

ICW'S YOUNG ADVOCATES SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM 2021



Welcome ICW's Young Advocates Media Team
November 2021

Our newly selected Young Advocates Media Team is here and we would like to formally introduce you to the next team of fierce feminist voices that are changing the HIV narrative throughout the world with their advocacy.

These young women each have very powerful stories to share on living with HIV, SRHR, obstetric violence and they are developing a #KnowYourRightsCampaign campaign as part of the 8-week intensive social media and SRHR program.

Of the many incredible applications we could only select 12 applicants and we would like to introduce you to Joy Abahi Oboyi and Faith Onuh from Nigeria, Svetlana Bondarenko from Kyrgyzstan, Eva Dewa from Indonesia, Doreen Moraa Moracha and Elizabeth Atieno Onyango from Kenya, Kimberly from Trinidad and Tobago, Nontsikelelo Shabangu and Marcia Dlamini both from ESwatini, Barbara Kemigisa, from Uganda and our members from Ukraine and Nepal.

When asked about what women living with HIV need in their country. Eva from Indonesia shared, “Women with HIV don’t have the same rights in deciding their sexual and reproductive rights, and need to receive help and support from social systems such as family, environment and health workers”.

Barbara from Uganda said, “We need a conducive and friendly environment for women and girls that assures them of safety and good health during and after maternity. All women and girls matter regardless of whether they stay in rural or urban areas thus we demand for equitable services for all”.

On SRHR issues in her country, Doreen from Kenya said, “There needs to be commitment in advocating and implementing SRHR for women and girls. We have nice policies on paper but where is the implementation in the community? Women and girls go through obstetric violence and still don't know it's violence. More needs to be done in terms of education, advocacy, good-will & implementation.”

Sveta from Kyrgyzstan shared, “It’s very urgent to start sex education or nothing will change. Until women herself know her rights and trust herself nothing will change.”

“Better resourced health sectors in the region of Eswatini are needed where comprehensive education on SRHR issues is not provided nor conducted and they has not been enough said about GBV and we can eliminate obstetric violence and any form of abuse, abusive maternity care should be labelled as obstetric violence,” said Ntsiky from Eswatini. “There's a perpetuating cycle of unplanned pregnancy which leads to backside abortion in as much as abortion laws are restrictive, its still happening, sexual violence is common in young women's first sexual intercourse,” she added.

These are very powerful statements made by activists who fight for what is right in their countries especially for women living with HIV who are often marginalized and experience violence and oppression.

“The government of the world should ensure that the basic humanitarian needs and rights of affected populations, especially that of girls and women, are addressed. Empower a woman you empower a generation,” Faith from Nigeria powerfully concluded.

The Young Advocates Media Team is still ongoing and there is much more that our advocates will be participating in that we are excited for you to look out for. Follow them on social media [@InternationalCommunityofWomenLivingwithHIV](#) (Facebook) and [@ICW_Global](#) (Instagram and Twitter).