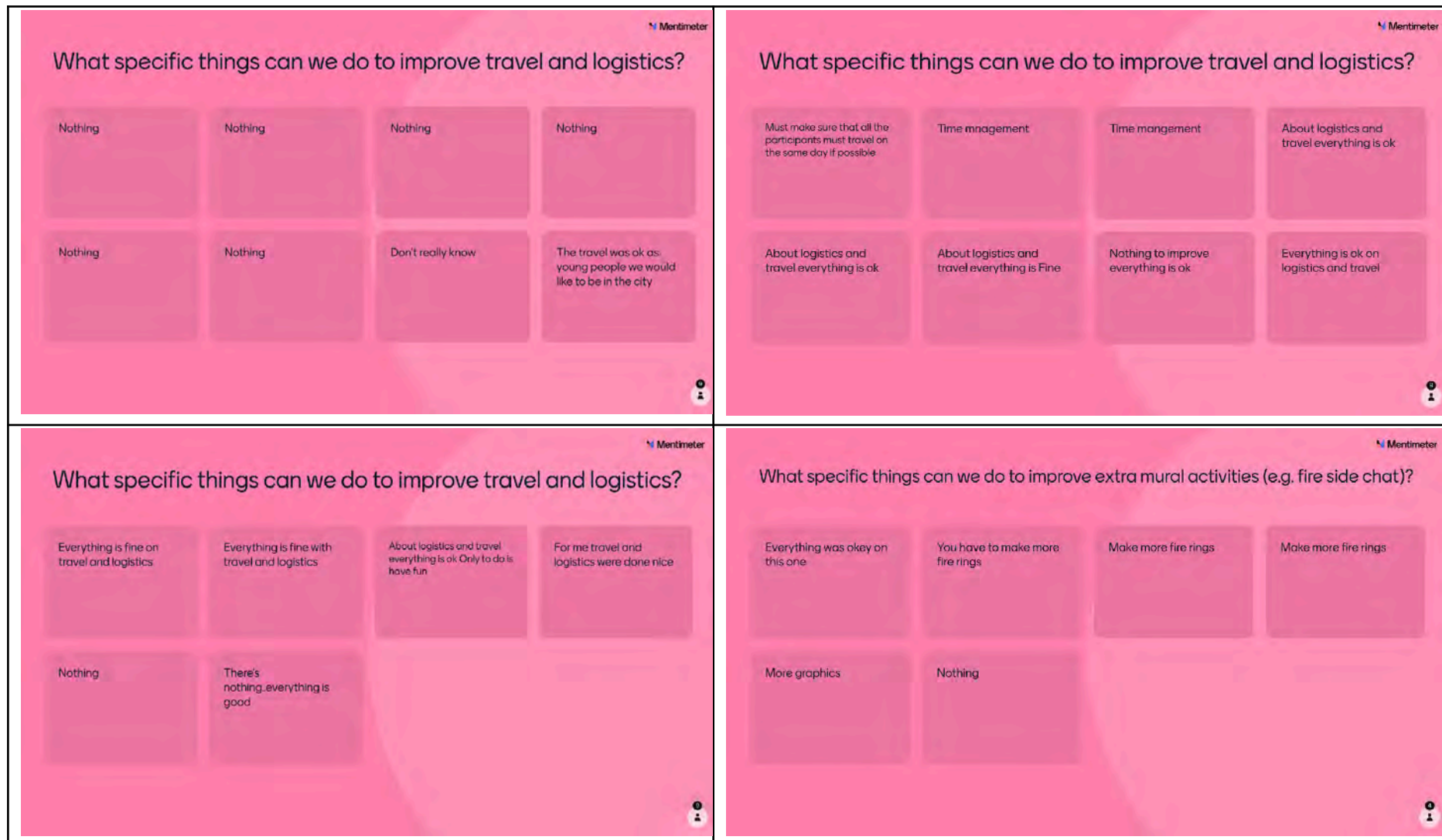
The academy sessions where great and they were up to date in terms of facilitating and content of the modules

Nothing

Null

Nothing but just ensure the lodge or hotel provides quality Internet access because that is the only method of communication back home

Also invite people with disabilities





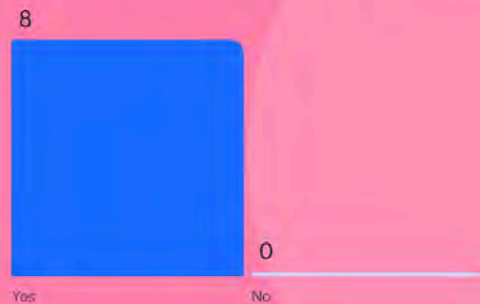
One word about how you feel about the academy so far?

splendid  
excited  
educational  
beautiful  
good  
great  
very gorgeous and excited  
was quiet good and funny

The academy managed to meet its expectations?



The academy managed to meet my expectations?



What is that one thing you would change about this academy?

nothing to change  
relative  
friends  
advocacy  
location  
add per diem  
conduct company  
transition to hard words  
everything was just okay  
extend the days  
invite different people  
community

## What is the strength of the academy?

strong analytical skills  
me feel more  
helped me feel more confi  
travel and logistics  
share ideas  
funny  
togetherness  
share experience  
share knowledge  
excellent  
facilitating  
confident  
commitment  
good  
team work  
learning  
helped  
safe space

## What is the weakness of the academy?

contribution of participa  
facilitators  
share ideas  
share knowledge  
no weakness  
share experience  
concept forms because we  
failed to have enough  
some facilitators  
were rude  
catering  
dislike

## In your opinion, does the academy address the issues of equity and inclusion fully?

8



Yes

No

Not Sure

## In a few words, what did you think of the learning event: Stigma Index Report Dissemination Meeting?

I have forgotten

We should learn to  
accommodate everyone  
regardless of the key  
population they belong to

Stigma index are some of  
the important topics we  
must learn because these  
helps things affect as in  
other way or the other

Good because we learn on  
who we can treat and  
ending discriminate  
disability people

Is that stigma is always  
there

It's was I good thing  
because youth tend to have  
fear to face adults so having  
to learn about that was a  
good thing

It boosts people's  
confidence

In a few words, what would you say to the next young person who would be interested in participating in the academy?

Don't be porpunce that you are going to another country have in mind that they choose you for a reason

Don't let other people intimidate you you can do it

It will be good if they will come and participate because after learning they will be able to to help and also to play major role in doing advocacy and also in making young people resilience

Do more advocacy and be a full participant on the READY + ACADEMY group

Never miss that chance

Do join this academy..your life will change



## 7. Participant Learning Diary

Learning journal for (Name.....)

1. What are three key things you have learned from this training

2. What is one thing you will immediately apply when you go back to your country?

3. Which new skills have you learned through this training?

4. What specific action will you take as a result of this training?

5. How confident are you now in your ability to engage or hold policymakers and government officials accountable in relation to youth-centred issues and SRHR financing?

6. What is one question you still have for the faculty?

## 8. READY Academy Concept Note Marking Rubric

**READY Academy Concept Note Marking Rubric.**

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)
<b>Clarity of Purpose</b>	Clearly stated and compelling	Clear and relevant	Clear but not compelling	Vague or somewhat unclear	Not clear or relevant
<b>Background Information</b>	Thorough and well-researched	Adequate and relevant	Sufficient but limited	Incomplete or partially relevant	Lacking or irrelevant
<b>Contextual Understanding</b>	Demonstrates deep understanding of context	Good understanding	Basic understanding	Limited understanding	Lacks understanding
<b>Feasibility</b>	Highly feasible	Feasible	Moderately feasible	Limited feasibility	Not feasible
<b>Appropriateness of Methods</b>	Highly appropriate	Appropriate	Somewhat appropriate	Limited appropriateness	Inappropriate
<b>Clarity and Detail of Procedures</b>	Detailed and clear	Clear and sufficiently detailed	Clear but lacks some detail	Vague or lacking detail	Unclear or missing
<b>Clarity of Outcomes</b>	Clear and specific	Clear	Somewhat clear	Vague	Unclear
<b>Relevance and Significance</b>	Highly relevant and significant	Relevant and significant	Moderately relevant	Limited relevance	Not relevant or significant
<b>Potential for Impact</b>	High potential for impact	Good potential	Moderate potential	Limited potential	Low or no potential
<b>Justification of Costs</b>	Well-justified and reasonable	Justified and reasonable	Somewhat justified	Limited justification	Not justified or unreasonable
<b>Resource Availability</b>	Resources clearly identified and available	Identified and mostly available	Some resources identified	Limited identification	Not identified
<b>Justification of Costs</b>	Well-justified and reasonable	Justified and reasonable	Somewhat justified	Limited justification	Not justified or unreasonable
<b>Summary of Key Points</b>	Clear and concise summary	Clear summary	Adequate summary	Vague or incomplete summary	Unclear or missing
<b>Strength and Relevance of Recommendations</b>	Strong and relevant recommendations	Good recommendations	Moderate recommendations	Limited recommendations	Weak or irrelevant
<b>Summary of Key Points</b>	Clear and concise summary	Clear summary	Adequate summary	Vague or incomplete summary	Unclear or missing
<b>Organization and Structure</b>	Well-organized and structured	Organized and structured	Somewhat organized	Poorly organized	Disorganized
<b>Clarity and Professionalism</b>	Highly clear and professional	Clear and professional	Somewhat clear	Limited clarity	Unclear or unprofessional
<b>Grammar and Style</b>	Grammatically correct and stylish	Mostly correct	Adequate but some errors	Numerous errors	Poor grammar and style