



ART & GLOBAL HEALTH CENTER
AFRICA

Newsletter

Amplifying community voices and action

January 2024 - March 2024

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Art & Global Health Center Africa (ArtGlo) is a Malawian NGO that harnesses the power of the arts to nurture creative leadership, and ignite bold conversations and actions. We envision a world where communities are healthy, open, and active, and people are free to be who they are.

Executive Director's Note



Dear Partner,

As we reflect on the accomplishments of this quarter, it fills me with immense pride to witness the continued impact of our endeavors in leveraging the transformative power of the arts to effect sustainable social change. Our commitment to fostering positive change within communities remains steadfast, and the progress we've witnessed is a testament to the dedication of our team and partners.

In our Youth and Community Engagement Programme, we've seen tangible results in Lilongwe rural, where our collaborative efforts with UNICEF and child protection structures have led to enhanced response and effectiveness in child protection and addressing threats to child development and child abuse cases. The statistics now reflect an increase in reporting and redressing of such cases, signaling a positive shift towards ensuring the safety and well-being of our children.

Additionally, our partnership with REPRIEVE to advocate for the abolition of the death penalty in Malawi underscores our commitment to advancing human rights and dignity. It's through collective action and advocacy that we can strive towards a more just and equitable society for all.

In our pursuit of equitable justice access for LGBTIQ individuals and other minority groups, our Umunthu Inclusive Society Project, under the Social Inclusion and Diversity Programme, with support from the Southern Africa Litigation Center (SALC), has been instrumental in empowering communities and raising awareness about their rights to justice access within the system. Through "Know Your Champions" initiatives, which are being carried out by magistrates, community leaders, and police officers who are part of the project, we are fostering a culture of inclusivity and ensuring that everyone has equal access to justice.

The Tiyambe project, under our Gender Justice initiative with Eastern Produce Malawi Limited, continues to make significant strides in ending gender-based violence and establishing response mechanisms in tea and macadamia estates in Thyolo and Mulanje. Through the power of theatre for development, we are creating safer and more supportive environments for all individuals by addressing these issues at their roots.

Furthermore, our projects have contributed to national and international conversations on pressing issues such as climate change, gender justice, and child and maternal health. We have conducted and participated in conferences and workshops in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and South Africa, we have facilitated meaningful discussions and exchanged valuable insights that will inform future action and policy decisions.

As we look ahead, let us remain committed to our vision of a more just, inclusive, and equitable world. Together, we can continue to harness the power of the arts to drive positive change and build brighter futures for generations to come.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to our shared mission.

Warm regards,
Rodger Kumalire Phiri
ArtGlo Executive Director.

UNICEF Child Protection Campaign: Lilongwe community dialogue performances



We have recently engaged communities in Lilongwe’s TA Kalumbu, TA Chiseka, TA M’bwatalika, and TA Njewa through participatory arts to amplify efforts that ArtGlo, with support from UNICEF Malawi, is making to ensure that children are protected and their rights are safeguarded. To foster vital discussions and collaborations, the four community dialogue performances brought together officials from the Child Justice Court, the district’s Social Welfare Office, Police, and Victim Support Units as well as Child Protection Workers, Youth leaders, religious leaders, Mother groups, and Community leaders. We delved into important topics and raised awareness through the power of art such as drama, poetry, and traditional songs.

Neotree Public Patient Involvement

We are thrilled to have engaged a total of 30 women in Zimbabwe and Malawi in the Neotree Public Patient Involvement (PPI) work for 2024. In Zimbabwe, 20 participants worked in their PPI groups on how to help mothers and their families on the same.

“We are looking forward to sharing what we learn in our community,” said one of the mothers in Zimbabwe.

Our YCE Manager, Lekodi Magombo worked with Faith Kandiye from the Biomedical Research and Training Institute in to deliver a workshop for mothers at the Chinoyi and Sally Mugabe hospitals.

With support from University College London (UCL) and The Neotree, we have also engaged 10 mothers at the Kamuzu Central Hospital (KCH) in Lilongwe Malawi.



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“I feel more empowered and prepared to navigate challenging situations,” says Gwetsani



Trinity Gwetsani is a STD 7 pupil at Kalolo Primary School. The 14-year-old girl attended two of ArtGlo’s child protection awareness campaigns held in TA Kalolo, Lilongwe, supported by UNICEF. She is fascinated about the crucial knowledge centered around safeguarding herself and her peers.

“I learned that if I or someone I know experiences abuse, we can report it to authorities like Police, Victim support unit among others. It is important to speak up and seek help when needed”. She shared.

The campaigns were set up as a result of the need in the area for people to know and understand the services they have available considering that this knowledge was seldom shared among a majority of people in the area....

<https://artgloafrica.org/i-feel-more-empowered-and-prepared-to-navigate-challenging-situations-says-gwetsani/>

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Amplifying community voices and collaboration key in Child Protection



Lyford Gwazani is a 42-year-old dedicated advocate in the fight against violence targeting children. Lyford has been an integral part of several child protection initiatives in TA Chimutu, Lilongwe, for over 5 years serving as a Children Victim Support Unit (CVSU) leader and a member of Chimutu Community Based Organizations network.

Art & Global Health Center Africa (ArtGlo) with support from UNICEF conducted child protection campaigns in TA Chimutu of which Lyford was involved. Lyford shared his insights on the work, “Each of the awareness campaigns resonated with me on a personal level, reminding me of the urgency to protect our children from harm”.

In his work as a stakeholder in the UNICEF child protection campaign, Lyford explained that he has gained invaluable lessons. “Working alongside ArtGlo has....

<https://artgloafrica.org/amplifying-community-voices-and-collaboration-key-in-child-protection/>



Stakeholders speak against GBV



Our Tiyaambe Project team held the fourth and final TfD performance for EPM's Eldorado and Thornwood Estates at Kadzuwa Village in Mulanje district. The performance exposed the tendency that some men have to deny their wives from engaging in income-generating activities such as business and work.

Several stakeholders spoke against the vice, penalties for perpetrators, and shared some legal instruments to address the same. The Community Police Forum, Traditional Chiefs, Mimosa Police Officers, and Muloza Court Clerk took their time to sensitize the community about their different roles in dealing with vice.



Tiyaambe TfD Performances impress Tea Buyers



For the first time, tea buyers were among the stakeholders that attended our community engagements through Tiyaambe TfD performances in both Thyolo and Mulanje districts. This has assisted them to understand real issues that transpire within the sector they operate in with regards to ending GBV. The fourth and final TfD performance in Kasembereka Estate was held in Butao village and exposed predominant incidents of wife battering and early child marriages in the area. A representative from Thyolo Magistrate Court, EPM's Corporate Affairs Manager and Estate Manager also attended the event.

Mchinji Inclusion champions meet



The year 2024 has started on a good note for the Social Inclusion and Diversity (SID) program. The Mchinji inclusion champions under the Umunthu Inclusive Society project, met to brainstorm and map out initiatives they intend to implement to advance inclusion in their district. Apart from their plan to meet with Area development committees, they will also engage with community members to share knowledge and understanding about Umunthu and raise awareness of inclusive justice services being provided by both the police and courts. The meeting was led by the champions including some members of the LGBTQ community.

Meanwhile, the Champions in Chikwawa held an interface meeting with LGBTQ people who highlighted the challenges that they face in accessing justice. They together explored the solutions and actionable points which prioritize engaging other primary justice actors such as Chiefs as they are the gatekeepers of their communities among others.

Stakeholders converge to learn from Inmates once under the death penalty

As the Malawi National Assembly is set to deliberate on a private members bill meant for the repeal of the penal code provision of the Death penalty this year, Reprieve and ArtGlo brought together key stakeholders to appreciate the lived experiences of some inmates who were on death row, but not pardoned and commuted to life imprisonment at Zomba Central Prison.

The Honorable member of the Legal Affairs Committee of Parliament, Yusuf Mthenda, Paramount Chief Kawinga, Chief Annie Magwira from Domasi, Legal Counsellors, Religious leaders and the Media took their time to appreciate the stories of the inmates, interact with prison officials and visit the cells of the inmates.

“Before my death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, I used to have fear of the unknown, for I didn’t know when I was going to be executed. We were confined in the condemned cells which barred from outside contact....”



<https://artgloafrica.org/stakeholders-converge-to-learn-from-the-inmates-once-under-the-death-penalty/>

ArtGlo's documentary gets beamed at Africa's loss and damage conference



We are thrilled to have had one of our documentaries beamed at the 3rd Africa Regional Conference on Loss and Damage which was held in Lilongwe from the 20th to the 22nd of March 2024. The conference's main theme was "Positioning African countries to play an instrumental role in the governance of loss and damage fund, secure enhanced action at the frontline, and optimize on benefits from the fund."

Together with participants from across African countries, we shared our plight, work, and aspirations with regard to climate change-induced loss and damage. Hon. Dr. Micheal Usi, Minister of Natural Resources and Climate Change was the Guest of Honor, and the Former President of the Republic of Malawi, H. E. Dr. Joyce Banda, was the keynote speaker. Along side the conference, we also participated in a tree planting exercise at the Lilongwe Botanic Garden.

https://www.tiktok.com/@aghcafrica/video/7218975939416345861?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=p-c&web_id=7307722577509844486

Championing Environmental conservation through participatory arts



At ArtGlo, we believe in the transformative power of participatory arts to facilitate bold conversation and action towards social change. We have engaged 15 youths from GVHs Kathebwé, Magoli, Chaweza, Makuwa, and Mbalu at St. Paul's Teacher Development Center (TDC) in TA Mwambo, Zomba. The aim of the engagement was to strengthen their capacity to develop and implement promotional messages and champion environmental conservation initiatives in their communities. Participants demonstrated how they would implement the roles they suggested as champions using participatory arts. They also formulated action plans such as reaching out to Youth clubs and Village Savings and Loans (VSL) groups among others. The initiative was led by Aaron Mahamah, WUSC-Malawi Climate Justice Advisor assigned to ArtGlo.

Arts for Climate Change Action Phase II promotes transparency and participation



Communities that we have worked with in the first phase of the Arts for Climate Change project have started taking action on some of the key findings that ArtGlo, with support from the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) through Trocaire, unearthed through TfD, Umunthu Circle Dialogues and Photojournalism. In the second phase, we have utilized the first two participatory approaches to promote transparency, community awareness and participation in the implementation of microgrants and psychosocial support initiatives that our implementing partners, Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD) in Nsanje and Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM) in Zomba have facilitated to reduce the impact of floods and psychosocial trauma.

We have held a total of five TfD performances in GVHs Mbenje, Ngabu, Mtemangawa and Mambundungu in Nsanje on community led microgrant initiatives and psychosocial support now available as a result of a training that some key stakeholders attended organized by CARD. In Zomba, we held a TfD performance for people in GVHs Mbalu and Makawa on psychosocial support and vocational skills training for youth in the area organized by CADECOM.

Anyanja Cultural festival fosters unity and collaboration

People from GVHs Mbalu and Makawan-share Likangala River which for the past decade has caused havoc due to persistent tropical cyclones and heavy rains. During the first phase of the project in early 2023, we discovered that people from the two GVHs expressed resentment by each others vulnerability to natural calamities. This was unearthed through our separate and joint interactions with survivors of loss and damage induced by climate change, community leaders, and members. People from GVH Makawa cited that they are highly susceptible to floods because of human activity in the upper part of the river while their colleagues from Mbalu denied the claim. To bring about unity and collective effort among the people from the two communities, a ArtGlo and CADECOM organized a cultural festival which was held at Matambala ground, TA Mwambo, Zomba, on the 16th of March 2024.....



<https://artgloafrica.org/anyanja-cultural-festival-fosters-unity-and-collaboration/>



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