



8TH RHNK PAN-AFRICAN ADOLESCENT & YOUTH SRHR SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

2023

In partnership with



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CENTER for
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RIGHTS



YOUTH VOICES TOOK CENTRE STAGE AND PPI WAS PROUD TO WALK BESIDE THEM

THEME:

ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN A WORLD OF EMER-
GENCIES AND OPPORTUNITIES



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The rhythmic beginning of Chini ya Mnazi, a youth-led pre-conference session under the coastal palms of Mtwapa, signalled that the 8th RHNK Pan-African AYSRHR Scientific Conference would be more than just a gathering. It was a rallying call. A vibrant, intergenerational environment where young people from across the continent took initiative, shared stories, tackled obstacles, and developed solutions to the pressing challenges affecting their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Being a part of this historic occasion was both an honour and a responsibility for PPI. As one of the conference partners, alongside RHNK, Amplify Girls, Girl Effect, TICAH, Rutgers, NCPD, MSI Kenya, Zamara Foundation, and others, PPI supported the attendance of two staff members and four Jasiri Youth Champions who gave presentations and immersed themselves fully in the learning, camaraderie, and collective energy that defined each day.

PPI's presence in the Mombasa conference rooms was not about numbers but about voice, wisdom, and real-world experience.



At the Vikaos 4 AYSRHR session, PPI's Knowledge Management and Communications Associate, Betty Wangui, shared practical insights from Laikipia County, where community-led dialogue forums known as Vikaos are dismantling silence and stigma around contraception. Her presentation illustrated how these inclusive spaces are shifting mindsets by bringing together youth, elders, parents, and healthcare workers in honest and respectful conversations. She emphasized that the power of dialogue lies in its ability to change not only opinions but also social norms.

Christine Muthoni, a youth champion and volunteer with PPI, captivated audiences with her abstract on bodily autonomy and self-determination. She spoke about the everyday realities that prevent young people from exercising agency over their bodies, including structural inequalities, social stigma, and restrictive laws, and called for rights-based programming that places autonomy at the core of SRHR interventions.





In a technical and often under-discussed session, Peter Ngure, PPI's Team Lead, delivered an abstract on contraceptive-induced menstrual cycle disruption, a critical factor in early contraceptive discontinuation among young women. He introduced innovative tools such as digital platforms and decision-support apps that are helping to demystify these side effects and restore confidence among users. His presentation reminded the room that choice is not enough, and that young people need support to stay informed and empowered throughout their SRHR journey.



From Isiolo, Nasibo Wario, a PPI youth champion, brought the issue of climate justice into the spotlight of SRHR. Her abstract focused on how climate change disrupts adolescent access to health services, particularly through displacement, inadequate infrastructure, and recurring droughts. She also highlighted solutions, including mobile clinics, peer-led education, and community advocacy campaigns, that are helping youth in climate-affected areas find their voice and access the care they need



Youth are not asking for space —We are taking it, shaping it, and leading from it



On the final day, Dennis Kamau, a PPI Jasiri champion and youth volunteer, gave a forward-looking presentation titled "How Gen Z is Demanding People-Centred Budgets That Work for All." He demonstrated how young people are leveraging technology, such as chat-bots, digital platforms, and social media, to make public finance more accessible and to hold governments accountable. His message was both timely and bold: youth are not just asking for transparency, they are building it.

Two other Jasiri Champions, Rohi Koome and Joan Wambui, collaborated on a joint presentation titled "Redefining Change: Youth as Catalysts for Social Accountability and Community Empowerment." Their session showcased how youth-led initiatives are not only holding systems accountable but also transforming communities from within. Drawing from their personal advocacy experiences and community-based projects, they emphasized the importance of agency, collective action, and youth innovation in reshaping local governance and



RHNK 2025 reminded us that young people are not just beneficiaries of policy — they are the architects of bold, rights-based solutions. When trusted and resourced, they lead with brilliance, courage, and clarity."
— Pathways Policy Institute, RHNK 2025 Reflection

A significant moment that day was the dialogue on the East African Community (EAC) SRHR Bill, 2021. The session brought together Members of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), national parliamentarians, and key SRHR partners to build support for the bill and strengthen regional efforts to improve access to SRHR services. If passed, the bill will help eliminate legal and policy barriers, promote accountability, and improve health systems across the region. One of the panellists, Hon. Kim Gai Ruot, noted that culture and religion remain key challenges to the bill's progress. He encouraged stakeholders to increase advocacy at both national and community levels to overcome these obstacles. The session underscored the importance of legal and policy reform in advancing reproductive rights across East Africa.

Later in the day, the PPI team took part in introducing the FP2030 Motion Tracker Approach to attendees at the exhibition area. This initiative, developed and implemented in partnership with FP230 via The Health NGOs Network, and SAMASHA, aims to enhance real-time monitoring and accountability for Kenya's eight FP2030 commitments. HENNET's Senior Programmes Officer, Sharon Musakali, guided the session and encouraged organisations to promote the tracker using distributed leaflets containing a QR code linked to FP2030 data. The exercise reinforced the need for improved self-reporting and visibility in family planning progress.

While PPI did not host an exhibition booth of its own, our youth champions fully immersed themselves in the conference's interactive spaces. They took part in games and quizzes at various booths, networked with fellow advocates, and engaged with partners from across the continent. These lighter moments, filled with joy, laughter, and shared learning, were powerful reminders of the energy and creativity youth bring into advocacy spaces.



As the day ended, delegates gathered for the Ubuntu Gala, a joyful cultural celebration of resilience, community, and the spirit of solidarity that the conference embodied. The night was filled with music, dance, and storytelling, offering a warm and reflective close to a powerful week of learning and connection.

As the conference ended with reflection and celebration, the sense of collective responsibility was unmistakable. RHNK 2025 wasn't just about discussing SRHR. It was about advancing it. It was about affirming that Africa's youth are not waiting on the sidelines. They are leading the charge, raising the questions, presenting the data, and daring to reimagine what inclusive, rights-based health systems can look like.

At Pathways Policy Institute, we returned to our work more inspired, more connected, and more committed than ever. The young voices we supported didn't just represent our programs. They embodied our mission. And their brilliance affirmed what we've always known: that meaningful change begins when youth are trusted, resourced, and recognized as co-architects of their futures.

The work continues.
So does the movement.



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