



Savana Signatures

2020 Annual Report

I AM YOUNG,
EMPOWERED AND FLOURISHING



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Savana Signatures

2020

**YEAR-END
IMPACT REPORT**



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Access Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
information and referral services through the
SHE+ Helpline

0800 00 11 22

#StayHome

#StayHealthy

Is Private Is Confidential Is Managed by Professionals
Provides Referrals Is Nationwide



**RESULTS: SEXUAL HEALTH
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Yatasu, 16 years from Savannah Region, Ghana, a beneficiary of the Girls' Life Choices Project Masked up to protect herself from COVID-19 during Menstrual Hygiene Management training.

ABOUT SAVANA SIGNATURES

Savana Signatures is a For-Impact Organization focused on creating impact across seven regions of Ghana with innovative and essential interventions for vulnerable groups in these areas. Savana Signatures is registered as a Non-Profit organisation operating in Ghana with two main offices located in Sagnarigu in the Northern Region and Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana.

The organisation for over a decade, has implemented projects in quality education, skills development, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the Northern, North-East, Savannah, Upper East, Upper West, Oti and Volta Regions of Ghana.

These selected regions encompasses the majority of vulnerable groups in the country, thus empirically known to harbour majority of the poorest households - of Ghana.

Women led interventions and technology has been a key driving force behind the success of the organisation coupled with its dedicated multiple partners and donors.

VISION

A society where all have access to tools that improve their livelihoods and quality of life.

MISSION

To initiate positive change among youth, women and vulnerable populations of Ghana using innovative solutions to facilitate access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Quality Education and Skills Development.



INTRODUCTION

In 2020, Savana Signatures’ journey to achieving the ambitious goals set for the year was successful through your support. The organisation provided access to reliable platforms that amplified the voice of the voiceless, implementing interventions that brought about improvement in the livelihoods of the vulnerable in Ghana. This was achieved by leveraging innovation and technology, to bridge the knowledge and access gap that exist as well as create linkages to existing social protection systems.

The report “I am young, empowered and flourishing”, captures the spirit of Savana Signatures’ long-standing goal of empowering girls and women while supporting existing systems to bring respite to the thousands of young people and other groups, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Some essential underlying themes such as Skills Empowerment, Gender Equality, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Adolescent Reproductive Health and Rights are deeply embedded in the interventions implemented in the year under review.

The report, true to Savana Signatures’ new strategic direction highlights key strategies deployed by the organisation to ensure an increase in access and quality of education; increased access to and quality of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, and providing professional skills development programmes to the underprivileged in society. This is in furtherance of Savana Signatures’ vision of a society where all have access to tools that improve their livelihoods and quality of life.



Welcome Message

Dear partners and supporters,

The year 2020 was a year that changed everything across the world. This change has given us a rare opportunity to rethink the future of development work in a post-pandemic world. The following are my thoughts on the future:

Integrating ICTs into Education

The digital world is now where young people spend their time. Even the least privileged young person must be able to move comfortably in a digital world (using phones, tablets, and computers with ease; assessing the quality of content; and thinking of technology as an integrated part of their learning toolbox rather than an add-on). The pandemic drastically changed the way we educate children.

Overnight, remote learning replaced classroom learning. In many of Ghana's under-resourced communities, schools were not equipped to support their students online. There should be equitable access to technology and we need to bridge the rural-urban digital gap.

Education matters today more than ever

This global pandemic, which has shuttered businesses and pushed first responders to the limit, has become a potent reminder that education indeed matter. This COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in at least one positive thing: a greater appreciation for the importance of education. As parents struggle to work with their children at home due to school closures, public recognition of the essential caretaking role schools play in society has been experienced. As young people struggle to learn from home, parents' gratitude for teachers, their skills, and their invaluable role in student well-being, has risen. Even before COVID-19, there was a global consensus that education systems in many countries were not delivering the quality education needed to ensure that all have the skills necessary to thrive. Think about the problems the world is faced with now. It is the next generation that will be the ones to solve these problems.

The need for young people to learn social and emotional skills

The ability to regulate our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours – all determine how well we adjust to our environments. Considering how fast our world is changing, these are skills that young people need. The Covid 19 pandemic has caused young people to be challenged emotionally - fear, anger, uncertainty and grief. People with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially.



Stephen Agbenyo
Executive Director, Savana Signatures

Welcome Message

The need to protect young people from Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) perpetuate norms that are deeply rooted in gender inequality and disempowerment of women in our societies. Women and girls are victims of harmful practices such as sexual exploitation, unequal division of roles and responsibilities, child marriages, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sex trafficking which makes them vulnerable to teenage pregnancy, aesthetic fistula, STIs including HIV/AIDS, and the practice of unsafe abortion. While this is at play, the Covid 19 pandemic has increased the vulnerability of young people to these SGBV resulting in an upsurge in teenage pregnancy rates and abuses in our communities.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", it is important for families, individuals and institutions to work in unison in the empowerment of young people.

Savana Signatures which believes in gender equality and the empowerment of young people and women, made it central to its work in the year review, to showcase their endurance and achievement by giving them equal opportunities. The organization continues to challenge the status quo and project the urgency to protect women and girls in our society against SGBV. This is evidence in community interventions that support ending discrimination and violence in all forms against women and girls and strategically empowering them to amplify their voice to condemn harmful practices, and stereotypes.

Therefore, as a society, there hasn't been a time as now, that needs the collective effort of its people to ensure that women and girls are guaranteed protection and safety within their environment and are encouraged to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

Now it is up to us – together – to keep innovating and to help create the future. The pandemic is not over. We are faced with funding challenges. With huge funding gaps, we are unsure of how 2021 activities will end. However, we are hopeful.

We thank our sponsors and partners who have had faith in us and continue to support us. Together, we shall have a society where all have access to tools that improve their livelihoods and the quality of their lives by initiating positive change among youth, women and vulnerable populations of Ghana using innovative solutions to facilitate access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Quality Education and Skills Development.

Thank you for supporting and partnering us to build a better world.



SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED BUT IT IS NOT A HOLIDAY

COVID-19 INTERVENTION



Schools are closed but it is not a holiday

On March 15, 2020, the Government of Ghana ordered the closure of all educational institutions to slow down the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and to control the consequences of the virus on the health sector. This ban challenged the government and development organisations to urgently establish platforms for pupils and students to access learning, follow COVID-19 trends and stay safe while at home.

In response to this, and prioritising the adherence to the COVID-19 protocols announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Savana Signatures together with Edukans International implemented a timely response project dubbed "Schools are closed but it's not a holiday" in three regions of Ghana; Volta, North-East and Northern Regions. The project brought together some selected media houses, teachers, parents, children and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to engage in radio discussions aimed at contributing to mitigating the social consequences of the pandemic.

Project Objectives



- Guide parents to support their children during the pandemic.
- Ensure every child goes back to school after the crisis.
- Provide psychosocial support to teachers and pupils during the COVID-19.



REGION	RADIO	FREQUENCY	TIME
Volta Region	Kuul FM	103.5MHz	10:00 am
Volta region	Lorlornya FM	93.3MHz	12:30 pm
North East	Eagle FM	94.1MHz	12:30 pm
Northern Region	Radio Tamale	91.7MHz	1:00 pm



Key Results

Schools are closed but it is not a holiday

1,908,548

Teachers, Students and Parents Reached

The project within two months of implementation reached about 1,908,548 teachers, students and parents in Ghana with information relating to COVID-19, psychosocial support and ways to adjust to teaching and learning during lockdown period.





40

Teachers, Students, and Parents

capacities were built to lead the radio discussions on Psychosocial, GBV, SRHR and COVID-19 related issues.

1600

Teachers

equipped with teaching materials to offer home learning support to students through WhatsApp and phone call.

Listeners

are equipped with knowledge to comfortably guide their children at home to learn and also make effective decisions on their reproductive health.

COVID-19: "I am afraid when I am in town" Gloria, 12 years



Gloria Ahadzi, 12 years old, lives at Adaklu Kodozbi in the Volta Region of Ghana and a student at Regional Model School at Flat Junction, Ho. She expressed fear about the COVID-19, stressing that her fear grows worse each moment she is in town.

"Though I follow all the protocols by using sanitizers, facemasks, washing of hands with soap under running water often but I am still afraid of the COVID-19 because one can't tell who has the virus. I feel I could easily be infected due to the fast spread of the virus in the country."

Gloria aspires to become a nurse following her passion to help people. "I am very sympathetic to persons who are sick and wishes to help them regain their health."

However, she shared her disappointment pertaining to the virus and regarding how she missed school especially teaching and learning. She also missed her friends and how they used to learn together.

"Not going to school limits me to study at home and watch television in my leisure time. I also sweep the compound, do the washing and run errands for my parents."

Gloria praised Savana Signatures and Edukans International radio programme dubbed "Schools are closed but it is not a holiday" and noted that it is a good programme that educates and encourages people, hence her fear has diminished since she started listening to the programme.

"It is very educative and guides me in my studies, I've learnt a lot including how to protect myself from COVID-19, practice personal hygiene and care for other children by sharing what I have and educating them on the prevention measures of COVID-19 and personal Hygiene"

She stated, she will continue to listen to the radio programme because it is a good initiative that would aid in her personal and academic development.

She works on her homework while her parents examine her. They also correct her on some of the things she got wrong. She plans to learn hard when school reopens because she has missed a lot already and would not relax.

Gloria encouraged the public to follow all the COVID-19 protocols and stay healthy.

“I missed a lot about school especially with my students” Marriama, a teacher



Musah Mariama, a 38-year old teacher at Keche RC Primary School residing at Dohinayili in the Northern Region said she missed a lot about school regarding her relationship with her students, conversations, socialising and helping students.

She expressed worry over how students are reading and working on their assignments since the advent of the pandemic. “Some of the students have no access to the internet to enable them to participate in the e-learning, but cannot do anything in this era of COVID-19 than to adjust and pray that God will deliver us from this deadly disease.”

She added that there is a lack of potable water in her community where her school is situated. “Children find it difficult to access potable water to wash their hands with soap under running water despite it being a key requirement to preventing the infection of the disease.”

However, she expressed excitement for the opportunity granted to her to speak on radio, adding that, with the radio, people are willing to listen to your knowledge and wisdom regarding issues of COVID-19 and children education wherever they are. “When I was called to come to the radio station to share information about COVID-19 and how students can keep up with their studies, I was glad because as a teacher you are bound to face challenges which you need to develop the habit of sharing information.”

She added that people in deprived communities have limited access to information regarding COVID-19 and home learning, hence the radio allows them to participate in educative programmes such as Savana Signatures and Edukans’ initiative. “Audience are able to call-in, ask questions and seek for clarifications in Ghanaian local languages.”

She stressed that “though schools are closed, it’s not a holiday, parents should encourage their children to sanitize their hands, wash their hands with soap under running water, observe social distancing and study at home”.

According to her, through the radio discussion, we are able to reach out to students with the relevant guidelines and links to learning materials and/or follow e-learning platforms, hence broadening their knowledge on their curriculum as well as instilling the willingness to resume school when schools reopen.



LESSONS LEARNED

- The radio programme which utilized an interview guide, ensured that discussions were focused and thus effective airtime management was ensured.
- Linking listeners to the SHE+ helpline provided an opportunity for listeners to access further information, counseling and referral services.
- The call-in session during the radio discussion enabled feedback provision and follow ups.





Background

The Girls' Life Choices (GLC) Project aims at increasing the agency of adolescent girls between ages 10 and 19 years in order to reduce child marriages in Ghana. This is done through the facilitation of girls access to skills development opportunities and to information on their reproductive health and rights (RHR). Also, the project seeks to create safe and enabling environments for girls to thrive in their various endeavours. The GLC project is being implemented by Savana Signatures in 80 communities within 16 districts in 5 regions in Ghana. The project is implemented within the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) framework of Adolescent Girls Programming and under the Korea International Corporation Agency's (KOICA) Better Lives for Girls Initiative.



Skills Empowerment Objectives

Skills development opportunities are known and accessible to adolescent girls to support learning, empowerment and employability'

Increased community-level social action, acceptance and visibility around investing in and supporting girls, and generating shifts in social expectations related to girls.



SRHR Component Objectives

Health and protection systems implement guidelines, protocols, and standards for adolescent friendly health and protection services.

Programme-specific data and evidence generated and shared on what works / result of programme interventions.

Project Catchment Areas

VOLTA REGION						
DISTRICT: NORTH DAYI	DISTRICT: AKATSI NORTH	DISTRICT: AKATSI SOUTH	DISTRICT: SOUTH TONGU	DISTRICT: ADAKLU	DISTRICT: CENTRAL TONGU	DISTRICT: KETU SOUTH
COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES
Vakpo Afeye	Kpegbadza	Gefia	Sokpoe	Adaklu Anfoe	Mafi Adidome	Klikor/Agblekpui
Vakpo Fodome	Nyintawuta	Dafonyame	Hlevi/Tolokpo	Adaklu Ahunda Bosso	Mafi Kumase	Agavedzi
Aveve Dzeme	Zomayi	Agbaflome	Large	Vodze	Mafi Devime	Hatsukofe
Wuta Gadze	Kpotavi	Fiato	Aglorkpovia	Adaklu Sofa	Kebegodo	Adzevikofe
Tsome Sabadu	Korte	Ahlepedo	Adutor	Seva	Mafi Agoe	Kpotame/Akame
SAVANNA REGION		NORTH EAST REGION		NORTHERN REGION		
DISTRICT: BOLE	DISTRICT: MAMPRUGU MOADURI	DISTRICT: WEST MAMPRUSI	DISTRICT: TOLON	DISTRICT: KPANDAI	DISTRICT: TATALE-SANGULI	DISTRICT: TAMALE- METRO
COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES
Carpenter	Wuntubri	Guagulga	Woribogu- Kambonaayili	Ogerege	Kpalbutab	Jakarayili
Banda- Nkwanda	Mugu	Nayirifong	Tali	Uchado	Nankando	Nwozie
Jama	Zukpeni	Bokuduri	Lungbunga- Yapalsi	Balai	Nahuyili	Pagazaa (Tugu)
Bamboi	Yagaba	Nasai	Kpalgun	Nchapuni	Nkaligbani	Vitin Daboashie
Tesilima	Nangorima	Loagri	Adumbiliyili	Wunadindo	Daawudo	Kublimahigu
OTI REGION						
DISTRICT: KRACHI EAST	DISTRICT: KRACHI WEST					
COMMUNITIES	COMMUNITIES					
Atsigode	Bommoden					
Bidi-Skele	Ehiamankylene					
Anyinase	Osramanea					
Tsikata	Kantakofori					
Asikafoabatem	Kadetwe					

Legend

- 5 Regions
- 16 Districts
- 80 Communities

Contributing to SDGs

Achievements: Girls' Life Choices

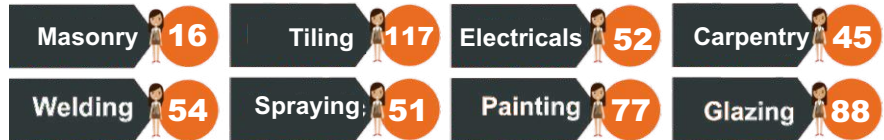


500

500 girls were mentored in accessing skills opportunities known to be traditionally male-dominated.



500
Girls enrolled in skills training apprenticeships



Pictured: Mr Muhammad Rafiq Khan (right), Chief of Child Protection Programmes at UNICEF Ghana, during his monitoring visit to some workshops where the Girls' Life Choices project beneficiaries are under going training.

33

33 Master crafts persons trained to provide girl-friendly and safe training for the 500 girls



Pictured: A workshop held in Ho, Volta Region of Ghana to sensitize master trainers to provide safe working space and the needed support for the girls to keep their interests in going through the skills training.

Madam Margaret Gwada, Chief of Field Office at the UNICEF in Tamale, during a similar workshop held in Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana, encouraged Master Trainers to provide the needed support for the girls to keep their interests in going through the skill training.

She said "you need to understand the girls and how they do their things so that you can give them the support they need, because the society sometimes stereotype females who go into male-dominated skilled professions. That alone sometimes discourages them from venturing into such professions and so it is your duty to give them the protection they need."





42,475

adolescents boys and girls, women and men, and opinion leaders reached with life skills, ASRH, CP/SGBV (through Face to face engagement- clubs, music, sports, games, radio programmes).



2000

adolescent girls are exhibiting increased knowledge in reproductive health issues, increased agency in making informed decisions and have become assertive especially with regards to their rights.



80

communities are showing increased awareness of child protection related issues highlighted by the engagements. Adolescents are becoming more conscientious of their rights, of infringements as well as all the possible avenues for them to find redress



Supporting Girls With Job Skills To Thrive



Bayanfui Theresa, 18 years from the Kpandai District in the Northern Region of Ghana, struggled her way through to Junior High School (JHS) and to Senior High School (SHS) but had to drop out in her first year due to financial constraints and lack of family support.

"I am the first born among five children, I had admission to study General Arts at the Northern School of Business (NOBISCO), it's the same year my parents divorced and as a result, my dad fell sick and couldn't afford to pay my school fees," Theresa cried.

"I had to drop out of school to assist in farming and taking care of my sick father and siblings. And I have given up a lot to get my father and my siblings and myself to survive."

Theresa finds new passion

Growing up, Theresa also loved the art of painting. "I have always been amazed at how they use colors, because colors express a lot of emotions".

Fortunately, Theresa was enrolled in painting apprenticeship through the Girls' Life Choices Project.

Theresa is optimistic that her new found passion is the best opportunity she could harness to improve her livelihood and support her family.

"I love the work because I believe it would afford me the opportunity to improve my living condition. The other advantage for me is that, my trainer is not limited to painting but he is equally into sign post/board designs and drawing."

The master trainer, Kennedy Kofi, highlighted that Theresa together with her 11 colleagues who are undergoing the training with him are doing very well as they actively take part in the training process.

Pictured above: Theresa together with her colleagues and master trainer painting a school in the Kpandai District in the Northern Region of Ghana.

Daring to change the narrative: Young girls venturing into male-dominated professions



Pictured: Miss Hafsa together with her Master trainer tilling a house in the Krachi-East District

Jessica 18 years, said as a young woman, venturing into a male-dominated activity was not easy because her friends and community members made fun of her for engaging in it.

“I have been sitting at home for some years now till Savanna Signatures enrolled me in the Girls’ Life Choices programme, even they were making fun of me in the beginning but I am excited to be among the first young lady who have ventured into tilling in my district”, she said.

According to her, she would start her own tilling business to earn income to help the family. She determined to inspire her family and her community, especially the girls in her area.

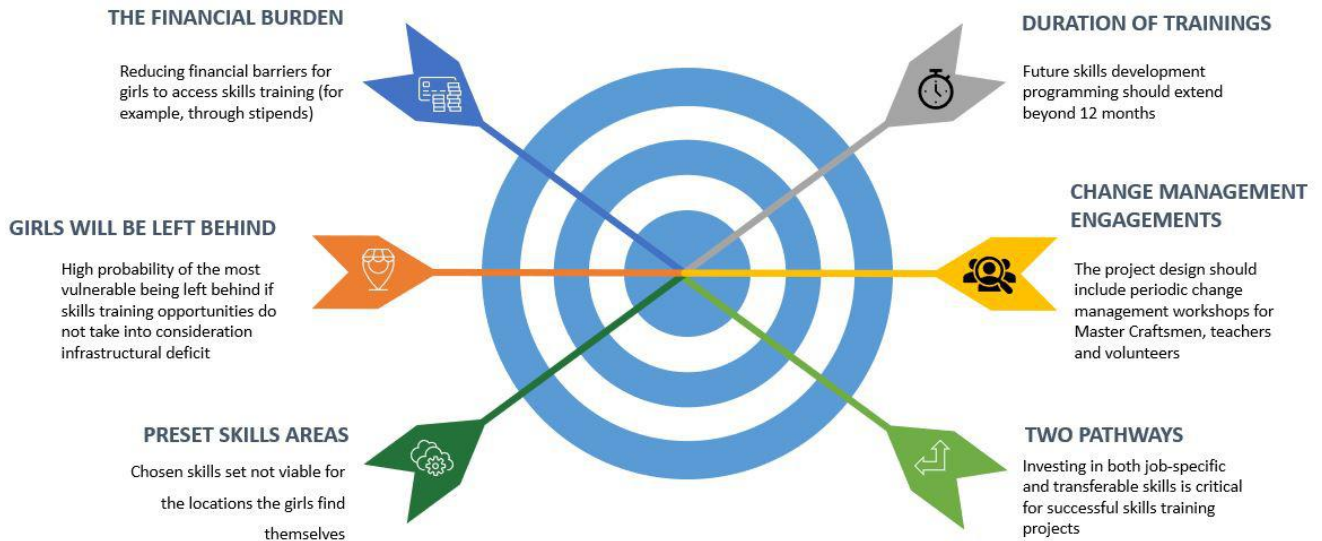
Baria, who enrolled in fabrication in the Tamale Metropolis, said her dream of a brighter future would materialise as I acquire entrepreneurial skills through the project.



Pictured: Baria (left) demonstrating her work to Mr Muhammad Rafiq Khan (right), Chief of Child Protection Programmes at UNICEF Ghana, during his monitoring visit



CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS



OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDED INVESTMENTS

Girls' Life Choices under Better Lives for Girls

- Available female workforce**
500 girls currently under training
- Training duration**
The 6 months initial training duration is insufficient
- Continuous monitoring**
Motivates the girls
Ensures trainers are adhering to the safeguarding policy
- Re-investing in life skills**
Keep contact with the girls
They need the assurance of the safe spaces now more than ever
- NVTI Certification**
Assist the girls to get basic certification
- Online market place for the 500 girls**
Connect girls to market opportunities







Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) is implemented by Savana Signatures with support from UNESCO. The project is implemented within National and International legal, policy and institutional frameworks that promote the protection of young people from STIs/ STDs, early pregnancies and GBVs like child marriages. The YEP project is implemented in Central and South Tongu districts in the Volta Region of Ghana.



Project Goal:

To introduce adolescents and young people in schools to an accurate and age-appropriate integrated model of Reproductive Health Education (RHE).

Contributing to SDGs



RESULTS AT A GLANCE



Youth Empowerment Project (YEP)

628

628 (390 girls and 238 boys) adolescents received education on reproductive health and GBV in 9 communities

1,161 (748 girls and 413 boys) were linked to the SHE+ Helpline to access information, counseling and referral services

1,161



Community and School-related Gender-Based Violence Guideline have been developed.

23 teachers and community volunteers were trained in skills and methodologies in facilitating RHE and providing youth friendly services.

23

1,262

1,262 women and men, community and traditional leaders and adolescents sensitized on GBV and reproductive health.

30 schools administrators, teachers, Department of Social Welfare and community Development, community leaders and adolescents sensitized on Community and School-related Gender-Based Violence Guideline.

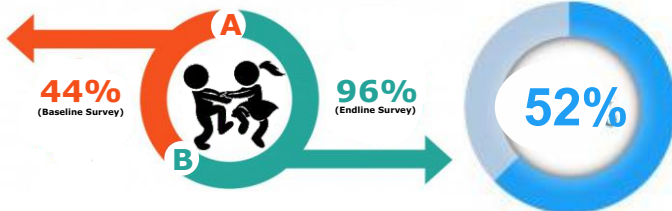
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RESULTS AT A GLANCE

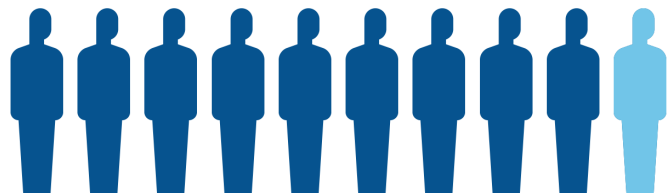


52%

Increase in knowledge and attitude of adolescent girls and boys in project communities, from 44% to 96% in prevention of STI's.

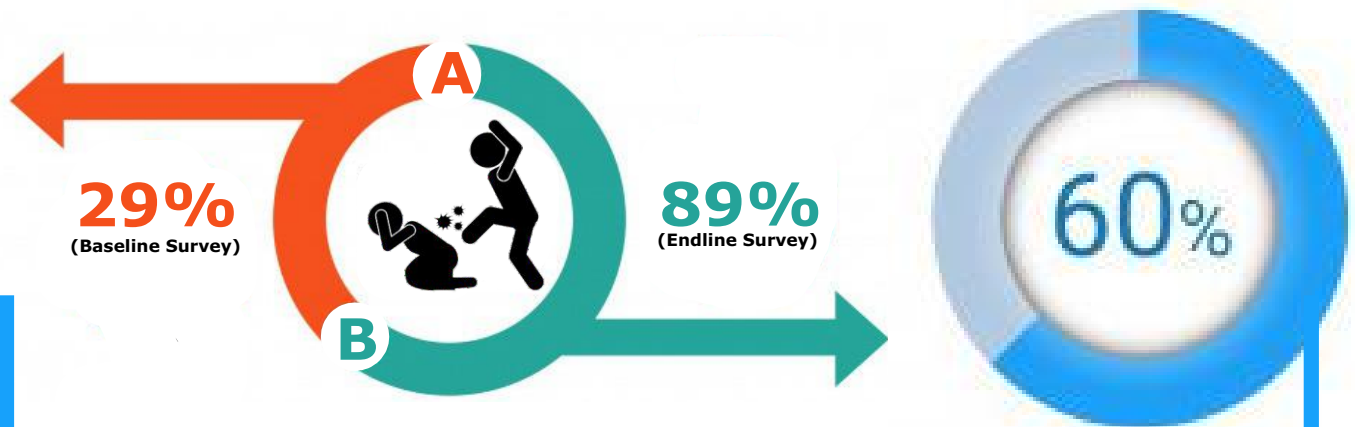


92%



92% of adolescent gained confidence and can freely access sexual counselling and health services without the fear of been stigmatised.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE



There is a positive attitudinal change among adolescent girls and boys on GBV, **60% of the adolescents** said girls who get raped should not be blamed on what they were wearing but the focus should be judged on the act. This shows a change in common view and judgement of adolescent on issues of SRHR and GBV within their communities, thus they now advocate for justice for survivors.



The distress of an Adolescent girl forced into marriage



In the Mafi Kumasi, a community in Central Tongu District, Adjo, a 19-year-old girl, at the age of 17 (2 years ago) had to stop school and get married to a man which she didn't love. This marriage was arranged between her family and the man without her consent. She was only informed the day the family of the man came to pay her bride price. She had tried explaining to her family to rescind their decision to no avail. Without a choice, she obeyed her parents and move to the man's house. Adjo tried running away on several occasions but she was caught and brought back to the man. The man gets hungry, physically abuses her and threatened to kill her, should she tries to run away again.

Her younger sister introduced her to the Reproductive Health Education group meetings organised by the Youth Empowerment Project in their communities. She discussed with her facilitator who was a community volunteer to advice and support her. The community volunteer called the SHE+ Helpline and was referred to the Police station and social welfare to help address the issue.

Adjo was able to get justice from the Ghana Police Service and support from the community volunteer and social welfare. When the marriage between the man and her was terminated and she returned back home to her family. The community volunteer led the process of getting her parent to better understand the consequences of their actions, hence she was accepted by her parents. She is constantly checked on by the volunteer and feels happy of the freedom she has now.

She said "I slept every night with tears in my eyes and fear of what might happen to me the next day. I do not get enough food to eat and had to rely on any amount of money the man give which often I don't get to receive from him. The man usually beat, shouts and disgraces me for the little mistake I do. It was painful and I felt like taking my life. The lesson on 'Knowing Yourself' from the Ready Steady manual changed everything for me. It gave me hope and courage to discuss my issue and now I am free to live again. Currently, I sell soaps on a tray to support myself and raise money to learn a skill in sewing. I am grateful for the support giving me."

Pictured above: Adjo interacting with the Youth Empowerment Project manager on a monitoring and evaluation visit



LESSONS LEARNED

- Community volunteers and teachers can better relate with adolescents and support them to make effective decisions with regards to their reproductive health and rights when trained to appreciate the various concept of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- In ensuring the successful facilitation of accurate age-appropriate reproductive health and rights (RHE) in schools and communities, teachers and community volunteers selected should have a basic understanding of reproductive health issues, appreciate the reproductive health needs of adolescents and be willing to learn to facilitate lessons. This allows them to contextualize the contents of SRHR in the local setting of the communities through the use of local stories and events.
- When facilitating RHE session in schools, especially for adolescents, teachers/facilitators should be open-minded and less judgmental and also willing to listen to adolescents when supporting them with their SRHR issues.
- Teachers/facilitators must create a safe space for adolescents by establishing trust and confidentiality of discussions among group members. They must be willing to share personal stories or events to connect with the heart and mind of adolescents during group discussions.
- The use of Adolescent Linkage Card (ALC) provided adolescents with the convenience to access contacts to call the SHE+ Helpline and seek access to their SRHR/sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) needs.
- The School and Community-related Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Guideline served as a resource to empower adolescent both in and out of school with information and knowledge of their rights and ways to seek justice when abused.
- By involving adolescents, community and traditional leaders, Ghana Education Service (regional, district and school leadership), Ghana Health Service (GHS) and Department of Social Welfare and Community Development in the development of GBV guidelines for schools; it ensures ownership and usage of the document.
- Community sensitization held in communities provides the platform to inform and educate adolescents, women and men on their rights to reproductive health and GBV. It also rallies the support of the community and traditional leaders to help in addressing some challenges of adolescents and women in the community.





i MATTER PROJECT

i MATTER PROJECT

Harmful socio-cultural norms in Ghana fuels high levels of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against women and girls. It is often considered normal for men to control women; inter-marital violence is also seen as private and survivors of SGBV face stigma. Often, women are not aware of their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and are not able to claim them. Other barriers that prevent them from receiving support and justice when experiencing SGBV are costs associated with accessing these services including travel expenses and time, and lack of anonymity.

Savana Signatures with support from the Grand Challenges Canada implemented the IMatter project in eight (8) Junior High Schools (JHS) selected across eight communities in the Nkwanta North and Krachi East Districts in the Oti region of Ghana. The project was implemented from July, 2019 to November, 2020 and has since, contributed to the reduction of SGBV among adolescent girls and women in the region. This was achieved through the creation of safe spaces for girls and women to discuss SGBV issues using the Ready Steady Manual and raising awareness on SRHR issues in the region through interactive media-based education. Beneficiaries were further linked to Savana Signatures' innovative Sexual Health Education Plus (SHE+) Helpline to access essential counselling and referral services and linkages to social justice institutions.





52,348

52,348 young people and adults in the project catchment areas were reached with campaigns on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Nkwanta North and Krachi East Districts in the Oti region of Ghana.

1,773

A total of **1,773 (Girls-958, Boys-625 and Women-96, Men-94)** beneficiaries in project communities have accessed information, counseling and referral services through the SHE + helpline. Most issues addressed by the helpline are mensural hygiene, safe abortions, family planning, child marriage, covid-19 etc.



1,465

A total of **1,465 (girls 836, boys 463, women 144 and 22 Men)** completed 6 sessions in the Ready Steady manual across the 8 schools in the communities in project districts.

659

659 beneficiaries (**girls 436, boys 188, women 35**) showed a change in knowledge.

38

33 Health workers, teachers and volunteers have been equipped with facilitating skills, thus are impacting the lives of young people in the area of SRHR education, SGBV prevention and creating safe spaces.

Hubaidatu, aged 17, escapes marriage to pursue her dream



A teenage mother from Kpasa, the capital of the Nkwanta North District in the Oti Region is back to school after refusing to get married to the father of her baby to enable her pursue her dream of becoming an actress.

Not even advice from her family and peer pressure to marry her baby's father to fulfill societal norms and practices could make her rescind her decision to go back to school after giving birth.

Nambu Hubaidatu, aged 17, student at the Kpasa Junior High School, said she took the decision to go back to school after benefiting from the I-Matter project, thus took part in a series of capacity building activities dubbed the "Ready Steady discussions", where she learnt the effects of child marriage.

"I refused to get married after I was educated on the effects of child marriage; I notice I would suffer if I marry as a child without a career. I am back in school, studying to become an actress and a responsible adult to enable me to take care of my baby", she stated.



LESSONS LEARNED

In most cases, When Women/girls survivors do not receive psycho-social and financial support, it makes it difficult for them to reintegrate back into the community, thus the project has brought to the limelight the need to provide psycho-social and financial support to survivors.



**GET UP
SPEAK
OUT** for
youth
rights



The Ghana Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance for Young People, known as GH Alliance, is the leader and reference point in the area of SRHR for Young People in Ghana. It is an Alliance of seven (7) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working together to promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all young people between the ages of ten and twenty-four (10-24) years old in Ghana.

The Alliance works in the following 5 outcome areas in the GUSO programme;

Outcome 1: Strong and sustainable alliances

Outcome 2: Young people increasingly voice their rights

Outcome 3: Increased utilization of comprehensive SRHR information and education by all people

Outcome 4: Increased utilization of high-quality SRH services that respond to the needs and rights of all young people

Outcome 5: Improved socio-cultural, political and legal environment for young people's SRHR

Contributing to SDGs



RESULTS AT A GLANCE



Pictured above: Orientation of facilitators to build their capacities to facilitate access to age appropriate reproductive health information services among young people in the East Mamprusi District.

297

297 Peer Educators facilitated sexuality education for their peers in the East Mamprusi District and Tamale Metropolis.

74 Health Care Workers provided Youth Friendly services to young people in the Tamale Metro and East Mamprusi municipality.

74

16,008

16,008 young people utilized comprehensive SRHR information and services.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE



13,293

13,293 young people accessed comprehensive SRHR education.

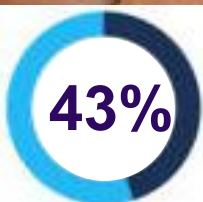
494

494 young people empowered and given opportunity to participate in project planning and implementation

1,809

1,809 young people make informed decisions about their SRHR.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE



43% of young people (under 25) have been given the opportunity to represent in the organisation's structures and decision-making processes.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Participation of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and Ghana Health Service (GHS) in the project can contribute to sustainability.
- Orientation of CSE facilitators (teachers, peer educators) to discuss the fall out of public outburst on the implementation of CSE in Ghanaian schools provided an opportunity to discuss and pick their thoughts about what was peddled in the public and to clear the misconceptions regarding the objectives of CSE for young people.
- The potential of online media as an alternative platform for implementing CSE or RHE has become evident during the Covid 19 period. The use of the SavSign TV to host the Young Voices Forum, proved that innovation attracts young people to information and education.
- The use of the SHE+ Helpline guaranteed confidentiality of young people, thereby motivating and increasing the number of young people accessing information on SRHR to reduce their vulnerability.



EAT LOCAL FOODS, LIVE HEALTHY

Plan and eat 4 - Star Diet ★★☆☆



Grains: grains such as maize, wheat, rice, millet and sorghum, roots and tubers such as cassava and potatoes

Legumes: such as beans, soy beans, broad beans, cow peas, groundnuts etc.

Vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables: such as mango, papaya, passion fruit, oranges, carrots, yellow sweet potato, sugar cane and other fruits and vegetables; such as banana, pineapple, avocado, watermelon, tamarind, garden egg and collards

Animal-source foods: including foods such as meat, chicken, fish, liver and eggs and dairy products

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

EAT LOCAL NUTRITIOUS FOODS

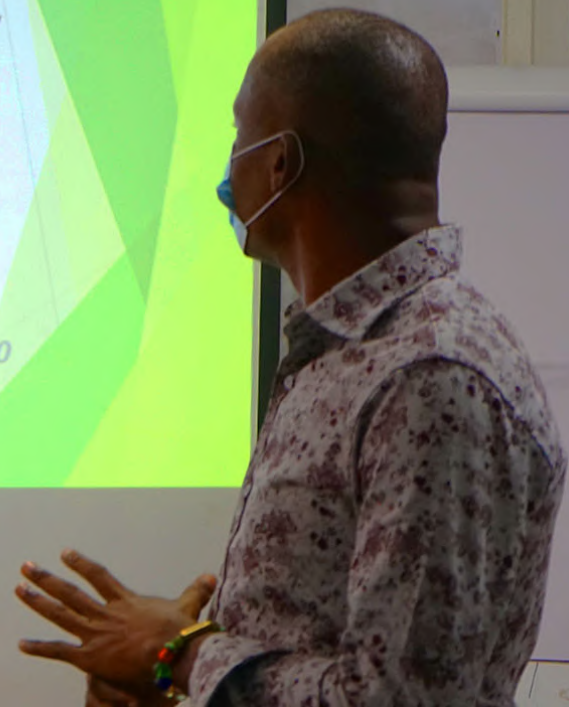


Implementation of SBCC activities to promote the consumption of fortified foods and other Nutritious foods in the Sagnarigu District of the Northern Region of Ghana

Demand Creation for Fortified and Locally Available Nutritious Foods

Ambrose Mwinpuo, RN, MPH.

Date: 27-28th Aug. 2020



Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) is increasingly an important element to WFP's nutrition programming and a key strategy for improving nutrition. SBCC essentially includes a collection of communications-based approaches, activities, and tools used to positively influence people's behaviours. SBCC is an effective tool to drive high awareness of the importance of the use of fortified foods.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to increased consumption of fortified foods and other locally available nutritious foods in the Sagnarigu municipality, Northern Region of Ghana. Savana Signatures further understood that these actions are to improve nutrition by leveraging the retailing sector and the role of the retailers to complement what has been done from the demand side.

Contributing to SDGs



RESULTS AT A GLANCE



20

20 women leaders trained to counsel fellow women and caregivers on fortified food and locally available nutritious foods.



SHEP Coordinators were capacitated to promote the consumption of specialized nutritious food and locally available nutritious food.

Action Plan

- ▶ Each SHEP Teacher to prepare an Action Plan for next steps of sensitizing colleague teachers, kitchen staff and Students in respective schools.



The Northern Regional Girl-Child Education Officer, Linda Amoah, opined at the end of the training that the training was insightful. "I wouldn't have forgiven myself if I hadn't come for this training,"





Technology for Maternal and Child Health (T4MCH) project was implemented in 9 districts of the Northern, North-East, Savanna, Upper West, Oti and Volta Regions of Ghana; contributing to a reduction in maternal and child mortality through an improved delivery and utilization of essential health services by pregnant women and new mothers.

The project developed the capacity of health staff in the use of ICT equipment to design, package and deliver Maternal and Child Health (MCH) education to pregnant women, new mothers, men and their relatives at the health facility and community levels. The project, through Mobile Messaging delivers MCH information in 11 local languages, Ewe, Likpakpa, Gonja, Brifo, Twi, Kotokoli, Tampilma, Sisaale, Dagaare, Dagbani and Hausa to pregnant women, new mothers, their partners and relatives.

THE PROJECT USES 3 MAIN STRATEGIES;

1. Mobile Messaging
2. Knowledge Sharing Sessions (KSS)
3. community Electronic Medical Records (cEMR)

Two key gender mainstreaming strategies were also deployed to mitigate gender inequality which is a major underlying factor hindering the improvement of maternal and child health outcomes in Ghana.

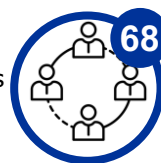
1. Mothers' Story
2. Father-To-Father groups



RESULTS AT A GLANCE



Produced facilitator's manuals for facilitators of father-to-father groups and health workers and teachers leading group discussions of adolescent pregnancy.



68 Father to Father groups formed, which influenced attitudes towards maternal and child health issues and created gender equity in families.



9,810 Men have improved their attitude in maternal and child health issues through the T4MCH Father to Father approach.



172,805 beneficiaries including pregnant women, their partners and family members were reached with Community and Health facility Knowledge sharing sessions.



238 Ghana Health Service staff including 163 females and 75 males trained in ICT skills to enhance the quality of health delivery.



Reduced maternal mortalities by 200% from 153.1 to 77.2, considerably below the Ghana Health Service National target of 140 maternal deaths per 100,000 births in project health facilities.



10,614 Women reached with maternal and child health information (M&CH) using the Kpododo mobile engagement platform.





LESSONS LEARNED

- More pregnant women and new mothers easily accessed information on maternal and child health in their homes when they have the opportunity to register and receive information using phones.
- Pregnant women and new mothers are attracted to ANC and PNC due to the use of ICT tools in education, thus increasing ANC and PNC attendance.
- When pregnant women are aware of the dangers of home delivery, they plan with their family to have skilled delivery.
- The father to father approach increased men support to their spouse during birth and child care.
- The use of audio-visual materials made maternal health education attractive to women and their partners.
- Adolescents mothers are empowered when they are interacted with on their plans for themselves and unborn babies.



Sexual Health Education Plus (SHE+) platform provides a reliable and accessible platform where young people can engage in discussions and acquire knowledge on sexual health education. The project aims to provide young people with right-based Reproductive Health and Rights (RHR) information to enable them to make right choices and to assist them with information and links to RHR services and commodities. In furtherance, the SHE+ provides counseling and referral services to health facilities and social welfare institutions, as well as generates an interaction among young people to discuss and share RHR knowledge, information and experiences. This is to get more young people empowered to make informed decisions about their sexuality.



Sensitizing the public on the Sexual Health Education Plus (SHE+) platform

Contributing to SDGs



RESULTS AT A GLANCE



The SHE+ Helpline witness an increase in the average number of calls from 40 calls in a month to 96 with the integration of the Agoo. This resonates with the increase number of young people accessing and utilising SRHR and SGBV services.

1,118

There is an increased access to and utilization of reproductive health information and services by 1,118 young people

Increased understanding of SRHR issues due to the use of local languages in the SHE+ Helpline

Beneficiary Testimony

One of the respondents who was interviewed about the SHE+ Helpline indicated that "the Helpline provided me with adequate information and I wish I had known the platform earlier. It would have shaped my decisions in life."

Why did you call the SHE+ Helpline? "I called because I needed to hide my identity and still be able to speak to a person who could understand me better and not label me as being bad or spoiled."



LESSONS LEARNED

- Young people are able to express themselves freely when they have the opportunity to speak in their local language to the Helpline attendants.
- Young people do not feel shy to mention their problems to the call center attendants for assistance because it is not face to face.
- Increases understanding of adolescents, young people and adults on reproductive health issues due to the use of local language by the Helpline attendants.



INNOVATION FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

INNOVATION FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

Globalization and rapid technological advancement have created a new economy, which is driven by knowledge in Information Communications technology (ICT). In this regard, ICT has become undoubtedly the critical enabler of a knowledge-based economy for many nations. Governments across the globe have recognized the positive impact ICT has on the socio-economic development of its people. Consequently, many governments have started to invest heavily on ICT to develop the nation's human capital thereby making them capable of addressing the demands of the digital and information age.

Oxfam believes in this and has equipped the two project schools with ICT tools. Savana Signatures provided system and technical support with varied trainings to integrate ICT in education.



Contributing to SDGs



ACHIEVEMENT



30

30 teachers and Officers from the GES equipped with skills to handle the Ideasbox.

40

40 teachers and Officers from the GES equipped with skills to handle the koombooks.

140

140 pupils learning outcomes increased.

160

160 Teachers and pupils are practicing safe surfing.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Provision of security for ICT storage facility is key for the protection of ICT equipment.
- Regular maintenance of the ICT tools is needed to prolong the lifespan of the Tools.
- Power surges can put harmful stress on ICT tools, and in some cases damage the power supply and other components. There is the need to use power regulators to control power surges.



Awards



In August 2019, Savana Signatures was named and received the **Best Innovative and Technological Development Award** for the year 2019 at the 5th edition of the Northern Business Excellence Awards held in Tamale. The award was in recognition of the organisation's outstanding use of innovation in the non-profit sector in the Northern Region of Ghana. The organisation received the Best Innovative and Technological Development Award for the year 2019.



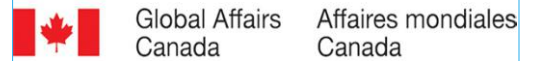
In March 2020, Savana Signatures was named and received the **NExA Sexual And Reproductive Health Organisation Of The Year Award** during the Northern Excellence Awards (NExA). This award was in recognition of our "impact in using technology to contribute to the reduction of maternal mortality and sexual reproductive health issues across the 5 regions in Northern Ghana".



Savana Signatures received a citation in recognition and appreciation of the organization dedication and distinguished humanitarian services in its catchment areas. This was presented to the organization by the people of Nabu community and its environs; a community in the Nkwanta North District of Oti Region, Ghana.



Our Partners



State Partners



Thank you for supporting and partnering us to build a better world.



I AM YOUNG,
EMPOWERED AND FLOURISHING

Savana Signatures

2020 Annual Report

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