



Into the gender lens.

"It is important to instill in girls necessary knowledge and practical skills, facilitate their confidence and determination and thereafter provide the financial means for girls to set up their businesses, create jobs and or employment for their fellow girls."

A global movement of young people creative positive social change through ARTIVISM!

Word from the chairperson



Elizabeth Busiinge

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth".

Board Chairperson

What an amazing year 2021 has been! There has been so much learn and we are still learning to thrive in our environment. As young people, we embrace change positively because challenges bring opportunities.

We at Sanyu Centre for Arts and Rights- SARI are grateful to our participants (young people), partners, local leaders, officials, fellow Civil Society members, mentors, coaches and above all the Almighty God who have been ardent supporters of our work.

We the board also appreciate our SARI implementing team for their tireless efforts to reach the young people especially girls in our communities and empowering them to reach their full potential.

We are therefore happy to present to you our 2021 report.

Join this movement of young people creating positive social change through ARTIVISM!

Word from the Director



Sylvia Nalubega

Nalubega Sylvia

Director

It is that exciting time of the year when we get the opportunity to share our work with you. 2021 has been a year like no other with so much to learn, unlearn and relearn. Innovation is our premise; Creativity our core value. We use Arts are our voices and actions to create a desirable environment.

Our work has been made possible through the active participation of the young people in our communities, the generous support of our partners, the support of the community local leaders, fellow Civil Society and the guidance of our board and mentors.

We have been able to reach approximately 400 young people including girls, young women, boys and young males through our activities including leadership development, human rights awareness, vocational arts skilling, Music, dance and drama, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights, mental health support as well as communication and documentation. We have had the opportunity to participate in various civic spaces and make our contributions.

We are continuing forward in this global movement of young people creating positive social change through ARTIVISM!

Join the move as you dig into our 2021 report and becoming a partner with us.

About the organization

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 youth in Uganda. Founded in 2019 and formally registered in 2020 as a community based organization (W.CBO/2D/6499), company limited by guarantee 2021(80020002881796), a Non-Government Organization (INDR155244621NB). We organize and engage young people including adolescent girls and young women, young people with disabilities, young people in the formal and informal sector in Art and Activism for employment, leadership development, mental health, awareness on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence redress and advocacy. SARI's core operations include Art, Design and life skills, Dance, Music, Writing, Sports and Cinema with Information Communication and Technology and media as a mainstream. Our work is premised on justice, empowerment, awareness and behavior change communication. SARI is part of networks including the Artivist Foundation, National Coalition for Human Rights Defenders Coalition/Defend Defenders and Catalyst 2030.

We envision a global movement of young people creating positive change through ARTIVISM! Our Mission is to 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.

Our objectives are 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 and 4) To create meaningful, cohesive, engaging, and sustainable content in various forms for social engagement in rights awareness, leadership and advocacy.



Girls showing off their craft shoes made during the SARI skills sessions

Creativity is the tool that brings people together and this enables empowerment for change. We use Arts to foster that creativity, participation and empowerment of girls in our communities.

A global movement of young people creative positive social change through ARTIVISM!

SARI 2021 snapshot



Content creation

- 300 copies of "Make your business formal" a simplified book on formalizing enterprises produced and distributed among youth.
- 2 podcasts and 1 audio drama on SRHR and SGBV produced and shared on SARI online platforms.
- A documentary on mental health among girls with HIV.

Networks and Engagements

- SARI contributed to the UNICEF programs on the functional requirements of the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) chatbot!
- SARI participated in the 16 days of activism where messages advancing the right to safety and protection of girls against gender based violence were disseminated.
- SARI participated in the international day of human rights defenders organized by the National coalition of human rights defenders.

Youth capacity development

- 200 girls and youth were equipped with vocational skills, equipment and material in arts related enterprises including Arts, fashion and design, knitting sweaters, tie and dye, graphics and design, crafts making, photography, writing as well as music, dance and drama.
- 64 youth got access to startup kits and capital to set up enterprises.
- 10 girl/youth collectives and safe spaces were formed for savings mobilization as well as mental health support.
- 201 youth equipped with more knowledge and skills in life skills, entrepreneurship and leadership development.
- 189 girls more aware of their sexual reproductive health rights, can access services provided for at health centres and are empowered to make their own decisions.
- 3 community forums for theatre for dance and drama were conducted on COVID-19 prevention, redress for sexual and gender based violence and promoting the girls' rights to go back to school reaching 109 people.
- 10 participants become more knowledge and skilled in script writing, developing podcasts and audio dramas.



Girls practicing their skill in playing traditional musical instruments. SARI is bringing girls into male dominated spaces especially in the ARTs fields.

“Creativity is a natural gift and resource that can tap into to develop girls into their full potential as well as participate in social and civic spaces.”

Youth capacity development

"For girls who have dropped out of school, improved economic opportunities can offer an alternative to early family formation and put them on a path toward a healthy future."



Girls during a life skills session on formalizing enterprises for sustainability.

SARI invested time and efforts towards enhancing capacity of young people especially girls in vocational arts, leadership development, entrepreneurship, communication and presentation. We employed a transformative approach, which we define as a process of instilling young people with the necessary knowledge and practical skills, facilitating their confidence and determination and thereafter providing the financial means for young people to set up their businesses, create jobs and or employment for their fellow young people.

Vocational Arts and life skills development

200 girls and youth were equipped with vocational skills, equipment and material in arts related enterprises including Arts, fashion and design, graphics and design, crafts making, knitting sweaters, tie and dye, photography, writing and making podcasts as well as music, dance and drama. The trainings were done with theory and practice to enhance learning and participation of the youth. The sessions came in handy with the COVID-19 school lockdowns that left many young people vulnerable to mental health challenges, getting early and unwanted pregnancies and dropping out of school. The activity was indeed a COVID-19 recovery and resilience initiative.

SARI worked with 11 community tutors to support the young people with the knowledge and skills. SARI also received support from schools within the community including Gayaza road school, Lusose primary school and Molly primary school Kyebando which provided free space to conduct the training due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

As a result, youth are able to make different arts and crafts such as clothes, sweaters, bags, craft shoes, hats, doormats, pompoms which they sell to earn income. Many youth were also keen on passing on the skills acquired to their fellow youth so that they too were empowered. SARI celebrated 29 of those commendable youth who were able to train fellow youth.

Some of the products made by the youth



Bags in different shapes



Craft shoes made with thread and rubber



Doormats and decorative mats made with thread



Different clothing designs. These are coats

Furthermore the young people were empowered to form groups/collectives through which they learnt how to save as well as strengthen their leadership skills. The groups were safe hubs where participants supported each other through experience sharing and received psycho-social support to enhance their mental health and emotional well-being.

In addition, 201 youth equipped with more knowledge and skills in life skills, entrepreneurship and leadership development. The skills have enhanced decision making, communication, interpersonal relationship and envisioning among the participants. Similarly, 64 youth got access to startup kits and capital to set up enterprises which not only boosted their incomes but also confidence.

Fatila- the young entrepreneur



Fatila in one of the shops in Kampala purchasing fabric for her fashion and design work

I have improved my life skills in terms of interpersonal relationships, communication and self-awareness. Before working with SARI, I had limited skills in tailoring and design which has always been my dream. Right now, I can make different designs including dresses, skirts, shirts and I am eager to continue improving my skillset. I am so proud of the fact that I have my own sewing machine. I feel more secure now that I am able to earn a living. I am currently earning UGX 25,000 per week (7 USD). My plan to grow my income to at least UGX 125,000 per week (USD 35). With the knowledge and skills in marketing that I received from SARI life skills class, I am intentionally reaching out to potential clients to grow my market. Through I dropped out of school as a result of the continued COVID-19 school lockdowns, I am able to make right choices for myself and keep myself from being coerced into sexual relationships for material gain.

The dance that changes things



A group of young people having fun during a dance rehearsal session at Kyebando.

SARI empowered young people to create inclusive and gender friendly community safe spaces through theatre for dance to address Sexual Reproductive Health issues, mental health and promote confidence especially during this period of being away from school. There is also increased awareness and practicing of life skills such as communication, presentation, leadership, presentation among the members. Young people especially the girls have become more confident in expressing themselves, relating with others, are more self-aware and report to feel more physically fit with the dance rehearsals. SARI supported the groups with music instruments both traditional and modern. Girls are also learning to play musical instruments like drums, xylophone, flute which have been traditionally played by males. This is breaking the gender stereotypes in performance arts. The group was able to book two shows at weddings where they were able to earn 1,000,000 Ugx (287 USD).

Moreover, the groups conducted 3 community forums for theatre for dance and drama were on COVID-19 prevention, redress for sexual and gender based violence and promoting the girls' rights to go back to school reaching 109 people.



The youth club during a dance performance on COVID-19 prevention guidelines in Erisa zone.

Similarly collectives such as ‘Lens Her Space’ and Centre for Creative Photography were formed to enhance storytelling, economic empowerment and leadership through photography among 23 youth. Thus girls who have always had the desire to enter and thrive in this mostly male dominated space got an opportunity to develop their skills and create desirable futures for themselves. One of the girls got a job offer at a local photo studio hence she is earning as well as perfecting her skill.



Youth doing a community photo-shoot on water for hygiene and COVID-19 prevention.

Through photography, the youth are getting more engaged in their communities.

Using Sports and dance for Sexual Reproductive health rights awareness among girls



An SRHR awareness and body integrity exercise session led by a police officer in Kibuli among girls

SARI worked with sports coaches, health workers, police officers and officers from the ministry of gender labour and social development to implement 'sexual consent: a strategy for prevention of sexually transmitted infections among adolescents aged 15-24 years living in the slum areas.' The sessions were done through sports such as football and indoor games that had awareness messages on SRHR and life choices. Through working with the health workers, at least 189 girls more aware of their sexual reproductive health rights, could access services provided for at health centres and are empowered to make their own decisions. The project also enlisted male engagement where boys and young males were empowered to change agents of those who respected the bodied and dignity of girls. The project was timely with the escalating sexual abuse, early and unwanted pregnancies and gender based violence occurrences especially during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

Content creation

Our objective is to create meaningful, cohesive, engaging, and sustainable content in various forms for social engagement in rights awareness, leadership and advocacy.

Driven by our content strategy and informed by the views of the youth, we developed and produced 300 copies of "Make your business formal" a simplified book on formalizing enterprises which were distributed among the youth. The small handbook was also uploaded on the SARI website (<https://www.sanyarts.org/sanyuresources>), twitter and LinkedIn. The youth got more knowledge on how to register their enterprises and appreciated that it was the best way to ensure their longevity and sustainability. Two girls were able to register their businesses as a result of getting knowledge and support on how to do so from SARI tutors.



Participant reading the 'Make you dream formal' hand book.

SARI further equipped 10 participants with more knowledge and skills in script writing, developing podcasts and audio dramas. Moreover, 2 podcasts and 1 audio drama on SRHR and SGBV produced and shared on SARI online platforms.



Participants during a rehearsal session on the audio drama



Young women recording a podcast in studio.

SARI also produced a documentary on mental health among girls with HIV. The documentary aimed at creating awareness on the issue as well as advocate for community based mental health structures where girls could easily acquire the needed support.



One of the participants during the filming of the documentary

Networks and Engagements

SARI contributed to the UNICEF program on the functional requirements of the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) chatbot! This was done through an online engagement with participants in Dares salaam, Nairobi and Kampala. The sessions were to continue in the coming year to increase access to mental health support for youth.

SARI also participated in the 16 days of activism where messages advancing the right to safety and protection of girls against gender based violence were disseminated. Similarly, SARI participated in the international day of human rights defenders organized by the National coalition of human rights defenders with the theme of defending civic space; human rights defenders voices at the centre.



Pannel session during the international day of the human rights defenders

SARI director at the international day of the human rights defenders event.



2021 spotlight



Our 2021 spotlight is on 20 year old Angella young energetic leader of the Girls' Creative Hands group in her community, Erisa zone. Angella also stood for the post of vice chairperson of her school faculty at Makerere University Kampala and she won. She was also elected as deputy gender officer. She attributes her confidence to the life skills trainings she got from SARI programs.

"Becoming more self-aware through vocational arts and life skills has set on my leadership journey and I believe that I will make a positive impact in my community especially among my fellow girls and youth."

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Like many of her fellows, Angella was negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as she had to pause her studies yet her personal financial, emotional and physical needs were growing. The extended lockdowns, limited movements and interaction with her peers left her lonely and anxious; she badly needed safe space where she could share her thoughts with her friends. Angella started participating in SARI activities in the community through joining a training where girls and youth were being trained in crafts as well as cloth designing. She also participated in the trainings in life skills, entrepreneurship and leadership. Furthermore the participants were trained in savings mobilization where they formed groups through which they would save. They also planned to have their groups legally registered at the local council offices to ensure their longevity and also be part of other community initiatives. Angella and her team formed the Girls' Creative Hands which has 14 members. These make different hand crafts such as door mats, bags, money purses, clothes and many other decorative items.

Angella reports that the training that changed her mindset and improved her the most was the life skills, entrepreneurship and leadership development. The knowledge and skills acquired empowered her to lead the formation the Girls' Creative Hands. She and her team members are able to sell the products which enables them to meet their basic needs. The Girls' Creative Hands is also a safe space where Angella and her fellow girls share different issues to improve their lives and community.

Going into 2022

- SARI will be allocating resources for economic recovery and development of young people through vocational arts, marketing and networking both in physical and virtual spaces.
- SARI will be putting more efforts on creating and establishing community youth groups, spaces, forums and networks to enhance the entrepreneurial, emotional well-being, leadership and advocacy skills of young people including vulnerable girls, those with special needs, young mothers, youth in refugee communities through ARTIVISM.
- SARI will produce and publish content on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and mental health among young people for more social engagements.
- SARI will be expanding its outreach to more districts.
- SARI will continue to work with local government, line ministries as well as join more likeminded networks and catalysts for positive change among young people.
- SARI will also be strengthening its organizational systems, resource mobilization, staff capacity and compliance with national guidelines for more effective delivery of her work.

Appreciation

We are grateful to the young people who are the positive change in our society. We appreciate the support of the local government especially in Wakiso and Kampala districts as well as the line ministries that have made our efforts worthwhile. Special thanks goes to our partners the Global Academy of SRHR, Equitas Canada (East African Human Rights Program), PixinArt Studio, Blacksmith studio, Children Rights Violence Prevention Fund, SYRADO Uganda and individual contributors who have made this work possible.



Girls leading: A young sports leader participating in a Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights sports outreach in Kibuli.

For any comments, inquiries or to follow us, please reach us on the following address.

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