



## Young Leaders trained and certified as Master Trainers (TMT) on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

The development of a new generation of African leaders with exceptional character and skills is critical to Africa's development. Good leadership is the glue that cements strong and effective institutions, sound policies, and effective allocation of resources to public goods and services, rule of law, and socio and economic transformation. Building a new generation of transformational leaders is more imperative now than ever before.

The experiences of South East Asia show that leadership is important. Given the opportunity to train a new generation of leaders with new values right from the early stages and ensuring that such leadership qualities permeate through generations, CDD has created a youth leadership program. Africa's lar-

ge youth population presents a great opportunity to influence the emergence of a new generation of leaders. Most young people in Africa are hungry to learn and to realize their potential.

However, to harness their potential, young people must be healthy. Therefore, as part of one of its programs, namely Transformational Leadership and Agency Development, the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) trained and certified young people on "Youth Leadership (YL) and (Peer) Education on Reproductive Health and Sexual Rights (SRHR)", aiming at placing youth leadership at the center of civil society action to improve SRHR challenges in Mozambique.

Held at the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM)



Credits: SRHR

Campus, in Maputo city, between March 9 to 20, 2020, the training represents a collaborative work between CDD and the International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus Rotterdam University (ISS-EUR, Netherlands) and the African Institute of Governance (AFRUGI, Ghana).

As a first step, the program aimed at training and certifying 15 young Mozambicans, a group made of social activists as well as young entrepreneurs working on sexual and reproductive health, human rights, gender equality, social justice and inclusion, youth leadership and advocacy, as well as the influence of government policies and socio-cultural practices on SRHR.

Speaking at the opening of the program, Prof. Adriano Nuvunga, Director of CDD, stated that the SRHR course is part of the training and preparation of the next generation of Mozambican leaders, because “leaders are not born, but are trained, oriented and socialized”. Therefore, the main objective is to place youth and leadership at the center of Mozambique’s socio-economic and political transformation and development, through training.

There is a clear concern on the urgent need for SRHR services for young people. Statistics indicate that about 46% of adolescents, between 15 and 19 years of age, are mothers or are pregnant; Mozambique has a high fertility rate of 4.8 (2019) and 25.6% (2016), with an unmet need for family planning; a high maternal mortality rate of 489 per 100,000 births and 48% of these deaths occur among adolescents and young girls aged 15 to 24 years (WHO, 2015)<sup>1</sup>.

About 7% of Mozambican young people, between 15 and 24 years of age, live with HIV. HIV transmission and early pregnancy are highly influenced by socio-economic and cultural factors, such as poverty, gender inequality, deeply rooted social norms and values, such as child marriages (Capurchande et al., 2016:1)<sup>2</sup>. Worldwide, 1 in 4 girls marries before the age of 18, and 1 in 5 of them becomes a mother before the age of 18<sup>3</sup>. Similar data reveal that Mozambique ranks 10th in the highest rate of child marriages, predominantly in rural areas, where 14.3% of girls between 20 and 24 years old married before the age of 15<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, knowing and understanding these and other aspects that affect mainly young people appears to

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., SS-EUR, AFRUGI & CDD (2020), pg. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., SS-EUR, AFRUGI & CDD (2020), pg. 1.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF (2019). Fast Facts: 10 facts illustrating why we must #EndChildMarriage. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/eca/press-releases/fast-facts-10-facts-illustrating-why-we-must-endchildmarriage>

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF (2015) apud SS-EUR, AFRUGI & CDD (2020), pg. 1.



be an asset for this social group, because only then can they not only intervene but also contribute to change these realities.

With these demographic characteristics, the most aspired demographic dividends are only investing in the human development of the young population. Thus, lowering fertility levels and shifting the age structure of the population is a critical first step toward achieving a demographic dividend. In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly two out of three women who want to avoid pregnancy for at least two years are not using a modern family planning method.<sup>5</sup> Several countries in Eastern and Southern Africa are well on their way in the transition to smaller families. For example, Rwanda's increased investments in voluntary family planning and child survival have led to significantly lower fertility. Also, greater political commitment and increased resources for family planning and child survival have put Rwanda on a path to making the demographic transition a reality.<sup>6</sup>

It is in this context that CDD trained 15 leaders who will be Master Trainers, as the first step of the program referred as TMT (Tailor Made Training).

These, in turn, will have to cascade the training to other 45 young (Peers) Educators considered as phase two of the program, referred to as TMT+ (Tailor Made Training Plus), who, subsequently, will also train, in a period of five years, about 5,000 young people, through Youth Summer Schools program to be organized annually by CDD Youth Leadership Academy.

Moreover, YSRHR training in Mozambique will conduct collaborative training exchanges with Ugandan trainers, obtaining lessons, and inspirations from the SET-SRHR<sup>7</sup> project in terms of curriculum design, providing necessary support.

Therefore, the training will help to build the confidence of youth leaders to design, implement, supervise, monitor, and evaluate SRHR programs, i.e., it is expected that young people will be able to link knowledge about SRHR to leadership through advocacy activities led by them or their peers, contributing to improving the access and quality of SRHR services for young people and other marginalized groups. Ultimately, this will contribute to the sustainable development of demographic and human capital and the country's inclusive economic growth.



Credits: SRHR

<sup>5</sup> SINGH, Susheela & DARROCH, Jacqueline, Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services, Estimates for 2012 (New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2012)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. GRIBBLE, J. & BREMNER, J. (2012)

<sup>7</sup> SET-SRHR is a 4-year project (2016-2020) funded by the Foundation for International Cooperation of Dutch Universities (Nuffic). The project aims to strengthen SRHR education and training capacity in Uganda and is co-implemented by a consortium led by the International Institute for Social Studies at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam (ISS-EUR), in collaboration with Rutgers in the Netherlands and the School of Public Health at Makerere University and the Nsamizi Social Development Institute in Uganda. The SET-SRHR curriculum was tested between 2017 and 2020, training a total of 34 Educators (TMT+) who successfully trained 400 practitioners from different areas of SRHR through a Trainer of Trainers (ToT) program designated ToT-400, composed of young men and women, who are in various stages of implementing personal change projects, as progressive influencers of SRHR policies in different contexts in their country.

## References

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The image shows two identical posters side-by-side, one in English and one in Portuguese. Both posters have a black top section with 'COVID-19' in red and the title in white. Below is a blue section with a red virus icon and the text 'Report human rights abuse during the state Of emergency in mozambique' (English) or 'Denuncie os abusos contra os Direitos Humanos em Moçambique' (Portuguese). The middle section is green with a virus icon and the text 'From April the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020' (English) or 'De 01 a 30 de Abril de 2020' (Portuguese), followed by 'CALL NOW:' (English) or 'LIGUE JÁ:' (Portuguese) and the phone number '87 85 33 330'. Below the number is a WhatsApp icon. The bottom section is red with logos for CDD (CENTRO PARA DEMOCRACIA E DESENVOLVIMENTO) and sahrón, and the text 'Respect human rights in Mozambique. Spread the word! COVID-19 An initiative of' (English) or 'Respeite os Direitos Humanos na resposta ao COVID-19. Passe a palavra! Uma iniciativa de' (Portuguese). A red footer bar contains the text 'Help respect human rights Mozambique. Spread the word!' (English) or 'Ajude a respeitar os Direitos Humanos em Moçambique. Passe a palavra!' (Portuguese).



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