

JASIRI 20

REUNION 25





Every August, the world turns its spotlight on young people during **International Youth Week**, praising their creativity, resilience, and potential to lead. Yet too often, these celebrations end with hashtags and photos, leaving **youth voices** trapped in tokenistic spaces with little follow-up. At PPI, we have chosen a different path: building sustained, **meaningful engagement** that allows youth not just to be heard, but to shape policy and community change long after the workshops are over.

This month in **Laikipia County**, two major events underscored this commitment: the **Dreams Youth Expo (8th–9th August)** and the **7th JASIRI Youth Champions Bootcamp Reunion (10th–13th August)**. Together, they painted a picture of what genuine **youth empowerment** looks like in practice.

The Expo: Advocacy Meets Services

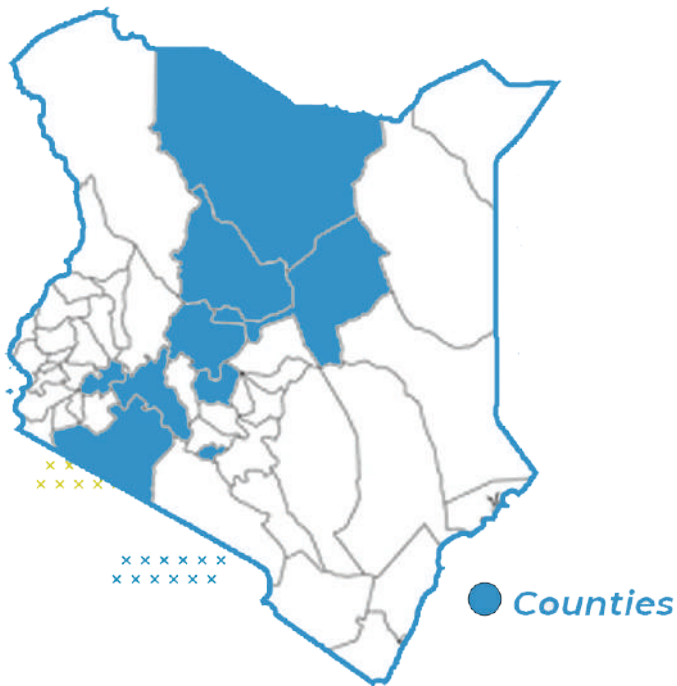
The bootcamp journey began at the **Dreams Youth Expo** itself. Hosted at Cedar Mall and bringing together over **1,200 young people, parents, county officials, and community organizations**, the Expo became a hub for information, dialogue, and service delivery. At the heart of it, **JASIRI champions** stepped into the public arena—engaging visitors in conversations around sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), drawing on PPI's research and data to power their advocacy. Far from being observers, they became **co-facilitators of change**, demonstrating how evidence can drive youth-friendly solutions.



The PPI booth stood out not just for its conversations but for its integrated service delivery model. Together with Mosaic Health, DKT International, and the Beyond Zero team from Laikipia Health Service, PPI co-hosted a shared SRHR booth that brought advocacy and services under one roof. The Beyond Zero mobile clinic truck ensured that, alongside learning, youth could access family planning, cancer screening, HIV testing, PrEP/PEP enrolment, HPV vaccination, and menstrual health education—all in real time.

The Mosaic team brought along their exciting Pamp'her packs, plus plenty of fun games and giveaways for the youth, while DKT kept the vibe going by making free condoms easily available to anyone who needed them. This innovative approach to creating a truly youth-friendly space set the booth apart as a model of partnership and impact. It was no surprise, then, that by the close of the expo, PPI was honoured with the award for Best Booth in Social Impact

The JASIRI Bootcamp Reunion: Sustained Mentorship in Action



From there, the champions carried the expo's momentum into the **JASIRI Reunion Bootcamp**, where **39 youth from 9 counties**, trained through six cohorts over several years, gathered to reflect, learn, and strategise . Unlike many programmes that train youth once and leave them to figure things out, PPI has walked with these champions over time, engaging them in **public participation processes, budget memo writing, RMNCAH advocacy, and even international conferences** where they have presented papers and proposals

Jasiri means





This continuity transformed the reunion into a grounded reflection space, not a classroom exercise. Champions shared authentic stories of policy wins and systemic barriers, mapped cross-county challenges, and debated strategies under themes like "When the System Fought Back" and "If I Was Governor for a Day." Met key decision makers and even conducted mock parliamentary proceedings in the Laikipia County Assembly, rehearsing the democratic roles they are preparing to take up in real life.

The bootcamp also doubled as a networking and skills-sharing platform.

Champions reflected on their county-level advocacy work, sharing both wins and challenges. From the conversations and panel discussions, it became clear that they shared many common experiences—and that many of the solutions they were seeking were already within their networks. Best practices from different counties offered inspiration and practical lessons they could borrow and adapt. These exchanges underscored a powerful truth: while contexts differ, youth face common systemic barriers—and collective learning strengthens their responses

Beyond Training: **Building a Movement**

The JASIRI model thrives on follow-through, an intentional design by PPI. Too often, organisations tick the "youth engagement" box without ever checking whether young people can apply what they learn. JASIRI proves that when young people are continuously mentored and given platforms, their meaningful engagement in advocacy stops being make-believe and becomes the engine of real, lasting change.

Already, JASIRI alumni are shaping county policy dialogues, leading youth involvement initiatives, contributing to national SRHR strategies, and speaking at international conferences. They are not "future leaders"; they are leaders now.

As we marked International Youth Week, the lesson was clear: youth engagement must move beyond rhetoric and into sustained practice. PPI's model shows that when youth are trusted with responsibility, resourced with evidence, and supported with continuity, they don't just talk about the future; they lead in the present.



The JASIRI reunion showed us that when young people come together, they don't just share stories; they share real solutions and strength. What started as a bootcamp has grown into a movement that is only getting stronger. The voices collected here will carry on in communities, in county halls, and in everyday actions. **Our hope is to make being a #JASIRI the norm in every community**, a spirit of courage, unity, and action that everyone can live by.



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