

Choices, Bonfires & Condoms

By Betty Muchiri
&
Lucky Namunyake



2021 International Women's Day
Drawing Dreams initiative



The Road Trip for a Cause

On the 6th of March, 2021, 52 youth from Pathways Policy Institute (PPI), Drawing dreams initiative (DDI) and REDP, gathered outside Cedar mall, Nanyuki, headed to Musul, Kimanjo in Laikipia county for a road trip dubbed **Road trip 4 A Cause** by Drawing dreams initiative for the 2021's International Women's Day commemoration.

Donning matching purple 'I CHOOSE TO CHALLENGE' T-shirts (which, just to note, is the color of royalty because *duh!! Aren't all women royalty?*) They let their T-shirts loudly proclaimed their intentions for the day.

On the other side of very rough semi-arid terrain, large clouds of dust, and very beautiful wildlife sightings we got to Kimanjo primary school to find the bright faces of teenagers waiting eagerly. Standing behind were their parents carefully eyeing us. We were quickly informed by the community leader that due to the high number of teenagers who got pregnant during the Covid-19 pandemic period, the parents in a genuine attempt to curb the cases had gotten very protective of their children and are quite skeptical of the information given to their children by 'outsiders'.

The mothers, however, after an introduction from the community chairperson and a brief breakdown of our objectives of the day from the Drawing Dreams Initiative founder **Ms. Grace Wanene**, were not shy to show their relief and enthusiasm through broad smiles.

*“♪ Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb ♪”
... well Mary (from nomadic Laikipia) needs
sanitary towels, menstrual health, and menstrual
hygiene education too.*



March 8 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

To kick start the International Women's Day commemoration, the girls were divided into four groups. Each group had both male and female instructors. Pathways policy institute and Drawing Dreams Initiative being institutions that strongly believe in the inclusion of both genders in the menstrual health and hygiene conversation ensured the event would be inclusive for all and what says inclusive better than merging menstrual health and menstrual hygiene class with a football match for the boys.

The Mosul football club boys were so excited to get into the field and challenge teen pregnancy and early marriages the best way they knew how, and challenge they did because they made sure to come out on top and were named the international women's day champions.

On the other Hand

The girls in the different groups were not scared to ask all manner of questions on menstrual health and hygiene, sexual and reproductive health, and what life is like after school, which the instructors were more than happy to answer.

Four hours later, lots of shy chuckles mixed with bold and explosive bouts of laughter from the students, the commemoration was climaxed with the distribution of two packs of sanitary towels for all girls who were in attendance. They proudly held up their sanitary kits and we all collectively affirmed that we chose to challenge period shame and period poverty.

The sky went grey as the exhausted and hungry team arrived at Twala Campsite, ready to discuss the day's activities around the big bonfire that was visible from the entrance. As darkness set in and supper was served under a sky full of stars it seemed the energy levels started to rise and before long the Twala campsite darkness was riddled with laughs and conversation that continued till the early hours of the morning. It was clear that the team did not come to sleep because before long we were all back on the road headed back to Nanyuki.



The Condom Moment

The trip however could not be considered complete without a condom blowing contest aimed at de-stigmatizing condom use that was organized by Peter Ngure 'Uncle P', Team lead at PPI, under the very hot Laikipia sun we blew our condoms so big they popped as a sign that it is time we had these conversations for the sake of all young people everywhere.

Watch it out!

<https://youtu.be/XW3srqB0MUA>





Reach to Us



Public Pathways



@publicpathways



admin@thepathways.org



PATHWAYS

MEANINGFULLY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

WWW.PATHWAYS.CO.KE