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End-of-Project Report: Consultancy with the ECPAT International She Leads Program

Project: Co-Creating Multimedia Campaign for Youth Participation in Political Decision-Making

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MARIAMA WURIE CONSULTING

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

She Leads is a consortium that **brings together child rights organisations, feminist/women's rights organisations, and girl- and young women- (GYW) led groups** in a joint effort to increase the sustained influence of GYW on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions. She Leads aims to support and equip girls and young women to drive change in their countries and works at the international level to drive policy change on girls' and young women's participation and to empower GYW to use international systems to advance their advocacy.

She Leads is a five-year joint programme of Plan International Netherlands, Defence for Children – ECPAT the Netherlands (DCI-ECPAT), African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), and Terre des Hommes (TdH) Netherlands, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

This programme has a specific geographic focus on **East Africa (Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya), and West Africa (Ghana, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Liberia).** The programme also aims at targeting regional institutions, international human rights mechanisms, and other stakeholders, as well as facilitating girls' and young women's access to regional and international platforms.

For ECPAT International the goal of the She Leads programme is to increase the sustained influence of girls and young women on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions— with a particular focus on (1) advocating for youth and young women's participation in decision making and (2) ending online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

To attain this goal, this consultancy project entitled — **Co-creating multi-media tools with children and young people to challenge decision makers in better listening to their views and acting upon them**— was initiated as a contract between, myself, the consultant, Mariama Wurie, and ECPAT International.

21
Digital Collaborative Workshop Meetings Held

3+3
Suverys+Videos Co-designed

52
Infographics Co-designed

CONSULTANCY PROGRAM REPORT

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The consultancy program included a diverse range of activities aimed at collaborating and co-creating with the She Leads Girls and Young Women (GYW) team or representatives to collectively strategize, co-design and co-create the multimedia tools. These included:

- planning meetings
- strategy workshops and games
- shared Google Doc building (working collaboratively during meetings and asynchronously across time zones and availabilities to build and edit key documents and multimedia tools)
- using Mentimeter to collectively strategic and design campaign strategy and tools
- using Mentimeter to design our final interactive surverys
- Online meetings to practice and refine roll-out and implementation

4

- WhatsApp group for fast and informal texts and calls to make decisions
- Design thinking workshops to strategize aims, target audiences and texts for infographics— including designnning colors and images
- Design iteration meetings
- Group script building exercises and tools using meeting games and Google Doc to build, edit and iterate video scripts
- Editing rounds to refine multimedia tools into democratic final products – including decision making on sound/audio/music, colors, text, images and more.
- Emails for iterative feedback to refine final products
- WhatsApp group voting for final/concluding products.
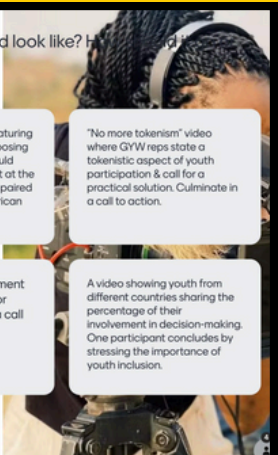

What should we call our campaign!

15 responses

girls rep beyond numbers
youth raise your voice
her tomorrow
am speaking hear me
i claim my righfulplace
women together campaign
raise voices-share power
africa's young voices
my voice matters
she shapes africa
lets rise and lead
i count on you
i claim my place
her rising
leadership two point zero

GIRLS RUN THE WORLD

Do you have some ideas on what our leading 60 second videos should look like? flow?

Each GYW rep says one line which states a statistic/data that bolsters why young girls should be involved in decision making - ending with an African leader sharing a strong finishing line& pledge

GYW reps share societal challenges they overcome to participate in decision-making. Includes animation of statistical highlights (e.g., population demographics and representation gaps)

Quick, engaging clips featuring GYW reps& influencers posing questions like, "What would YOU do if you had a seat at the decision-making table?" paired with calls to action to African leaders.

"No more tokenism" video where GYW reps state a tokenistic aspect of youth participation & call for a practical solution. Culminate in a call to action.

Small word or theme or phrases given to différents girls. We will have small introductions those shorts followed by a statement to close the video

We can start with statistics like "Did you know 60% of Africa's population is under 25, yet their voices are barely heard in leadership?" Pictures of a decision-making room with no youth.

We can make a statement about what we want or envision. W e can do a call to action.

A video showing youth from different countries sharing the percentage of their involvement in decision-making. One participant concludes by stressing the importance of youth inclusion.

Who are some dream social media influencers, f women's rights in Africa, that you would like to p

9 responses

DREAM BIG.

little witch   berla mundi - ghana
elizabeth wathuti
aya chebbi   khelanie
animatrice h
bogolo kenewendo
oumou sangaré
chimamanda

What are some slogans that come to mind?

Raise Your Voice - Share Your Power Listen, Co-Lead, Transform! Listen, Collaborate, Transform! Our Voice, Our Time, Our Future We Are Speaking, Are You Listening? Big Decisions Need Young Voices!

Empowering Youth, Empowering Africa For Africa's Youth, By Africa's Youth

We want today in hope of Tomorrow !

Our needs, our participation, our decisions !

Her, Heart, earth !

You're talking about my future, and I want to be involved. My future won't be decided without me. Don't decide for me; you won't be the one living it. My future, my choice, my Life

You're talking about my future, and I want to be involved. My future won't be decided without me. Don't decide for me; you won't be the one living it.

"You're talking about my future, and I want to be involved. My future won't be decided without me. Don't decide for me; you won't be the one living it."

METHODOLOGY & INSIGHTS

Throughout the She Leads Project consultancy, I utilized a methodology grounded in youth-led decision-making and evidence-based solutions, with a focus on **online community of inquiry principles.** I organized and facilitated multiple online meetings, including weekly planning sessions, and co-creation workshops, where I guided and scaffolded the She Leads young women and girls through brainstorming, research, content gathering, and multimedia ideation, iteration, and final design. Rooted in **intersectional feminism and global child protection,** this **approach** capitalized on the GYW representatives expertise in their lived experiences, their early-stage work in local activism and leadership, and their expert experiences as youth leaders for social change at national and international levels to drive the content creation process. From identifying campaign messages to selecting multimedia tools, the representatives led ideation whilst I played a technical role by leading multimedia production workshops, where I demonstrated how to design and develop videos, online quizzes, and other content. **Through iterative feedback sessions, we co-created high-quality multimedia products, including; (a) 3 surveys— two of which they presented and utilized at the** We Protect Summit in Abu Dhabi **in November 2024,**

(b) 52 infographics, and (c) 3 videos. One video was a lived filmed video through which I guided the team in recording their advocacy message, and the other two videos were animation videos, for which the team designed the scripts and image ideas, and I developed the videos. This collaborative approach fostered a **safe, open, and participatory environment,** allowing the GYW representatives to take ownership of their campaign's content and engage with decision-makers on the issues of youth participation and digital safety.

r stories are powerful, and our futures are brig

30%

avg. meeting attendance rate

11 /11

She Leads GYWs filmed lines for video one

11/11

She Leads GYWs provided feedback on surveys and infographics

Children and youth are the best experts of their digital world! They understand the dangers, gaps, and solutions!

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The She Leads Multimedia Campaign and Tools Production Consultancy achieved the following outcomes:

1. Challenging Global Leaders Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Youth and Young Women's Participation in Decision-Making: The campaign put this topic on the table for discussion, and centralized its importance at key global decision making spaces, particularly the We Protect Summit. in Abu Dhabi in 2024. Therein, the She Leads GYW implemented the survey co-designed via the campaign, which asked leaders to reflect on youth leadership. **Post-summit from the GYW team, as well as the survey responses showed that whilst most leaders believe youth voices should be included in decision making, this is not occurring in reality within their national nor local governments, and most leaders do not work directly with youth. This outcome highlights a key next step for the GYW reps which is to strategize mobilizing youth quotas, youth delegations and youth leaders within governments and international decision-making bodies.**

2. Raising Awareness of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA) & Private Sector Responsibilities: The GYW representatives were equipped with a survey at the 2024 Abu Dhabi We Protect Summit and an animated video on OCSEA at the ECPAT Regional Workshop held in Nairobi in April 2025 with to engage in policy conversations and advocate for meaningful participation in governance, leading to increased youth visibility in policy discussions. **Results from the survey implemented at the We Protect Summit showed the global leaders have a low awareness of the ways in which OCSEA operates and the key interventions needed to curb this issue. This survey aided to informing their gaps and placed the issue central to protecting children and youth at the Summit. The video on OCSEA which we co-created within the project equally provides the framework and tools for the She Leads GYW team to continue raise awareness on the issue and advocate for digital and private sector leaders to leverage their power and influence to ensure an end to OCSEA across Africa— an issue seldom advocated for across the continent.**

3. Engagement and Reach: The videos, infographics, and surveys are to be strategically distributed across various social media platforms, including Instagram, Instagram Story, Twitter, Facebook, Facebook Story, LinkedIn, YouTube and the websites and social media accounts of She Leads partners— maximizing visibility and engagement. **These multimedia tools can be shared not only with youth networks but also with political leaders, policy-makers, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and digital and tech companies.** This widespread sharing will facilitate direct conversations and raised awareness on critical issues such as youth participation in governance and online safety. **By reaching a diverse audience across the continent and beyond, the campaign fosters a broader understanding of the need for meaningful youth inclusion in decision-making processes and ending OCSEA. This wide-reaching engagement is crucial, as it helps amplify the voices of young people, positions them as key stakeholders in the political discourse, and brings global attention to the urgency of addressing youth rights and safety in Africa's digital spaces.**

LESSONS LEARNED
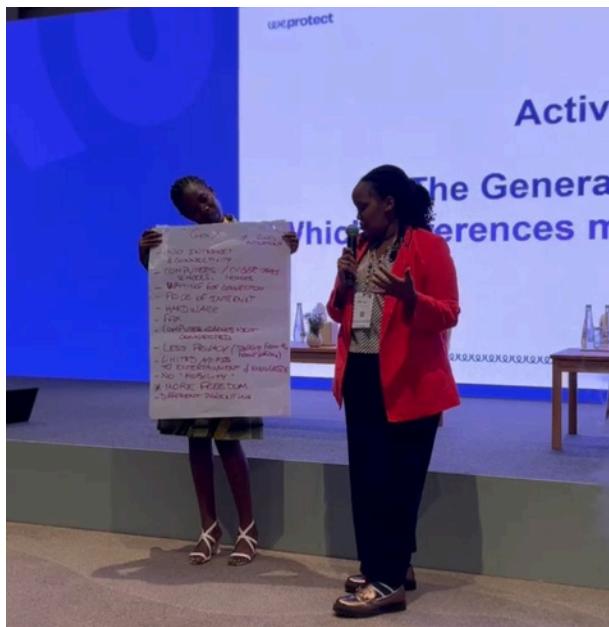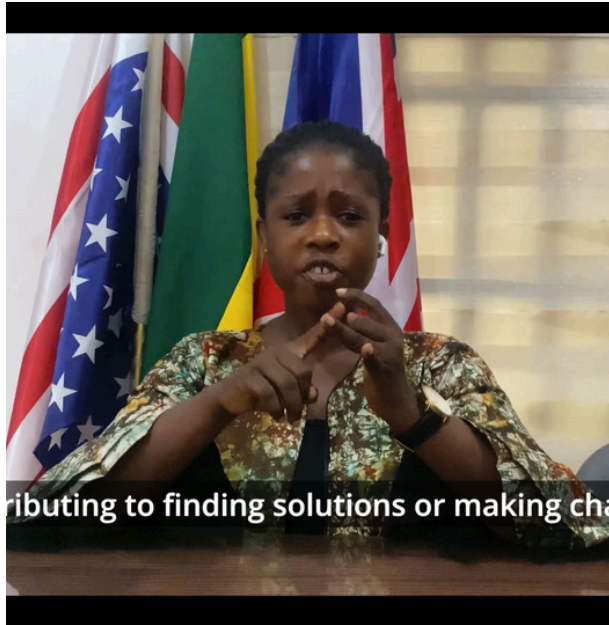
* **The Importance of Co-Creation:** GYW reps leading in content creation, ideation, and design ensured the campaign was both authentic and relevant to the target goals and audience. Their leadership grounded the messaging in real, lived experiences—building trust, ownership, and emotional resonance among peers. This participatory approach also shifted power dynamics, positioning girls and young women not as beneficiaries, but as co-authors of the solutions and narratives driving change.

* **Overcoming Tokenism:** While many initiatives claim to include youth, this campaign successfully ensured that the She Leads GYW reps led decision-making processes through design workshops, rather than one youth leader simply being a face of the project in a symbolic manner. This was key for developing tools that reflected their goals.

* **Cross-Sector Reach:** Early research and pre-program work equipped the team to prioritize a 3-sector approach. Targeting political leaders, CSOs and private/tech sector ensured strategy and messaging with directly geared towards the key sectors that the campaign aimed to reach.

* **Adapting to Local Contexts:** Tailoring the campaign's messages by and to organizations, governments and systems that impact African youth and African OCSEA, based on the researched carried out and published by the She Leads team— ensured that surveys and the inforgraphic and video texts and imagery related directly to the scope of work of target audiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

included but not in a meaningful way

BASED ON THE PROJECT'S FINDINGS, THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE:

1. Flexibility in working styles, digital tools, languages and scheduling: Projects that span the continent, across timezones, lanuages, and varying levels of access to internet connectivity must use a wide variety of digital platforms (video meetings, WhatsApp groups, text messages, Google Drive/Dropbox, etc.) that acommodate all team members' timezones, languages, travel/work/school schedules, and access to internet. It was essential early in the project to establish rules and guidelines for working flexibly. For example, in the first meeting which was also a workshop, we established that 3 meeting participants would suffice as quorum, **in order to advance the project and avoid time delays. To prioritize inclusivity, I also ensured to send emails and WhatsApp messages in both French and English— and to engage Francophone colleagues in all decision making to ensure they were not excluded.**

2. Prioritize Gender and Digital Safety: While advocating for youth, gender equality, and digital safety, it is critical to embody these principles throughout the project. Practically, this means creating safe, inclusive spaces for all participants and ensuring digital security during content creation. Gender dynamics should also be carefully considered in discussions and decision-making. It is essential to establish clear guidelines for protecting participants' identities and data. This ensures their personal safety both during and after the project. I took proactive steps by hosting a workshop on protecting digital identities before filming the videos, and encouraged participants to remain cautious about revealing sensitive personal information in the work. In cases where the GYW representatives expressed concerns about digital safety, I consistently referred to the ECPAT International Child Safeguarding Policy and PSEAH Code of Conduct to guide best practices. This not only safeguarded their well-being but also reinforced the importance of practical security measures in advocacy projects that deal with digital content creation.

3. Foster Continuous Feedback Loops: Establishing continuous feedback loops is crucial for ensuring a successful partnership consultancy project. This process helps ensure that the project remains responsive to the needs and input of all participants throughout its lifecycle. I made a point to regularly seek input from the She Leads GYW representatives at each stage of the project—from brainstorming and ideation to content production and post-launch reviews. This helped to ensure the content accurately reflected their needs and perspectives, while also allowing for real-time adjustments. Engaging both the She Leads reps and the ECPAT International team at every step of the process not only built trust and ownership but also resulted in a final product that was highly relevant and impactful. Regular feedback played a pivotal role in the project's success by fostering a collaborative environment, ensuring that the materials truly resonated with the target audience.

4. Leverage Collaborative Partnerships: Though the project had limitations in funding, scope, and partnerships, collaboration with local organizations, influencers, and community leaders is essential for replicating a project like this. These partnerships can help expand the project's reach, build trust within local communities, and ensure the campaign is culturally relevant and impactful. For example, launching the infographics on ECPAT International's social media channels in collaboration with a leading social media influencer—whose advocacy has already led to policy shifts—could significantly amplify the campaign's impact. By involving influential figures with wide-reaching platforms, the project would gain greater visibility and attract support from key stakeholders, such as the African Union. This could be pivotal in driving the adoption of policies like a Child Digital Safety Act across member countries, ensuring long-term sustainability and impact. Engaging with such collaborative partners from the outset would strengthen the campaign's foundation, increase its credibility, and ultimately amplify its advocacy for meaningful youth participation in policy development.

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