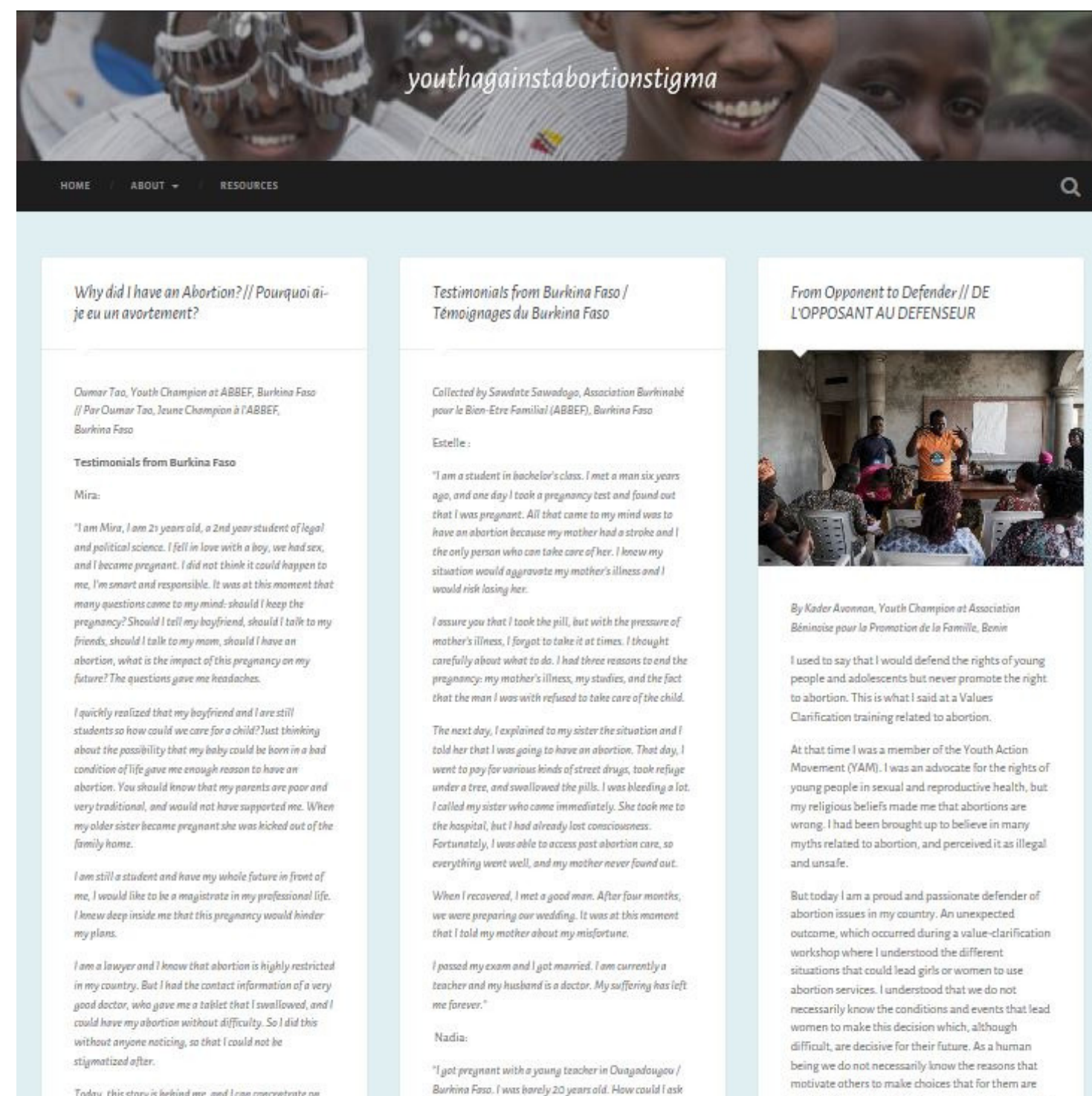


IPPF funds youth-led projects to tackle abortion stigma

In 2017, young people in IPPF Member Associations were asked to design projects which would tackle the issue of abortion stigma in their communities. Small grants were awarded to promising projects submitted by young people in [Guinea](#), [Kenya](#), [Nepal](#), [Puerto Rico](#), [Sierra Leone](#) and [Venezuela](#). Read on for more information about what these projects set out to do, their methods and the results.

IPPF gratefully acknowledges the support of the David and Lucille Packard Foundation in being able to provide small grants to our Member Associations for this work.



For more information about the work young people involved with IPPF are doing to address abortion stigma and promote reproductive rights around the world, check out our blogsite:

 <https://youthagainstabortionstigma.wordpress.com>

Choice, Not Crime

Voice and Action to Save



Young volunteers at AGBEF advocated for legal abortion in Guinea, where the restrictive law forces people to have unsafe abortions, which has detrimental consequences for their health and wellbeing and interferes with their right to reproductive liberty.



"The main goal of this workshop was to make the population aware of the various stigma-related issues, and the repercussions that this can have on young people, especially young girls. (...) The mentors who took part in the training are responsible for supporting the young leaders in this fight."

- Robert, youth volunteer at AGBEF

What they did

- Young people at AGBEF saw a need to educate politicians, community leaders and the community about the consequences of abortion stigma. They used storytelling, radio and TV programs, posters, home visits, social media and publications to raise awareness.
- They organized workshops for young leaders and mentors on abortion stigma and to share the importance of protecting a woman's right to reproductive liberty and making decisions over her own body.
- They organized educational talks (which over a thousand young people attended!) and awareness-raising sessions such as door-to-door activities that took place in different communities in the city of Conakry.
- Through training & petitions, community leaders learnt about the harms of abortion stigma and decided to make efforts to challenge abortion stigma and support people who decide not to continue a pregnancy.

Talk to your leaders

The young people at AGBEF got their community leaders involved to make sure they commit to advocating for legal abortion. Get in contact with your local community leaders and politicians! Send letters explaining why restrictive abortion laws are harmful and explain that providing safe and legal abortions saves lives. Remind them that family planning is a human right and is part of the sustainable development goals.



Connect with us!

Facebook: @agbefippfra @majguinee
Twitter: @agbef_pf @majguinee_ssr

The Silent Loud



KENYA

Family Health Options Kenya (FHOK)

Although the law on abortion in Kenya was liberalised in 2010, unsafe abortion remains a leading cause of maternal morbidity and mortality. This is why the young volunteers at FHOK created a project that would address the stigmatization of people who have had abortions in Eldoret, Kenya.



“That is exactly what abortion stigma is! Silent, hidden, yet so loud.” – Paula Rerimoi, youth volunteer at FHOK

What they did

- Young volunteers at FHOK disseminated accurate information and referred young people to safe and youth-friendly health services for their family planning needs.
- Young people were trained with value clarification exercises so that they would be prepared to raise awareness in their community.
- They used theatre and dance to share information with their community in an interactive way. They also organized dialogue sessions where young people can discuss the topic of abortion and stigma
- They hosted a live Twitter chat to answer questions about abortion and dispel myths that are prevalent in Kenya.

Go live on social media



The young people at FHOK used Twitter to raise awareness about abortion and encourage discussion. Social media is a great tool to share accurate information to people not just in your community, but also nationally and internationally. Choose a date, use a hashtag, and advertise it well beforehand!

Connect with us!

Facebook: Family Health Options Kenya

Twitter: @EldyYouthCentre

@FHOKenya

www.fhok.org

Reducing abortion stigma among youth in the community



Young volunteers at FPAN designed a project to empower people to take control of their reproductive health. Even though abortion has been legal in Nepal since 2002, there are still many barriers to accessing safe care, such as social stigma and lack of accurate information.



“Our great achievement was to start a change in people’s education and thinking. After the project they developed a bit of guts and a new way of thinking.” - Sunil, youth volunteer at FPAN

What they did

- Young people at FPAN developed a project to tackle myths and stereotypes in their community in the Palpa district of Nepal.
- They organised interactive workshops and activities for parents and young people to discuss abortion stigma, and created tools to share accurate and non-stigmatising information about abortion. Some activities included petitions, media training, creating music videos, and writing blog posts.
- The project focused on reaching the most marginalised groups in the community; such as people living with HIV or who have disabilities. FPAN created street dramas, scripted by young peer educators, which were performed in schools for children who are visually impaired.
- There was positive and wide-ranging media dissemination of the key messages of the project, with more than 20 radio shows, five television programs and five newspapers sharing information about the activities.

Get creative!

The young people at FPAN used theatre in order to captivate people’s attention and raise awareness about abortion stigma. Using engaging and interactive activities to raise awareness makes it easier and more fun to learn. How can you spread a message in a fun and interactive way?



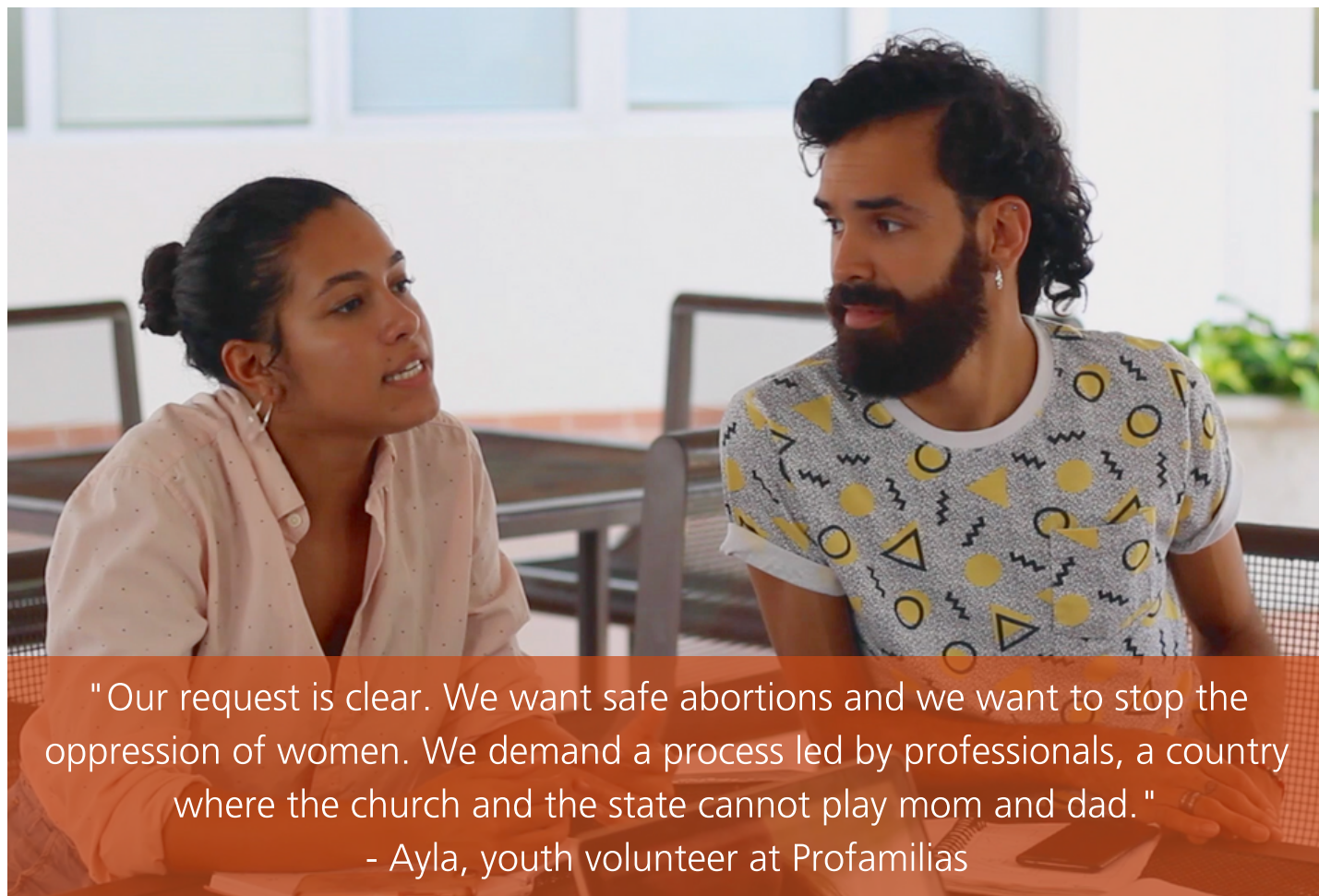
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www.fpan.org/

Let's Talk About Abortion

PUERTO RICO
Profamilias

Abortion has been legal in Puerto Rico since 1973, yet there are still a lot of barriers that prevent people from accessing abortion care when they need it. One of the barriers is lack of accurate information, as there are a lot of myths and misconceptions around abortion in Puerto Rican society.



What they did

- Youth volunteers at Profamilias produced five videos that challenge the myths around abortion that are most common in Puerto Rico. They wrote the scripts themselves, filmed and edited them, and uploaded them on YouTube in order to share them with a wide audience.
- Brochures were also created and disseminated at schools in order to provide accurate information about abortion.
- A press conference was organized on the 28th of September, International Safe Abortion Day. Local journalists and organizations working on human rights and women's health were invited to discuss abortion stigma in Puerto Rico.

Make your own video

The young people at Profamilias made several videos to raise awareness about abortion and share accurate information. They chose five of the most prevalent myths in Puerto Rico and explained why they are wrong. Videos are a great visual tool to captivate people and spread a message to a wide audience. Get together with your friends, decide on a topic, write a script and start filming! Remember to have a clear message and keep your video short and simple. Think about how you will share your video, maybe organize a movie screening!



Connect with us!

Facebook: @profamilias
Twitter: @ProfamiliasPR
Instagram: @profamiliaspr
www.profamiliaspr.org/

Together we can stop It!



SIERRA LEONE

Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL)

Young volunteers at PPASL created a project to raise awareness in Sierra Leone, where abortion is legally restricted and highly stigmatized, and where accurate information on family planning is not easily accessible.



"Despite these numerous challenges based on religious values and traditional beliefs that were deeply rooted in my community, the intervention of the project brought positive transformation." Alimatu, youth volunteer at PPASL

What they did

- The project aimed to provide factual information on abortion and empower communities and individuals to realize and exercise their human rights and control their reproductive health.
- Young people were trained to become peer-educators, and their role was to raise awareness around the stigma associated with those who seek abortion services. They spread information through panel discussions and songs that were aired on local radio programs.
- Meetings were organised for community stakeholders to discuss the harm caused by abortion stigma. Community leaders pledged strong commitment to support people who seek abortion services.

Get on the media

The young people at PPASL trained journalists and radio hosts on rights-based abortion messaging, and took advantage of social media to raise awareness and engage young people. They even wrote a song that was aired on the radio! What can you do that will get the media's attention? Get in contact with local journalists, TV programs, and radio shows and collaborate!



Connect with us!

Facebook: @PPASL Freetown
Twitter: @PPASLSRH @Yam_Sierra

Talk About It!



VENEZUELA

Asociación Civil de Planificación Familiar (PLAFAM)

Young volunteers at PLAFAM formed a campaign to bust abortion stigma in Venezuela, where abortion is highly stigmatised, and seldom talked about. Due to highly restrictive laws, people are forced to find other ways to terminate a pregnancy.



I was able to talk with the public and exchange views, many of them had never heard of the subject and they thought of abortion as something that did not happen here. It is very worrying that there is no information about abortion in one of the countries with the largest unwanted pregnancy rates in South America. - Vanessa, youth volunteer at PLAFAM

What they did

- Youth volunteers at PLAFAM broke the silence around abortion by talking at public gatherings and creating posters, infographics and videos that make visible the lives of women who have had abortions.
- The young volunteers held rallies for International Safe Abortion Day and The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, bringing the topic of abortion into public spaces such as shopping malls.
- The public were encouraged to participate in creative activities, artwork, discussions and games. Many wanted information about abortion and to share their experiences.
- Their social media campaign reached over 27,000 people!

Storytelling

The young people at PLAFAM created short videos which featured the stories of people who have had abortions. The stories highlighted the different ways people felt stigmatized by their families, friends, and health care providers in the process of having an abortion.

Storytelling is a very effective tool to bust stigma. Sharing experiences publicly can help those who have had or are considering abortion see that they are not alone, empower people to make decisions over their body, and highlight the fact that abortion is a common and real experience, not just an abstract political issue. How can you use storytelling to raise awareness in your community?



Connect with us!

Facebook: @PLAFAM Asociación Civil
Twitter: @PLAFAMong
www.PLAFAM.org.ve