



SANYU CENTRE FOR
ARTS AND RIGHTS



“Girls making table mats from which they earn income”

Word from the Director



It is with great pleasure that I present this 2020 annual report for the work that SARI has been engaged in. We celebrate our joys and successes where we have managed to engage at least 100 young women in arts, design and crafts, writing, dance, cinema based enterprises. We choose to press on with smiling faces regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic with its related challenges such as unemployment, violation of Sexual and reproductive health rights, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and mental health issues. We as girls are active participants in determining our future and therefore we choose to use all the resources that we can access to better our lives and our communities. We are change makers and we bring others with us on this journey as we form a global movement of girls and young women creating positive social change through ARTs! We are grateful to our partners PixinArt Studio, Blacksmith studio and generous individuals who have believed in us to do this amazing work.

“ARTs are our voices and actions for social change.”

We invite you to be part of this movement as you dive into our report.

NALUBEGA SYLVIA

Nalubega Sylvia

Introduction

Sanyu Centre for Arts and Rights (SARI) is a skills based nonprofit using ARTs to promote socio-economic empowerment, physical and mental health, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence redress among girls and young women in Uganda. Founded in 2019 and formally registered in 2020 as a community based organization (W.CBO/2D/6499), company limited by guarantee (80020002881796), our core operations include dance, Art and design and life skills, music, writing and cinema with Information Communication and Technology and media as a mainstream. Targeting in and out of school girls and young women, our work is premised on justice, empowerment, awareness and behavior change communication.

Vision: A global movement of young people creating positive change through ARTIVISM!

Mission: Enhance girls and young women's engagement in aspects of socio-economic development, physical and mental health, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence redress through ARTs.

Core objectives.

1. To enhance girls and young women with knowledge and skills in ARTs for profitable engagement in socio economic ventures.
2. To promote awareness and break stigmas on mental health, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence through ARTs.
3. To engage in policy advocacy on socio-economic empowerment, mental and bodily health, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence redress among young women through ARTs
4. To create meaningful, cohesive, engaging, and sustainable content in various forms for social engagement in rights awareness, leadership and advocacy.



SARI Board and implementing team during a planning meeting

Activities

1. Conducted training sessions in arts, design and crafts

33 girls and young women were equipped with knowledge and practical in arts, design and crafts skills in tailoring and design, shoe making, making sweaters and graphics and design. SARI worked with 3 community trainers to carry out the sessions. The trainings came in timely in response to the un certainty in employment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic especially for young women. The limited resources hindered SARI from recruiting more young women into the training program.



Participants during the training session of knitting sweaters

As a result of the trainings, at least 8 participants have improved in tailoring skills and have set up small enterprises, 2 have been hired by a school within the community to start making sweaters, 3 participants are now able to make crafts shoes for sale and one has a got employment as a graphics designer in a nearby small firm.

2. Formed 4 savings and safe groups among girls

SARI supported 78 girls to form girls saving and safe groups and they were trained in the basic records keeping, group dynamics and leadership. The participants regularly meet to save as well as share experiences. During the lock down period, young women created group WhatsApp to continue sharing and pass on important information to each other. They provided each other with support and advice on how to navigate the challenges. The spaces also provided especially adolescent girls opportunity to share their mental and reproductive health challenges and receive psycho social support. Parents, caregivers and local leaders greatly supported the groups which led to their sustainability.



Girls during the savings group formation

Through active engagement with the local leaders, SARI was able to support one girls group acquire a small fund from the girls funds through local government office which the members are currently using to set up small income generating projects within their communities.

The groups were also introduced to the concept of gender equality, equipping them with tools to create their own visions and career pathways that would last a lifetime. Furthermore, the program provides girls with a safe space to talk about their experiences and supports them in reporting incidents when they suffer violence and abuse as they learn about their bodies, their potential and their rights. Moreover, the groups were also exposed to sexual health and reproductive rights training and linked to service providers to ensure especially the girls were able to make decisions about their own bodies. The savings and safe groups provided opportunity for the girls to give peer to peer support, in the form of cascading leadership. Through this model, these groups acted as a vehicle for girls to become leaders of change.

In addition, being in savings and safe spaces has also provided a sense of belonging as a one 18-year old Kirabo says.



"I am more in touch with my community now that I belong to our girls savings and safe group. I get to know more developmental things, I have made more friends and I have learnt so many things. I am no longer into my small world but I am part of something bigger than myself."

3. Conducted training sessions in communication, issue selling and negotiation skills among 67 girls and young women.

67 girls and young women were trained in communication, issue selling and negotiation skills as life skills to enable them profitably engage in marketing of their arts, design and crafts products and services. The trainings were participatory to promote learning and understanding. SARI worked with 6 trainers in different fields such as marketing and branding, customer care, networking and collaborations, business registration services to provide the mentoring and coaching to the young women.

Our approach is a transformative methodology, which we defined as a process of instilling girls with the necessary knowledge and practical skills, facilitating their confidence and determination and thereafter providing the financial means for girls to set up their businesses, create jobs and or employment for their fellow girls.

Young women were exposed to trainings increased their technical skillset and also soft skills through life skills such as: leadership, confidence and decision-making.



SARI tutor facilitating a training session in issue selling

Furthermore, 28 girls were equipped with knowledge and skills in idea development including proposal writing, pitching and how to write applications and cover letters.



Girls during the training session in idea development

As a result of the trainings, at least 19 girls and young women were able to draw their business plans, 27 were able to draw their personal development plans, 4 could now develop project proposals while others were still in the process of self-discovery.

4. Supported 25 girls and young women with startup kits and capital

SARI supports 25 girls and young women with startup kits and capital in form small revolving loans to cope with the financial challenges brought on especially by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, girls have increased knowledge and skills to sustain them economically beyond formal schooling. Moreover, they feel encouraged and supported to pursue careers and enter new and more profitable sectors.

5. Established a dance studio to conduct dance classes

We set up a dance studio to provide space for dance trainings as well as sharing experiences. Spaces were open three times a week and these benefited 49 girls and youth. Through dance, girls and youth were able to enhance their mental and physical health that had particularly been affected during the COVID-19 lockdowns and uncertainties. The participants were able to develop various skits through interpretive dance to communicate. SARI held one community forum for dance theatre through which participants disseminated information on COVID-19 prevention.



Participants during a dance practice session at the studio

Furthermore, SARI procured dance costumes for 58 participants to ably communicate their message through the forum for Dance Theater.



Young people performing a traditional dance during the community forum for dance theatre.

6. Produced 5 podcast shows on mental health, SRHR and GBV in the midst of COVID-19

5 podcasts were produced to disseminate information and engage wider audiences on mental health, SRHR and GBV in the midst of COVID-19 among girls, young mothers and health workers. SARI worked with 10 participants to do the podcasts. The podcasts provided safe and empowering spaces where girls could engage in pertinent issues in society.



Participants during a podcast recording session



Participants doing a pod cast recording in studio

In addition, SARI produced two short films on SRHR (Family planning, Maternal Child Health and mental health) in the face of COVID-19. These were produced to educate the public about the issues.



SARI team shooting a documentary on mental health.

Feature story

My Hands, My Resource.

Sera is a young mother living in Kyebando, Erisa Zone and is a participant in SARI skilling programs. Sera is a talented artisan- a cloth designer to be more specific but had been left struggling after losing her job and business during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Her lack of income greatly affected her ability to meet her basic needs and those of her child. Sera became a participant in our programs. She got knowledge and skills in savings mobilization, entrepreneurship and she became part of the tailoring savings group formed in the project. During the identification and selection of trainers, Sera put in her request to be trainer in tailoring. The SARI team and the leaders vetted her and took her on since priority was given to community based trainers to foster ownership and sustainability.

Sera is now a trainer in the tailoring classes currently supporting 38 girls. She trains them in different fashions and items such as bags. She not only passes on the arts and design skills to her peers but also provided leadership and inspiration for them to have plans and goals for their future. As a group secretary for the tailoring savings groups, she encourages her fellow members to save and open up bank accounts where they can safely keep their money and not in their homes for security reasons. Since she is now a trainer, her income has increased by at least 50%. She is able to save at least Ugx 400,000 a month which she was not able to do before SARI's programs. Sera is a lot happier and she says her health has greatly improved since she has less worries about meeting her basic needs. She is also happy that she gets to be part of girls group where she gets to learn and share many things with her peers which was not the case

before. With the knowledge she acquired in the entrepreneurship sessions, she has started on processes to get her business registered.



Sera using her hands to create beautiful garments.

“This is a life changing opportunity for me because I have the opportunity to pass on my tailoring and designing skills to my peers to better their lives.”



Sera using her hands as her resource to train her peers in design

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