



BEYOND THE
GENDER ROADBLOCK

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Introduction

In 2019, our journey to achieving the ambitious goals set for the year was successful through your support. We provided access to reliable platforms that amplified the voice of the voiceless, delivering 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 stories in this annual report outlines the progress being made in tackling sensitive underlying gender issues and stereotypes that embolden sexual and gender-based violence and inequalities. Specific attention was paid to vulnerable groups, especially children, young people and women across Ghana.

The report "Beyond The Gender Roadblock", captured the spirit of our 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) agenda.

Some essential underlying themes such as 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. Also prominent in the report is a focus on expectant and new mothers and their spouses or partners, under the T4MCH programme. The interesting stories of change from the beneficiaries have also been captured and shared.

The report, true to our new strategic direction highlights key strategies deployed by us 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 our vision of a society where all have access to tools that improve their livelihoods and quality of life.



Foreword

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, Partners, Staff and Sponsors,

On a daily basis, I get inspired by the commitment of Savana Signatures to make the world a better place for our youth, women, girls and new-borns. You will see from this report that we have so much to be collectively proud of in 2019.

The year 2019 begun by furthering partnerships and going into new ones. These helped in furthering our goal of realising a society where all have access to tools that improve their livelihoods and quality of life.

The year 2020 has brought new challenges to the world and to our work. Now, more than ever, our activities must ensure progress for youth, children and women's health and rights and to ensure that these do not regress due to socio political and environmental forces, and that we address systemic inequalities that plague our communities and in particular target groups.

We thank all of our donors, sponsors, supporters and friends who have worked very hard in ensuring that we undertake various projects across Ghana. We are grateful that you have continuously kept faith in us and worked very hard in ensuring that we continue to impact lives of youth, girls, women and new-borns.

I am grateful to the young, dedicated and talented team at Savana Signatures who continue to work tirelessly day and night to ensure that we bring everlasting smiles on the faces of the thousands of individuals and families that we work with. Continue to be persons who facilitate the growth and enduring qualities in others for virtuous living and sterling leadership.

Sincerely



John Stephen Agbenyo
Executive Director, Savana Signatures

CHAPTER ONE

Our Story

We are 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. We have two main offices located in Sagnarigu in the Northern Region and Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana, with projects spread across the Northern, North-East, Savannah, Upper East, Upper West, Oti and Volta Regions of Ghana.

For over a decade, we have engaged in designing development programmes and interventions for vulnerable groups across our operational regions' empirically - known to harbour majority of the poorest households - of Ghana. Technology has been a key driving force behind the innovative design of these interventions by our young and dedicated team and with support from 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 Reproductive Health and Rights (Including Maternal and Child Health), Quality Education and Skills Development.



7 PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED

PROJECTS

In 2019, Savana Signatures contributed to bringing improvement in the lives of the vulnerable people in seven regions of Ghana through the following projects.



T4MCH



iMatter



Girls' Life Choices



Girls Empowerment



GUSO



SHE+



AGOOSHE+

CHAPTER TWO

Girls' Life Choices

Girls' Life Choices is a child protection project with a focus on skills empowerment for vulnerable groups, especially adolescent girls between the ages of 10 to 19 years. The project emphasizes inclusiveness, thus working with girls with disabilities, pregnant girls, adolescent mothers, girl brides, out-of-school girls from rural communities in districts considered to have high prevalence of teenage pregnancies, child and forced marriages as well as cohabitation. These target groups are considered to be highly susceptible to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), sexual exploitation, school drop-out, and migration.

The project utilized both life skills and hard-core skills for economic empowerment and employability skills acquisition. This intervention was taken in order to curtail gender inequalities; a proven strategy for reducing the vulnerability of these groups by empowering them to increase their decision-making power in the household and community.

Through the Girls' Life Choices project, adolescent girls were empowered to know and claim their rights, and live better lives with the potential of positive rippling effects on future generations.

The project is being implemented in 16 districts across 5 regions of the Northern, North East, Savannah, Oti and Volta regions of Ghana. The project is benefiting 80 communities across Kpandai, Tatale-Sanguli, Tolon, Tamale, West Mamprusi, Mamprugu Moaduri, Bole, Krachi East, Krachi West, Adaklu, South Tongu, Central Tongu, Akatsi North, Akatsi South, Ketu South and North-East districts, Municipal and Metropolitan areas of the country.



Girls' Life Choices

Key Results

150

PUBLIC SERVANTS TRAINED TO AID IN CHILD PROTECTION

We facilitated a meeting for 150 public servants from Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, Department of Children, Department of Gender, Legal Aid, and the Departments of Social Welfare and Community Development to enable the institutions to discuss child protection-related issues and to suggest innovative ways to collaborate for effective implementation of laws that protect children.



Key Results

The project equipped 39 female teachers from 16 project districts with the skills to use the AFLATEEN+ curriculum to engage identified 2,000 adolescent girls who are beneficiaries of the project.

39 FEMALE
TEACHERS
TRAINED
ON AFLATEEN+ CURRICULUM



2,000 ADOLESCENT
GIRLS BENEFITED





Key Results

36 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS TRAINED TO AID IN CHILD PROTECTION

Through the project, 36 community volunteers were trained from 16 project districts on the use of the Department of Community Development Child Protection toolkit to engage 80 project communities.

Lessons Learned

A key lesson learned is that child protection is multi-faceted; it is economic, social, cultural and has everything to do with unequal gender power.

It is very vital to bring together institutions mandated to ensure the safety of children at the beginning of the project to get their support and provide clearly defined roles to each of them on the project implementation.



CHAPTER THREE

i MATTER PROJECT



The IMatter (ii) project is being implemented in eight Junior High Schools (JHS) selected across eight communities in the Nkwanta North and Krachi East districts of the Oti region. The project seeks to contribute to reducing Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) among adolescent girls and women, contributing to raise awareness on SRHR issues in the region through interactive media-based education, creating safe spaces for girls and women to discuss SGBV issues using the Ready Steady manual. Savana Signatures' innovative Sexual Health Education Plus (SHE+) Helpline also provided essential counselling and referral services and linkage to social justice institutions.

Imatter Project



BEYOND THE GENDER ROADBLOCK

Key Results

The project has reached a total of 3,134 beneficiaries with strategies and ways of curtailing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

807

BOYS BENEFITED



1,089

GIRLS BENEFITED



471

MEN BENEFITED



767

WOMEN BENEFITED



Imatter Project

Key Results

Teachers and Community volunteers who were trained to facilitate the Ready Steady manual report an improvement in working and understanding young people's SRHR needs especially girls. There is now a shift from being judgmental to using the rights-based approach to addressing young people's SRHR needs.



Lessons Learned

When key stakeholders who make decisions at all levels are engaged in planning and implementation; it ensures understanding, ownership and active involvement in the project to ensure its objectives are achieved and sustained.

When teachers, community volunteers, Health staff and DOVVSU officers are empowered with requisite knowledge and skills; it ensures the effective implementation of project strategies and also provides trained staff the opportunity to train other staff to support in achieving project objectives and sustainability of project strategies.

When you work with community volunteers and leaders to form groups in their communities; it helps in ensuring group meetings are held as scheduled and facilitation easier.

When all services provided by different sectors (GHS, GES, DOVVSU, Social Welfare) are coordinated by a team, the varied expertise used from the team ensure project objectives are achieved.



CHAPTER FOUR



**GET UP
SPEAK
OUT** for
youth
rights

(GUSO)

Get Up Speak Out (GUSO) is a Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Programme for young people aged 10 to 24 years. The GUSO programme is being implemented by the Ghana Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance for Young People (GH SRHR Alliance) which has a membership of seven Civil society organizations (CSOs), namely, Savana Signatures, Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), NORSAAC, Hope For Future Generation (HFFG), Presbyterian Health Services – North (PHSN), Curious Minds and Theatre for Social Change.

GUSO seeks to contribute to increase access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights information and services for young people aged 10 - 24 in northern Ghana.

Key Results



2,489

Young People were reached with comprehensive SRHR education

9,684

Young People were assisted to access comprehensive SRHR Information



Key Results

108

Educators trained on Youth Friendly Health Services and facilitation of sexual reproductive health and rights to enable them facilitate access to quality health service for young people.

1,031

Young people were directly helped with Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services

10,265

Social media users were reached with comprehensive Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information

Change Story



GUSO: Haruna Abdul-Rahim (Kayasko)

Haruna Abdul-Rahim also known as Kayasko, a musician in Tamale, was very excited when he was given the opportunity to be part of the Young Voices Forum. Stating that, he wouldn't have had access to this kind of information considering his normal daily routines and the kind of places he frequents.

"I got to know a lot of things being part of the programme, I am really grateful for the opportunity. I have learned a lot about unsafe abortion."

He was particularly excited about the topic for discussion which was on Unsafe Abortion, explaining that "Being a boy I would never had known some of the things I learned about how a pregnancy occurs and what constitutes unsafe abortion".

According to Abdul-Rahim, he would advise other young people to patronize the forum, to increase their knowledge on reproductive health to ensure they live healthier lives.

Lessons Learned



- Working in an alliance provide opportunity for Savana Signatures and other alliance members to complement each other's expertise using the multi component approach to achieve higher results.
Working in Alliance increases the number of communities served, thereby increasing the number of young people benefitting from the project.
- Community advocacy to create an enabling environment for young people to access reproductive Health information and services is made easier leveraging on the presence of the Alliance members in the communities.
- It also provides opportunity for lesson learning and improvement on individual organization's capacities in the implementation of projects. The regular Project Management, Evaluation and Learning meetings creates a platform for knowledge sharing and learning among Alliance members.
- It increases government support and commitment to young people SRHR as the lobby and advocacy from the alliance is stronger. The composition of the Alliance based on expertise, makes it credible before government and its agencies.


The Girls Empowerment Project targeted 3 formal and informal Technical and Vocational Education Training Institutions in the Sagnarigu and Tolon Districts in the Northern region of Ghana.

The main goal of the project was to reduce the incidence of Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the targeted communities and institutions.

Health workers and Social Justice Institution staff have been trained on Youth Friendly Services, peer mentors and teachers of project institutions have also been trained on the facilitation of Adolescent Reproductive Health and Rights. This resulted in the facilitation of Adolescent Reproductive Health sessions in the various project institutions using the Ready Steady Videos.

Referral guides have been designed, printed and distributed to the various institutions to help in referral services for any beneficiary who might want a referral to any of the projects referral points.





GIRLS EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (GEP)

Key Results

The knowledge of students on issues of pregnancy, sexual behavior, HIV and other STI's, and safe sex practice has increased after the intervention.

Students were able to identify more options to prevent HIV transmission after the intervention than before. Especially the options of HIV testing of both partners before engaging in sex and abstinence were more often identified by students.

Students of the TVET institutions know more different options for accessing sexual health and rights services after the intervention and know better how to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy, STI's and unwanted sexual attention.

Targeted girls also became better at identifying what constitutes sexual harassment, selecting more types of sexual harassment after the intervention.

When it comes to negotiating for safe sex with their partners, girls are more convinced that a "no" should mean a "no" and that they would more often choose contraception.

Students are better able to discuss and talk about sexual behavior with others, especially friends.

When it comes to reporting sexual abuse, after the intervention the students understand other possibilities than the chief, showing especially large increases in assembly man, the police, the department of social welfare and religious leaders.



Lessons Learned

It is important to put into consideration the double track system when planning activities for the formal institutions as it affects project activities.

Contingency planning should be put in place to help in situations like the current global issue of corona virus pandemic.

Technology for Maternal and Child Health (T4MCH) project is being 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, Tampulma, Sisaale, Dagaare, Dagbani and Hausa to pregnant women, new mothers, their partners and relatives.



T4MCH 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

T4MCH

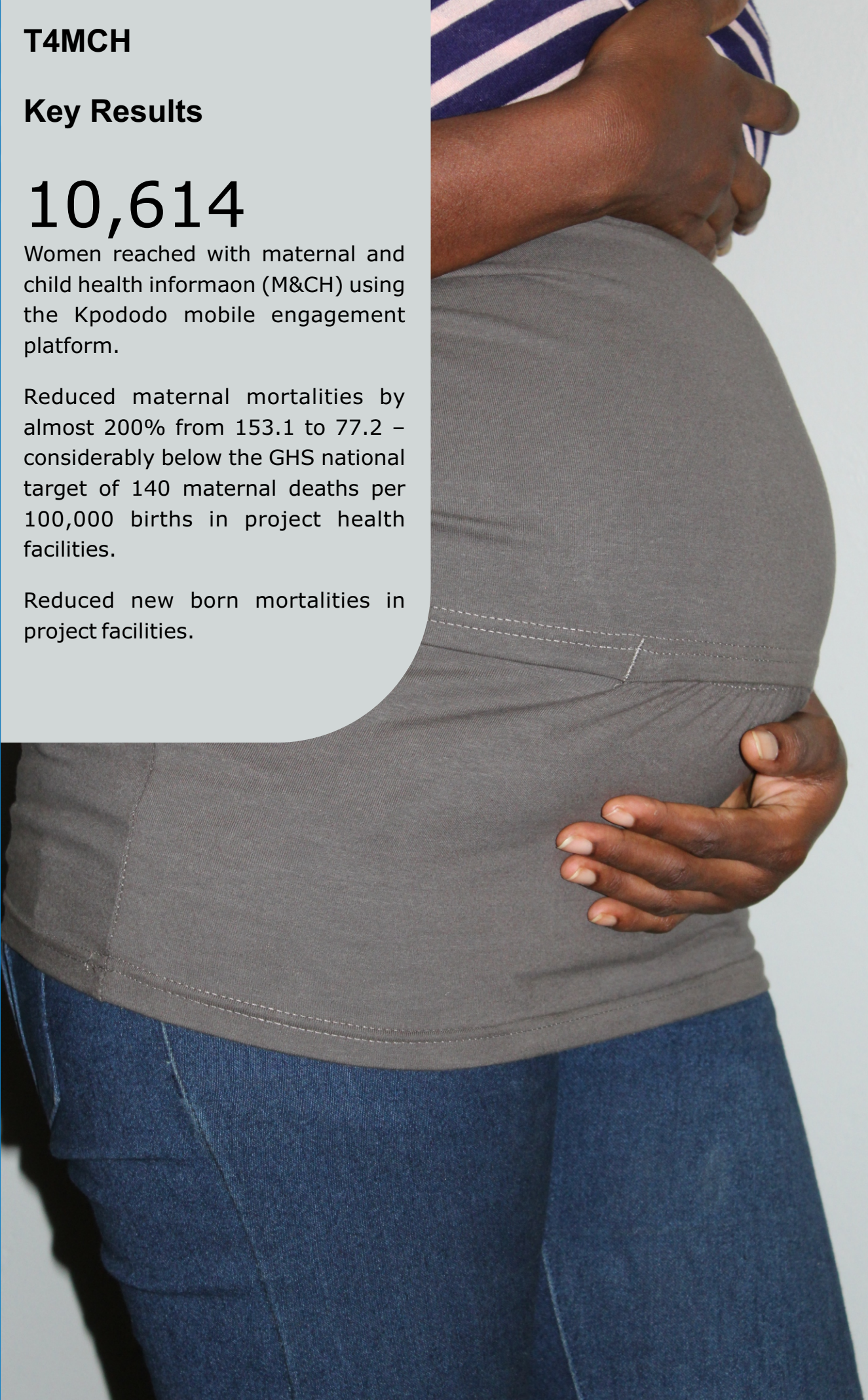
Key Results

10,614

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

Reduced maternal mortalities by almost 200% from 153.1 to 77.2 – considerably below the GHS national target of 140 maternal deaths per 100,000 births in project health facilities.

Reduced new born mortalities in project facilities.



T4MCH KEY RESULTS

Formed

54 Father to Father

groups to influence attitudes towards maternal and child health issues and to create gender equity in families.

9,810

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



71,534

Beneficiaries including pregnant women, their partners and family members were reached with Community and Health facility Knowledge sharing sessions

277

Health staff (186 females, 91 males) trained to use basic ICT tools in health delivery.



12 Girls who dropped out of school due to unplanned pregnancy benefited from livelihood support.

Lessons Learned

- 1 More pregnant women and new mothers easily access information on maternal and child health in their homes when they have the opportunity to register and receive information using phones.
- 2 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.
- 3 When pregnant women are aware of the dangers of home delivery, they plan with their family to have skilled delivery.
- 4 The father to father approach increased men support to their spouse during birth and child care.
- 5 The use of audio-visual materials made maternal health education attractive to women and their partners.
- 6 Adolescents mothers are empowered when they are interacted with on their plans for themselves and unborn babies.

CHAPTER SEVEN



Sexual
Health
Education
Plus

Sexual Health Education Plus (SHE+) project 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, SHE+ provides counseling and referral services 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.



Key Results



202

Young People received services on contraceptive, SGBV and relationship issues.

30

Females benefitted from Gynecology services.

27

Young People reached with Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) information.

20

Young People reached with information and counselling on Obstetrics.

6

Young People reached with comprehensive abortion care information and referral services.

Lessons Learned



Sexual
Health
Education
Plus



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

The project is an integration of two mobile platforms Agoo by UNICEF and SHE+ by Savana Signatures. It is aimed at using the SHE+ Helpline to provide Agoo subscribers a platform to interact in real time with a health professional regarding their sexual reproductive health and rights needs. The SHE+ Helpline number is advertised to the subscribers of the Agoo platform after each message on Agoo platform and encourage them to call and interact real time with the Helpline managers on their SRHR needs. Young people access the AGOOSHE+ platform by dialling 5100 for free using MTN and follow voice prompts. In addition, they call the following numbers (0544711799, 0502863699) to access the SHE+ Helpline directly.



AGOOSHE+

In 2019, 598 Young People benefitted from a range of health issues and entrepreneurship through the AGOOSHE+ Platform. The services provided are listed below

Expanded menstrual health and hygiene services, including direct support to 40 females and 18 males on menstrual hygiene management

58

Educated young people on healthy use of contraceptives, including direct Counselling of 33 females and 28 males

61

Services on Sexual Health and HIV/AIDs/ STI's prevention, including direct support to 44 females and 67 males

111

Facilitated access to pregnancy care and maternal health information to prevent teenage pregnancy, and maternal mortalities. 28 females and 13 males benefitted directly.

41

Handled Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) cases and directly supported 30 females and 15 males with counselling and referral services

45

AGOOSHE+ Key Results

AGOOSHE+

Education on COVID-19, including direct engagement with 75 young people

75

Helped 252 young people with relationship issues and general health tips for healthy living

252

Supported 8 young people in dealing with drug and substance abuse

8

Helped 12 young people to identify entrepreneurial and career development opportunity

12

AGOOSHE+ Key Results

10 beneficiaries through the AGOOSHE+ Helpline expressed their gratitude for the services provided. Amongst other messages includes; "We have learnt a lot from the information we get on the platform and we wish you would keep on the good work"

Lessons Learned

Young people are able to express themselves freely when they have the opportunity to speak in their local language to the Helpline Manager.

There is an increase in understanding of adolescents, young people and adults on reproductive health issues due to the use of local language by the Call attendants.





Global Affairs Canada / Affaires mondiales Canada



Grand Challenges Canada / Grands Défis Canada



DOVVSU
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT



GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



EDUKANS



NATIONAL YOUTH AUTHORITY GHANA
Facilitating Youth Development



Your Health-Our Concern

Savsign@10



French Ambassadors Visit



GLC Stakeholder Meeting

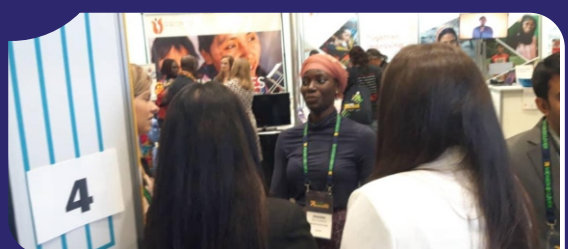


Ministry of Education Stakeholder Engagement



BEYOND THE GENDER ROADBLOCK

Women Deliver





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