



PYAO NEWSLETTER

Third Quarter, 2021

Volume 2

Issue 3

info@pyaomw.org

<http://www.pyaomw.org>



POSITIVE ACTION



WORD FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Vincent Makuluni Thom
PYAO Executive Director

We're very excited for being privileged to meet again in this third quarter of the year 2021. We only remain with a quarter in this year 2021. Let me take the opportunity to ask if we have started taking stock of what we have achieved by now as planned. Are we on track on fulfilling our plans? What are we doing to fulfill the remaining parts of these achievements?

This quarter PYAO had chance to serve our friends at Njalo Island again. This time around we were privileged to spend a night at this island just to appreciate issues residents of this island are facing. Frankly speaking, Njalo Island needs our support. Let's make sure we intensify outreach activities, outreach clinics, humanitarian activities and if possible supporting early childhood development and junior primary education. This will protect our children at this island who need to travel to the mainland in order to easily access education, health and protection services

Let me appreciate the collaboration and coordination that is there between PYAO and Phalombe Police. This quarter we continued with the outreach activities and this time around primary schools and communities from the border areas were targeted. It was very commendable and appealing to see the community policing department committing their time and services to the hard to reach areas in the district. A message to our stakeholders and partners, let's join hands and do more school and community outreaches especially in villages and schools around the borders.

We had a wonderful joint Youth Friendly Health Services monitoring and supervision this quarter. One key issue standing out is the need to support the health facilities with recreational materials like sports equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor sports disciplines.

This will attract more youths to be accessing and utilizing the YFHS. If partners and stakeholders also have time please plan to attend one of the YFHS club meetings at any health facility which normally happen on Saturdays. Next quarter, PYAO's priority is to monitor all YFHS clubs in the district.

I am very impressed with the way the youths have conducted the community scorecards in different projects and services during this quarter. It is evident that if given full support, they can support ADCs and VDCs in holding duty bearers to account. Let's support these youth leaders technically and financially for them to continue public expenditure tracking initiatives.

I cannot go without talking about International Youth Day. 2021 had a very good theme "Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health". Do you have something to show how young people are being actively engaged in transforming food systems in your communities? Phalombe will commemorate the day on October 14, 2021 at Thambe Ground, GVH Misomali. PYAO celebrates all young people in Phalombe who are doing commendable job in transforming food systems and health of the communities. We will award few selected best performers for the year 2021.

Lastly, PYAO has good news for the communities in Phalombe and neighbors we have a new program which contributes to the conserving of the environment in the district. We are starting making biomass / charcoal briquettes that are affordable and environmental friendly. Let's join hands in the conservation of the environment by starting using these biomass briquettes

Community leaders empowered in ending violence



Photo: Chidule making the presentation

Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation has empowered community stakeholders in Sub Traditional Authority Nyambalo have been to take role in ending intimate partner violence.

Intimate partner violence is common among families in this area according to survey that was conducted by Art and global health Africa in 2020.

PYAO Programmes officer Stanford Chidule said the activity aimed at telling the community members effects of intimate partner violence so that the vice be curbed.

“We engaged four chiefs and their VDC members, child protection workers, community police forum, in Sub TA Nyambalo discussing what they as leaders can do to end the intimate partner violence here.

“Gender Balance Tree and songs were used to help the leaders were empowered to take leading roles,” he said.

In his remarks, Sub Traditional Authority Nyambalo advised all the 4 chiefs to conduct the awareness through community meetings so that this message should reach out to all families in the area.

“Take advantage of your community meetings and disseminate these messages so that the intimate partner violence should be curbed,” said the Chief.

He further hailed PYAO for the activity saying there is need to be having such interfaces frequently in the area.

PYAO conducted the activity with support from Art and Global Health Africa through the project Malawi Art for Women Activism (MAWA).

PRODUCTION TEAM

Articles compiled by:
Chikondi Magalasi

+265 999 42 33 87
+265 888 67 63 75
chikondimagalasi@gmail.com

Edited by:
Sam Majamanda

+265 998 24 20 29
+265 884 81 50 38
sammajamanda@yahoo.com

Design and Layout
Chikondi Magalasi

Photography
Chikondi Magalasi
PYAO
Grecium Gama

Executive Director
Vincent Makuluni Thom
+265 997 13 06 54
+265 994 43 61 91
+265 881 76 28 51
vincent.thom@pyaomw.org

Twilight



Media

Profile

Twilight Media is an Award winning Multi-media Company run by professional Journalists and Film Makers, offering professional digital multimedia services in High Definition.

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In the consultancy package we provide services on consultancy basis. The services include Radio Programming, production of Television material, jingles, newsletters and development of communication tools, models and strategies, etc.

Chikondi Magalasi
+265999423387

Grecium Gama
+265 884687403

CONTACTS

Sam Majamanda
+265884815038

Phalombe district council keen to deliberate youth matters



Photo: Council Chairperson Benard Komwa emphasizing that youths matters will be given a space in the council meetings

Phalombe district council has promised that it will table matters affecting the youths in the district in the forthcoming full council's meetings.

This was revealed during an interface meeting which some youth champions and peer educators organised with support from Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation.

Among those present at the meeting were council's chairperson and chairpersons of different service committees such as health, development, education, finance and environment.

Speaking during the interface, the council chairperson Benard Komwa promised that some of the issues presented will be deliberated during forthcoming Council meetings.

“We are happy that you invited us to tell us matters affecting your fellow youths, this meeting is very fruitful as it has reminded us what we were missing so as to address issues affecting you (youths). I

“Let me promise you that whatever has been said will be tabled during forthcoming full council meetings, we don't want you to be left behind, you are the key to the development anywhere here in Phalombe district,” he said.

One of the youth champions who was present at the event, Successor Isaac, said he is happy to see how the council's representatives responded to the matters presented them.

“In many cases they gave us answers which we wanted, they weren't stingy with information, look they even told us that some of the things we are asking them can't be fulfilled easily because of their poor relationship with their respective members of Parliament,” said Isaac who is also chairperson for Phweremwe Youth Network.

In his remarks, PYAO Executive Director Vincent Thom applauded the council's representatives for giving audience to the youths and he was quick to remind them their pledge of taking these issues to a full council meeting.

“It was very important interface, look both sides are satisfied with resolutions made, we are looking forward for these councillors to fulfill their pledge and we are sure that the council will do something on what has been deliberated here” he said.

Among the issues are lack of youth corners in health facilities, Gender Based Violence (GBV), human trafficking, among others.



We are hoping to see change: Thom



VISION

PYAO envisions an inclusive society that values and supports full engagement of vulnerable people in civic, social, economic and environmentally healthy communities

MISSION

PYAO invests in innovative ideas, convenes interested parties, shares its learning and advocates for change in support of young people being health, creative and fully engaged citizens

FOCUS AREAS

SRHR | HIV and AIDS | Governance & Human Rights | Education
Environment and Climate Justice | Livelihood Security

STRATEGY


Advocacy | Community Mobilization | Capacity Development
Coordination & Networking | Data and Research

 [phalombeyoutharmsorganisationpyao](https://www.facebook.com/phalombeyoutharmsorganisationpyao)

 [PYAO_Phalombe](https://twitter.com/PYAO_Phalombe)

 [pyao_malawi](https://www.instagram.com/pyao_malawi)

 www.pyaomw.org

 +265 997 130 654
+265 994 436 191

 info@pyaomw.org
phalombeyoutharms@gmail.com

PYAO Supports YFHS Supervision



Supervision exercise in progress at Chiteketsa Health Centre

So as to unearth challenges facing youths in the health facilities, Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation (PYAO) joined Youth Friendly Health Services (YFHS) supervision exercise.

A-week exercise which was done in 10 health facilities in district was led by district's YFHS Coordinator Maurine Chilikutali, District Youth Officer Ian Sukali, among others.

Speaking at Phalombe Health Centre, Chilikutali said she is impressed with how some health facilities are performing which simply means that youths are being served very well.

“In many facilities which we have visited we see that relationship between health personnel and the youths through their clubs and networks is just fine. Look, like you are telling us that even without your presence youths can be able to hold sessions on their own.

“This is very impressive as we are able now to serve the youths with services they need,” said Chilikutali.

In his remarks Programmes' Officer for PYAO, Stanford Chidule, said the organisation is keen to support activities which aim to unearth gaps that can be bridged for the betterment of livelihood of the youths.

“We know through this exercise our stakeholders will be able to see gaps which need to be filled so that my fellow youths here in Phalombe should be getting better services in our health facilities.

“I am just dismayed with youths surrounding Mulungu Alinafe health facility in the area of traditional authority Phweremwe who are failing to make use of the facility, as an organisation we will try to make an effort so that youths be aware how important is that facility to their lives,” said Chidule.



We'll continue supporting: Chidule

PYAO equips Njalo community policing forum



Photos: training sessions in progress

Community Policing Forum members at Njalo Island have been equipped with skills of handling matters of children rights protection on the Island.

The two-day training covering topics such as Violence Against Women, Girls and Children, Child Labour, Child, Early and Forced Marriages, Drug and Substance Abuse.

PYAO Programmes Officer Stanford Chidule said the training was held upon the request of the chief Chalera of the Island who noted a knowledge gap among policing forum members.

“We wanted to empower the Community Policing Team so as to be enforcing the acts of protecting the child, preventing them from early and forced marriages while understanding the child related rights,” he said.

Chidule added that together with officers from Phalombe Police and Social Welfare through the two days they had been on the Island they noted a lot of issues which need to be addressed.

“this island does not have a health centre except the under-five clinic which is managed by only a single Health Surveillance Assistant. There is no Early Childhood Development (ECD) or main school. Although some people, mostly fishermen, just come for a short period of time, there are people whose main home is this island, they were born and grown up there.

“Life at Njalo is very bad in the sense that there is legal illiteracy of child related rights and laws, high Sexually Transmitted Infections prevalence approximately more than 75% prevalence,” he added.

Assistant Social Welfare Officer for the district Biton Mpilisi said children on the Island need to be assisted with an ECD centre.

“We have seen the problem, we need an ECD centre for these kids to be playing their while learning some basics of a child,” he said.

On his part Village Head Chalera commended PYAO saying the training is an eye opener and he promised that they will be arresting those who violate rights of the children, girls and women on the Island and face the law.

“My men and women have now acquired the knowledge which they needed, with the encouragement we have received from the officers who were here we've now gained a momentum and let me say here that we will never entertain all people who violate rights of our children who hold the future of this Island,” said the chief.

PYAO motivates Mlambe Girls



Photo: Mlambe girls dancing with PYAO officers

Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation has encouraged Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYWs) to be vigilant in ending sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in the area of traditional authority Chiwalo.

Speaking after visiting the AGYWs who are known by their Mlambe Girls Club, Executive Director for PYAO Vincent Thom advised the girls to guard each other.

“You need to be safeguarding rights of your fellow girls here. Whenever you hear that your colleague somewhere is being abused and her rights are being violated please do not hesitate to play a role in protecting her,” he said.

Thom added that by telling the girls that they should be encouraging fellow girls to be taking contraceptives so as to avoid unwanted pregnancies and early marriages

The club's chairperson, Racheal Matemba, thanked PYAO for the visit saying her fellow girls have learnt a few things which will be very useful in their day to day activities.

“We are happy for these kind of support, we'll continue doing the good work as you know apart from discussing issues of sexual and reproductive health we do also work as watchdogs for child and human trafficking as you know this area is the traffickers' route,” she said.

Mlambe Girls Club has more than 20 members both in school and out school girls as through the club are able to discuss matters affecting their day to day lives.



Photo: Matemba (centre) dancing with colleagues

Youths Speak Out!



Efridah Mangwanda from Namba Youth Club

Efridah says through PYAO's interventions she is now fully aware how to advocate for transparency and accountability from leaders of different committees at community level.

Through various trainings on advocacy and budget trafficking using scorecards, Efridah can now be able to track how funds are used by Village Development Committee of her village.

“Tracking how our taxes are being used by village development committee is no longer an issue as we always make sure that every 1 Malawi Kwacha counts.

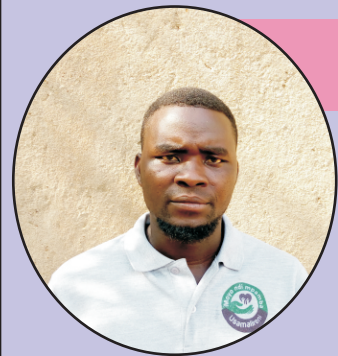
“Advocating for our rights is also no longer an issue, whenever we feel that somehow our rights have been violated we stand up and do something,” said Efrida.

Personally, Efridah says through knowledge and skills acquired from PYAO interventions she is able to do things determinedly and independently.

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“Advocating for our rights is also no longer an issue, whenever we feel that somehow our rights have been violated we stand up and do something,” said Efrida.

Personally, Efridah says through knowledge and skills acquired from PYAO interventions she is able to do things determinedly and independently.



Wyson Luka from Nazombe Youth Club

“The list of good things is too long which PYAO is doing to us here in Phalombe,” says Wyson who is also the chairperson for Phalombe district youth network.

According to Wyson most of leaders of the youth clubs across the district have the capacity in matters of Sexual Reproductive Health and Services (SRHS), advocacy on matters of seeking transparency and accountability.

“Youths of Phalombe today can't be deceived on various matters because of capacity which PYAO has built in them from advocacy up to implementing matters on the ground.

“Look with support and mentorship from PYAO, youths of Phalombe advocated for construction of youth resource centres, I can say now that Jenala Youth Resource Centre is nearly its completion stage and Mpsa Youth Resource Centre is about to start,” he said.

The chairperson added that youths living with HIV/AIDS are now coming openly and join the Y-plus networks in all the traditional authorities where they discuss matters that concern them most.

“Look our Y-plus clubs are vibrant now because of interventions by PYAO, we are very grateful for the support,” said the chairperson. “Youths of Phalombe today can't be deceived on various matters because of capacity which PYAO has built in them from advocacy up to implementing matters on the ground.

Youths Speak Out!



Laston Matopa from Phozwe Youth Club

Laston who is the chairperson for Kaduya Youth Network says through PYAO interventions youths are now meeting in the health facilities of Kalinde and Migowi as part of youth friendly health services.

He says PYAO has helped a lot in reducing teenage pregnancies and early marriages as the organisation has been making sure that contraceptive methods through YCBD As are always available to the youths.

Laston said: “If you come every Saturday at Migowi health centre you will be surprised with number of youths that you will find, many youths come and meet their colleagues and get help for sexual and reproduction health services and rights. “I can challenge people to go and see Kalinde health centre on how it is performing in YFHS, all this because of PYAO.” The youth champion adds that due to capacity in SRHR enhanced by PYAO most youth clubs are determined to make sure that teenage pregnancies are prevented.



Racheal Matemba from Mlambe Girls Club

“From Chiwalo Youth Network we are very grateful with PYAO, advocacy and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights trainings (SRHR) have built our capacity here,” said Racheal.

Racheal who is also chairperson for Mlambe Girls Club says PYAO has reduced teenage pregnancies in their area through trainings which YCBDAs received as they now able to give out some contraceptive methods which at first were being offered only at Nambazo Health Centre in the area.

She added that through advocacy skills which they received they are able to advocate to issues of protection of children in the area who are prone to human trafficking.

This is to notify you that in this e-*Newsletter* we just highlight some of the activities that our organisation carries out. There are a lot of the activities which have been done between the month of July-September 2021 which we could not put them in this publication.

Please don't miss anything all the time by liking our [Facebook](#) page or follow our [Twitter](#) handle.



Chief bemoans increase in teenage pregnancies

Sub-traditional Authority Phweremwe of Phalombe district has expressed concern over the increase in teenage pregnancy cases in the area, saying many girls are being impregnated by men from Mozambique.

The chief said this during an interface of different stakeholders on how to curb the teenage pregnancies in his area organised by Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation (PYAO).

In an interview, the chief said men from Mozambique cross over to his area and engage in sexual affairs with teenage girls.

“Most of these teenage pregnancies are fathered by Mozambican men as you know we're just meters away as my area borders with the Mozambique.

“I think due to lack of role models these girls drop out from school and they indulge themselves in sexual malpractices with these Mozambican men, government and other stakeholders should help us,” he said.

In his remarks, Child Protection Officer for the area, Charles Sipuni, said most of these teenage pregnancies are coming because of negligence of parents who fail to control these girls.

“Parents are not taking part in protecting the children here, they do not control their movements, there is need that parents should change their mindsets and be responsible,” he said.

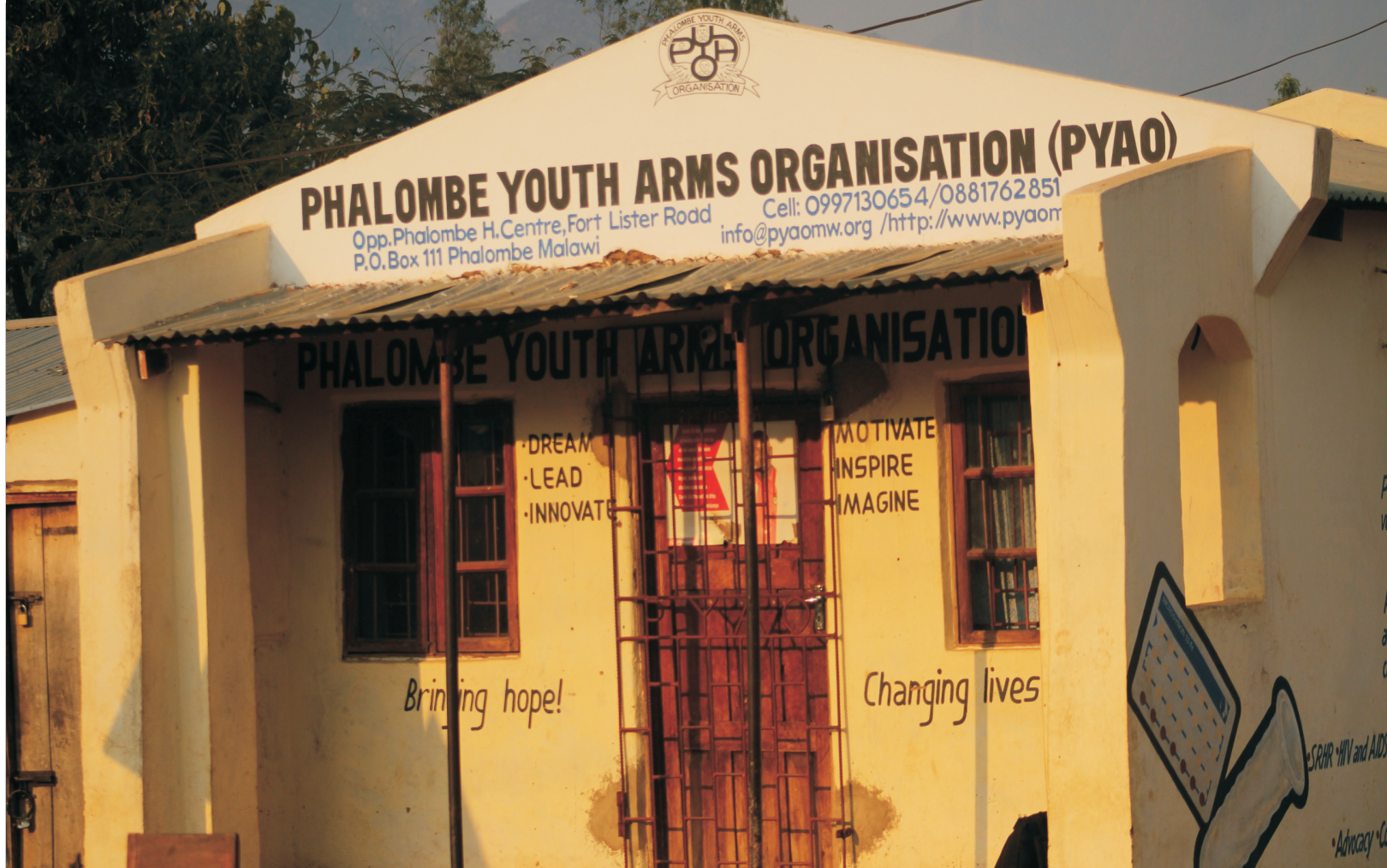
In a separate interview, PYAO Executive Director, Vincen Thom, said the interface was important as now stakeholders are on the same page on reasons of increase in teenage pregnancies.

“Going forward, we'll be able to formulate reasonable ways as a district, of how we can deal with the increase in teenage pregnancies, our girls need to be in school not in marriages,” he said.

Last year, 2,784 cases of teen pregnancies and 800 child marriages were recorded in Phalombe over a period of six months following closure of schools.



Photo: Sub-T/A Phweremwe



**Physical Address: Opposite Phalombe Health Centre
Along Phalombe-Mpata-Nkhulambe Road**

See you next time