



ART & GLOBAL HEALTH CENTER

AFRICA

Newsletter

Amplifying community voices and action

October 2023 - December 2023

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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 ArtGlo Family,

I am delighted to share with you the remarkable progress ArtGlo has achieved during the final quarter of 2023. Our ongoing mission to advance inclusion, combat violence against women and girls, and foster dialogue among students and educators to alleviate tensions in the delivery of Comprehensive Sexuality Education has been met with significant strides. Together with our esteemed partners, including the Southern African Litigation Center, UNTF, UNICEF, UNESCO, MEIRU, EPM, UCL, and WUSC, ArtGlo continues to leverage the transformative power of the arts to drive sustainable social change across various spheres.

One notable highlight of the quarter was the establishment of collaborative teams comprising primary justice actors and minority populations in Chikwawa, Phalombe, Dedza, and Mchinji Districts. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering inclusive practices and ensuring that all voices are heard and represented in our endeavors.

Furthermore, we are pleased to report the enthusiastic embrace of artistic methodologies by educators in Nkhatabay, who have pledged to incorporate these approaches into the teaching of comprehensive sexuality education. This innovative approach enhances learning outcomes and promotes a deeper understanding of sensitive topics in a safe and supportive environment.

In addition, our efforts to strengthen child protection mechanisms in Blantyre have yielded promising results, while the active engagement of communities in Thyolo and Mulanje demonstrates a resolute commitment to ending gender-based violence. These collaborative endeavors underscore the power of collective action in effecting positive change within our communities.

Lastly, I am thrilled to share that ArtGlo was honored to host a workshop at the UNTF We Rise2023 Global Summit for Africa and Latin America. This platform provided a valuable opportunity to showcase our work and exchange insights with fellow advocates and practitioners from around the world, further amplifying our impact and reach. Our YCE program team also showcased several artistic participatory tools we use in engaging children, on World Children's Day at the University College of London.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past quarter, let us remain steadfast in our dedication to advancing social justice through the arts. Together, we can continue to inspire meaningful change and create a more inclusive and equitable world for all.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to the vision of ArtGlo. Together, we are making a difference.

Regards,
Rodger Kumalire Phiri
Executive Director.

Umunthu Inclusive Society fosters Inclusion



The new developments around the world with regards to the LGBTI community, have recently sparked conversations in response to protests and repressive laws internationally and Malawi is not spared. Although these emerging issues have the further potential of silencing this key population and efforts to protect their human rights, beneficiaries, and stakeholders in the Umunthu Inclusive Society Project have remained committed to nurturing movements that can take action against human rights violations perpetrated against the LGBTI people. Some of the Champions and members of LGBTI community have assumed various leadership roles in their communities as a result of movement-building trainings where ArtGlo ignited self-actualization of the power within and strengthened the capacity that each person has to change the status quo.....

<https://artgloafrica.org/umunthu-inclusive-societies-project-fosters-inclusion/>

Justice Actors change perception towards the LGBTI people

Our Social Inclusion Diversity (SID) team engaged with Primary Justice Actors and LGBTQ persons in Dedza, Chikwawa, Phalombe, and Mchinji to among others unearth some significant changes that can be attributed to the Umunthu Inclusive Society Project. This was done through follow up and convergence workshops that were held in October 2023. Both parties stressed the impact the workshops have had on their personal & professional lives.

“I never thought that some people are born without feeling for the opposite sex. I used to think that they all do it for money since it seems to be a foreign behavior. The Umunthu workshop that I attended helped me to understand that some people are indeed born gay, lesbian and gender nonconforming.” Narrated a female police officer from Dedza.

Another police officer from Phalombe added....



<https://artgloafrica.org/pjas-change-perception-towards-the-lgbti/>

Umunthu Circle ignites bold conversations against Sexual Harassment



Students in tertiary learning institutions are not immune to gender-based violence and suffer in silence because they lack safe spaces to share their lived experiences for fear of being judged and socially excluded. The Criminal Justice Legal Clinic and Gender Justice Clinic of the University of Malawi (UNIMA) in partnership with ArtGlo organized a two-day Sexual harassment awareness campaign on campus meant to unearth GBV cases and also raise awareness of available reporting mechanisms at the institution....

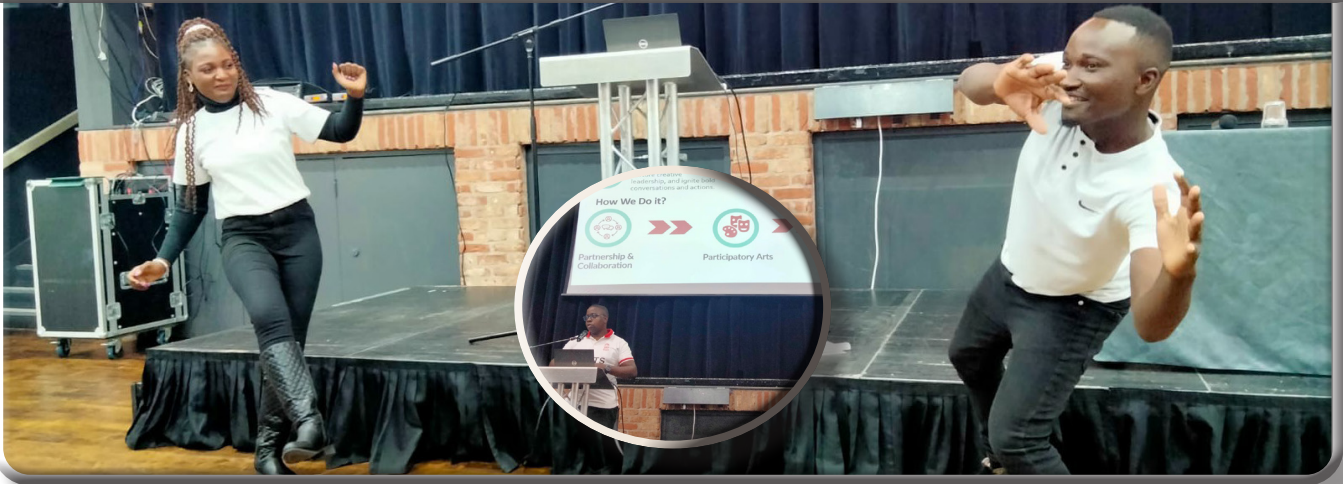
<https://artgloafrica.org/umunthu-circle-ignites-bold-conversations-against-sexual-harassment/>

Inclusion Champions meet in Mangochi District



The Umunthu Inclusive Society project team conducted a two-day training that engaged Inclusion champions in Mangochi-Boadzulu resort. The engagement brought together 16 Primary Justice Actors (PJA) and 4 LGBTQ people from Mchinji, Dedza, Chikwawa and Phalombe districts. It is expected that participants will take the lead in advancing inclusion, especially on justice access in their areas of work and communities after this engagement.

UCL/Neotree World Children’s Day in London



During the 2023 World Children’s Day in London, ArtGlo through its Youth and Community Engagement Lead, Lekodi Magombo and the YCE team presented our work with children. Participants at the conference hosted by University College London (UCL) and The Neotree, could not hide their excitement with our work and a number of participatory tools that we use when engaging children.



“That was really engaging and exciting!” expressed by one participant after the participatory arts showcase done by the ArtGlo.

Launch of the 2023-2028 National Youth Policy



The 2023-2028 National Youth Policy emphasizes the need to incorporate young people in leadership and governance roles. Our Youth and Community Engagement team was privileged to attend the launch of this new policy at the Bingu International Convention Center (BICC) in Lilongwe on the 30th of October 2023 with support from UNESCO. Among others, the team showcased some of our work with regard to creating space and opportunities for young people to dream, lead, innovate, create, and advocate. This work is made possible with support from UNESCO and UNICEF Malawi among others.

Exploring CSE in Nkhatabay district-UNESCO



ArtGlo led innovative dialogue sessions with secondary students and teachers to explore how Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is taught and learned in Nkhatabay district, in partnership with UNESCO and the Ministry of Education - Malawi (MoE). The work is a continuation from previous dialogues held in other parts of Malawi. All together, two events were held with 170 students including Learners with Disabilities (LWD), and 30 teachers from 16 schools.

“If I want to learn anything I mostly ask my friends. My parents and teachers would just shout at me but my friends would tell me the truth,” expressed one of the Form 1 Secondary School students.

These and many other insights were gathered during one of the youth teacher dialogue session. The students exposed a number of gaps in how CSE is taught and applauded ArtGlo for the platform the it created to discuss, explore, examine and share knowledge on the same.



We Rise 2023: UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women



In December, ArtGlo attended the UN Trust Fund’s first regional learning exchange summit in Nairobi, “We Rise 2023: UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women”. The summit was for grantees located in Africa and Latin America who had received funding from the UN Trust Fund under the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative for the past three years.

We Rise 2023 took place in the context of complex, overlapping, and protracted crises happening around the world. Since the start of these projects in 2019, civil society and women’s rights organizations have experienced and adapted to numerous global challenges, from the COVID-19 pandemic to natural and human-made disasters that had given rise to an increase in backlash to women’s rights as well as anti-rights movements and unprecedented levels of violence against women. As these impactful projects came to a close, the group of 55 organizations came together to exchange knowledge and learn from one another on what had worked to prevent and end violence against women and girls while building strong and resilient feminist movements.

ArtGlo has been implementing the Make Art for Women Activism (MAWA) project for 3 years and 3 months from 6th January 2020-31st March 2023. The overall goal of MAWA which also means was to end Violence Against Women and Girls and improve the lives of women and girls by challenging patriarchal social norms and mainstreaming women’s empowerment. The project aimed at addressing intimate partner sexual and physical violence.....

<https://artgloafrica.org/we-rise-2023-un-trust-fund-to-end-violence-against-women/>

<https://untrustfundevaw.medium.com/we-rise-2023-louder-stronger-more-resilient-together-2fcfb69e9514>

https://untf.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/20240115_untf_movement-building_series_paper_no_2_edited_table_webpages02-final_compressed.pdf

UN Trust Fund visit ArtGlo



Thank you UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, Spotlight Initiative team for visiting ArtGlo! The MAWA project CSOs are continuing to utilize the skills that the project imparted. Together we will build an inclusive and fair world, where gender equality is celebrated.

Mercy urges young mothers to go back to school



Mercy, not her real name, is a 19-year-old girl who withdrew from school after being impregnated by her boyfriend and forced into marriage. Her parents made it clear that they could not take care of the pregnant daughter and without any reservations, she was told to be with the man who had impregnated her. She had no choice but to enter into marriage and drop out of school at the age of 15. She gives an account about her life as a young mother and the turning point for the predicament she was in.....

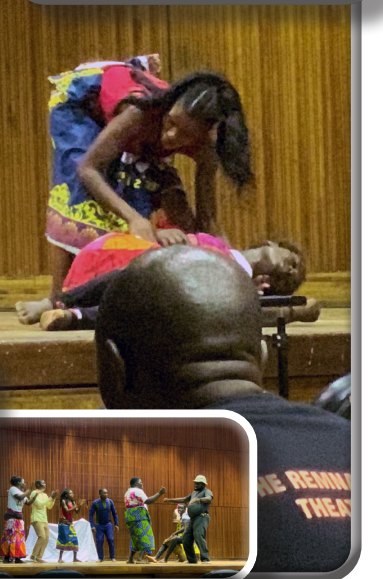
<https://artgloafrica.org/mercy-urges-young-mothers-to-go-back-to-school/>

Tiyambe Drama clubs perform at the UNIMA Theatre festival

During the 16 days of activism against gender based violence, a coalition of drama clubs that we work with in EPM's Namasalima and Ruo Estates in Mulanje as well as Mianga and Masawa Estates in Thyolo, showcased a TfD performance about the vice at the UNIMA Theatre Festival.

The performance exposed and created a safe space for the participants, who included students and lecturers, to discuss about effects of Sexually Transmitted Grades in tertiary learning institutions. It also acted as a platform for the drama clubs to strengthen their capacity and exposure in the fight against GBV.

Tiyambe project trains Drama groups formed by local community members in the development of plays based on the real-life contextual issues concerning gender equality and sexual harassment in communities within the Tea and Macadamia estates of Eastern Produce Malawi Limited in Mulanje and Thyolo.



Navigating the Nexus: Climate Change and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights in Malawi

How are Sexual and Reproductive Health issues connected to Climate Change?

HOST



Ms. Winnie Botha
Global Health and Communications Specialist
(Plan International Malawi)

PANEL



Dr. John A. Mushomi
Research and Policy Analyst (AFIDEP)



Dr. Isaac Tchuwa
Head of Earth Sciences Department (MUST)



Hayley Kellenberg, PhD
Climate Justice Expert



Lekodi Magombo
Youth and Community Engagement Lead (ArtGlo)

Co-HOST



Aaron Mahamah
WUSC Volunteer Climate Justice Advisor (ArtGlo)



TUESDAY
14 November 2023



TIME
10:30 am - 12:00 pm



Reproductive health issues often take a back seat in disaster management. While immediate concerns like food, shelter, and water are addressed, the unique needs of women, youth, and the elderly are overlooked. ArtGlo recognizes the urgency of attending to critical reproductive needs during crises and aims to raise awareness on this neglected aspect. In the same vein, we organized a live webinar where subject matter specialists spent their time navigating the interplay between Climate Change and SRHR in Malawi.

Dr. Mushomi, from the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), notes that out of the 60% of preventable deaths during childbirth that occur, 45% of those new births take place in fragile context, affected by climate change crises, extreme heat and climate related events. On the other hand Dr. Tchuwa of Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), affirms instances of social dislocation and displacement following cyclone Freddie, leading to cross-border migration with stories of sex trafficking, early marriages, and increased vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancies.

Challenges in Accessing Healthcare: Climate change events lead to constant and sometimes exacerbated needs, impacting the delivery of healthcare services. Dr. Mushomi underscores the disruption caused by climate crises on health infrastructure, resulting in delays and consequences for pregnant women and newborns. In addition, Dr. Tchuwa highlights the lingering impact of climate disasters, especially in areas where infrastructures remain destroyed, exacerbating the situation for affected communities. Slow-onset impacts and the debate around loss and damage are crucial aspects that need incorporation into discussions on climate justice.

These are among the insights that members of the panel shared in their capacity as specialists in their fields. Participants were also given a chance to contribute to the discussion. Our efforts in raising awareness, advocating for justice, and emphasizing the interconnected challenges are crucial steps toward building resilient communities that can withstand the impacts of climate change while safeguarding the reproductive health rights of all.

ArtGlo contributes to raising awareness about the interconnectedness of population dynamics, climate change impacts, and SRHR. The organization advocates for individualized management, timely interventions, and a nuanced understanding of the diverse needs of women, girls, and children facing different challenges. By emphasizing the importance of resilience and adaptive capacity, We seeks to address both short and long-term vulnerabilities.

Going beyond mitigation and adaptation, ArtGlo calls for attention to irreparable damages to societies, the environment, or infrastructure. The emerging concept of loss and damage in the climate change debate becomes a focal point for infusing discussions on SRH issues. We appeal to stakeholders to align themselves with the advocacy and form coalitions for climate justice, recognizing the disproportionate impact on communities that have contributed little to the climate change.

https://youtu.be/cmTW0T7hE7w?si=Rf_4P62SeEXJRCIF

ArtGlo Staff make contributions towards the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is one of the crucial processes that an organization undertakes to critically review, learn, and reflect on the past as well as to redefine and redesign the future. Different stakeholders shared their aspirations and dreams towards the outlook of ArtGlo and mapped out efforts that need to be undertaken to scale-up the organization's impact and relevance.

To kickstart the process, our staff embarked on a journey of discovery, ideation, design, and destiny for the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan from the 18th to the 20th of October 2023. Apart from critically analysing and reflecting about our work so far, different departments provided their strategic priorities to propel the growth of the organization.



Positive masculinity Staff training



Social and traditional roles and responsibilities of men in society have largely limited how they comfortably express themselves, perceive their worth, and how they interact with others. ArtGlo staff had the privilege to brainstorm and understand some strategies for engaging men and boys to promote positive masculinity across our programming areas. The activity was facilitated by our Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Florence Simbota at our premises.

Green Entrepreneurship Staff training



Our Climate and Social Justice Advisor, Aaron Mahamah, facilitated a Green Entrepreneurship Staff training considering that the future of work is green. Among others, participants were divided into groups and later pitched innovative green business ideas. The training was aimed at strengthening our team's knowledge and skills on the Green economy, its business models, and support tools.



UTAKA



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