



ART & GLOBAL HEALTH CENTER
AFRICA

Newsletter

Harnessing the Transformative Power of the Arts

November 2024

Changing Heart and Minds Symposium exposes gaps in human rights activism

This is powerful, it has the potential to shape LGBTQI advocacy in Malawi, it is timely and first of its kind," issues....."

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"Media shapes and influences public opinion, and as such journalists have a big role to play in helping people understand different social issues..."

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"Tell me, and I will know; teach me, and I will learn; involve me, and I will understand...."

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Dorica challenges socio-patriarchal norms and continues to excel

"Mzati CSO made a significant impact on my life. It transformed my life by providing essential school supplies....."

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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 this quarter, I am proud to share the strides we have made as a team at Art and Global Health Center Africa in fostering inclusion, justice, and empowerment across the diverse communities we serve.

Our Social Inclusion and Diversity Program continues to champion inclusive justice delivery for marginalized and socially excluded groups. This quarter, we successfully engaged key stakeholders—including the media, police, magistrates, and leaders of various CSOs—in the formation of a multi-stakeholder inclusion workgroup. This group is dedicated to addressing harassment, discrimination, injustices, and misreporting of cases, ensuring a knowledgeable and responsive approach to justice for all.

A highlight of this quarter was the graduation of the first Umunthu Primary Justice Actors Champions from Dedza, Mchinji, Chikwawa, and Phalombe districts during a vibrant symposium in Mangochi. These champions are equipped to lead their communities in promoting fairness and equality, embodying the Umunthu philosophy of humanity and interconnectedness.

Media plays a pivotal role in advancing social justice, and we were thrilled to convene key media stakeholders—Media Council of Malawi, MISA Malawi, editors, and journalists—at Boadzulu Holiday Resort. Together, they conducted a performance audit of reporting on the LGBTIQ constitutional court case, exchanged best practices, and developed strategies to overcome challenges. We are encouraged by the commitments made by the Media Council of Malawi and MISA Malawi to work with media houses in upholding ethics and guidelines, ensuring accurate and respectful coverage of issues affecting marginalized groups.

Through the Tiyambe Project, our efforts to combat gender-based violence (GBV) and promote equality between men and women have made significant progress. This quarter, we engaged Area Development Committees (ADCs), community members, and other stakeholders in action-planning workshops and impactful Theatre for Development (TFD) performances in Eastern Produce Malawi Limited's tea and macadamia estates. These initiatives continue to inspire collective action and local solutions in addressing GBV.

Under our Climate Justice Program, we are pleased to celebrate the achievements of the first cohort of Art for Nthaka Yanthu Youth Champions for Climate Change. This project, led by Laurel Whidden, a passionate intern from Cornell University, empowered youth to co-design climate resilience and mitigation projects tailored to their contexts. The ideas developed during the program will be carried forward as these young leaders take the helm in addressing climate challenges in their communities.

As we move forward, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and community champions. Your commitment and collaboration are the driving forces behind the impactful work we do. Together, we are creating a world where justice, equity, and sustainability are not just aspirations but realities.

With appreciation,

Rodger Kumalire Phiri
Executive Director, Art and Global Health Center Africa

Changing Heart and Minds Symposium



ArtGlo organised a two-day symposium at Boadzulu Lakeshore resort in Mangochi to understand the gaps and challenges that minority groups in the country face. Participants were drawn from various sectors which include Human rights advocates, Police, Magistrates, Journalists from different local media houses, CSO leaders, and religious leaders among others. We utilized this platform to disseminate research findings on the impact of constitutional court cases on the LGBTIQ community in Malawi, ignite conversations on balanced reporting of LGBTIQ cases by the media, and build allies in the struggle for equal rights. A documentary on the challenges being faced by this marginalized group was also screened and participants gave positive feedback on the issues that were raised in the documentary.

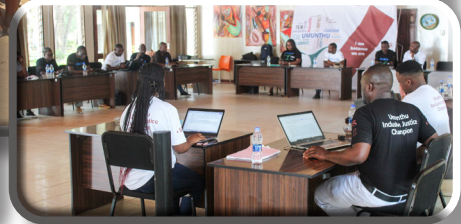
<https://artgloafrica.org/changing-hearts-and-minds-symposium-exposes-gaps-in-human-rights-activism/>

Fostering Human Rights for all



Deprivation of one's right is deprivation of everyone's rights. A media engagement strategy was identified as a crucial missing piece in advancing the human rights agenda, especially for LGBTIQ people. ArtGlo facilitated a convening for Human Rights Activists from across the country, who gathered at Boadzulu Resort to discuss how best they could synergize their efforts in fostering human rights for all.

Umunthu Inclusive Justice Champions celebrate their strides and strategize for the future



ArtGlo held a two-day evaluation meeting, from 28th to 29th August 2024 in Mangochi, with Primary Justice Actors who have been championing inclusive justice for all across the country. During the engagement, the participants shared about their plight as champions, achievements and strides made in advancing inclusion. The discussions also provided a space to brainstorm and strategize on the way forward following the recent developments on human rights cases in the country.

On the last day of the meeting, we celebrated the significant strides, invaluable efforts, and notable achievements realized by Umunthu Inclusive Justice Champions in the districts of Chikwawa, Dedza, Mchinji, and Phalombe. Our role in the Umunthu Inclusive Society Project was to spearhead dialogues in the proper and legal application of the law and social advancement for minority groups including the LGBTI with support from the Southern Africa Litigation Africa (SALC).

Media reporting key in human rights activism



Media reporting was singled out as one of the pressing issues stifling human right activism for minority groups in Malawi during the changing hearts and minds symposium. In response to the concern, ArtGlo organized a two-day long Media workshop on Minority rights at Boadzulu in Mangochi.

“Media shapes and influences public opinion, and as such, journalists have a big role to play in helping people understand different social issues,” said Mr Kaufa, Executive Director of the Media Council of Malawi while addressing the participants on ethical reporting. He further added that presenting information wrongly can lead to stigma.

ArtGlo through its recent study highlighted the different kinds of discrimination and stigma that the LGBTQI community faces and the gaps that are there when it comes to reporting and use of terminologies by the local media.

The engagement brought together officials from the Media Council of Malawi, MISA Malawi, Bureau Chiefs, Editors, and Reporters from different media houses in the country.



Mulanje ADC meeting exposes gaps in the fight against GBV



Every successful community intervention must involve all the stakeholders and beneficiaries to foster ownership, collaboration and achieve meaningful impact. At ArtGlo, we use the Human-Centered design approach to ensure that all the interested groups are involved at every step. Our philosophy is simple: “Tell me, and I will know; teach me, and I will learn; involve me, and I will understand.” Through this philosophy, we collaboratively learn, translate, and understand contextual factors, while co-developing interventions that are jointly implemented, leading to co-management of achieved changes. Before commencing the third phase of the Tiyambe Project, we held separate Area Development Committee (ADC) meetings in three Traditional Authorities (TAs), namely, TA Nkanda, TA Njema and TA Mabuka in Mulanje district. These were eye opening engagements for both our team and members of these committees.

<https://artgloafrica.org/mulanje-adc-meetings-expose-gaps-in-the-fight-against-gbv/>

Community members encouraged to report child neglect and GBV cases



Child neglect happens when one or both parents abandon their responsibility in taking care of their children. According to the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010) parents or guardians have the duty and responsibility to exercise joint primary responsibility for raising their children. During the first Glenorchy Estate TfD performance in GVH Mandandanda, Mulanje district, community members had a chance to learn, discuss and put in place action plans to deal with the vice.

<https://artgloafrica.org/community-members-encouraged-to-report-child-neglect-and-gbv-cases/>

One health TfD training and performances



The ministry of Agriculture through the department of Animal Health in collaboration with a consortium of organizations against rabies are implementing One health project to combat rabies in Malawi. One of the major activities through which rabies is to be controlled is through dog vaccination. Research shows that 70% vaccination rate could highly contribute towards elimination of the disease. However, Malawi's vaccination rate has been very low and therefore still lagging behind the required target. To support the consortium with methods that would contribute to the increased vaccination rate, ArtGlo trained 3 drama groups in Theatre for Development (TfD) to sensitize and mobilize communities on dogs' vaccination against rabies in Balaka district. The 3 drama clubs were selected from Utale, Ulongwe-Kalembo and Bizale Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) based on their TFD knowledge.

<https://artgloafrica.org/one-health-tfd-training-and-performances-against-rabies/>

Dorica challenges socio-patriarchal norms and continues to excel.



Dorica Frank, an 18-year-old woman from TA Kapeni, Blantyre, has emerged as a role model for girls facing educational challenges. The Mtenjera CDSS alumna made history as the school's first female overall top scorer in the 2023 MSCE exams, securing admission to Domasi Institute of Education to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Education History and Theology. Dorica's success is credited to the support from Mzati Youth Organization's Bwalo la Atsikana project, funded by ArtGlo, which helped her defy the odds and achieve academic excellence.

<https://artgloafrica.org/dorica-challenges-socio-patriarchal-norms-and-continues-to-excel/>

Art for Nthaka Yathu ignites climate action among youth in Zomba, Jali



Art for Nthaka Yathu (ANY) is an intervention aimed at strengthening community resilience through building, nurturing and nourishing the capacities of youth champions for climate change and health. The youth champions developed and presented innovative prototypes that underwent scrutiny by a panel of judges from the community and ArtGlo during a community meeting. Three teams presented prototypes at the event to familiarize their designed intervention with community members. Considering that one team emerged as a winner, the remaining teams agreed to collaborate with the former to implement their project.

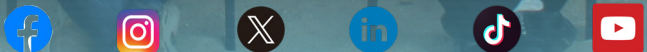


Through the ANY, ArtGlo is working with Youth from Zomba Jali area, who have demonstrated their passion in reducing the impact of climate change in their communities through a number of self-driven initiatives. These are young people who attended an Inclusive Climate Justice Champions Workshop in the first quarter of this year. Climate Resilience and adaptation workshops, project development, a community presentation and implementation of a winning prototype are the main activities that are in this project.






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