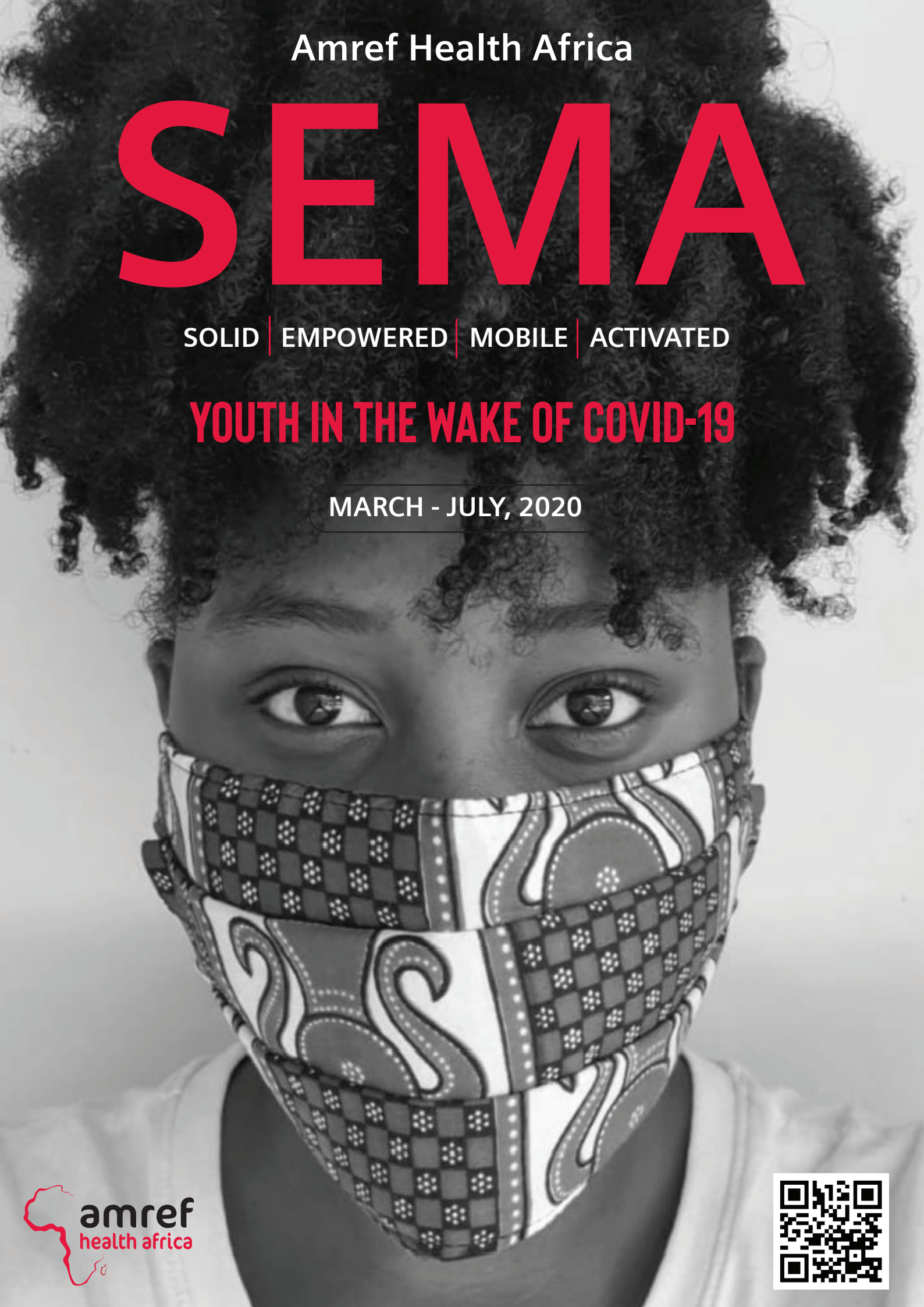
Amref Health Africa

SEMA

SOLID | EMPOWERED | MOBILE | ACTIVATED

YOUTH IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19

MARCH - JULY, 2020



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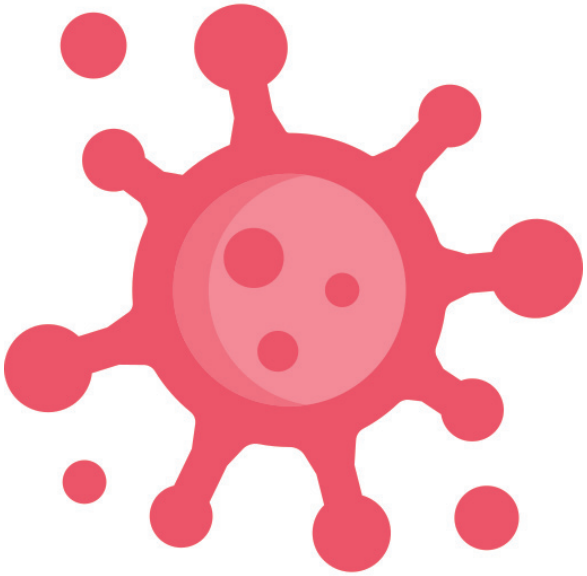

Time for a Rona Rhyme

Rona, Rona ... are you still here?
The unwelcomed guest who stays all year!
How long will you seriously be around?
We're all feeling a bit unwound.
It's now respectful to not shake a hand,
It's something that's just so hard to understand.
Hugs are no longer a way to show love,
This craziness is nothing I've ever dreamed of.
We show family our love by staying away,
That's difficult to grasp on any given day....

Source: A Letter to the Editor, Victoria Advocate Publishing

The youth have taken the front seat - they are involved and consulted about policies, services and systems that are developed for them.

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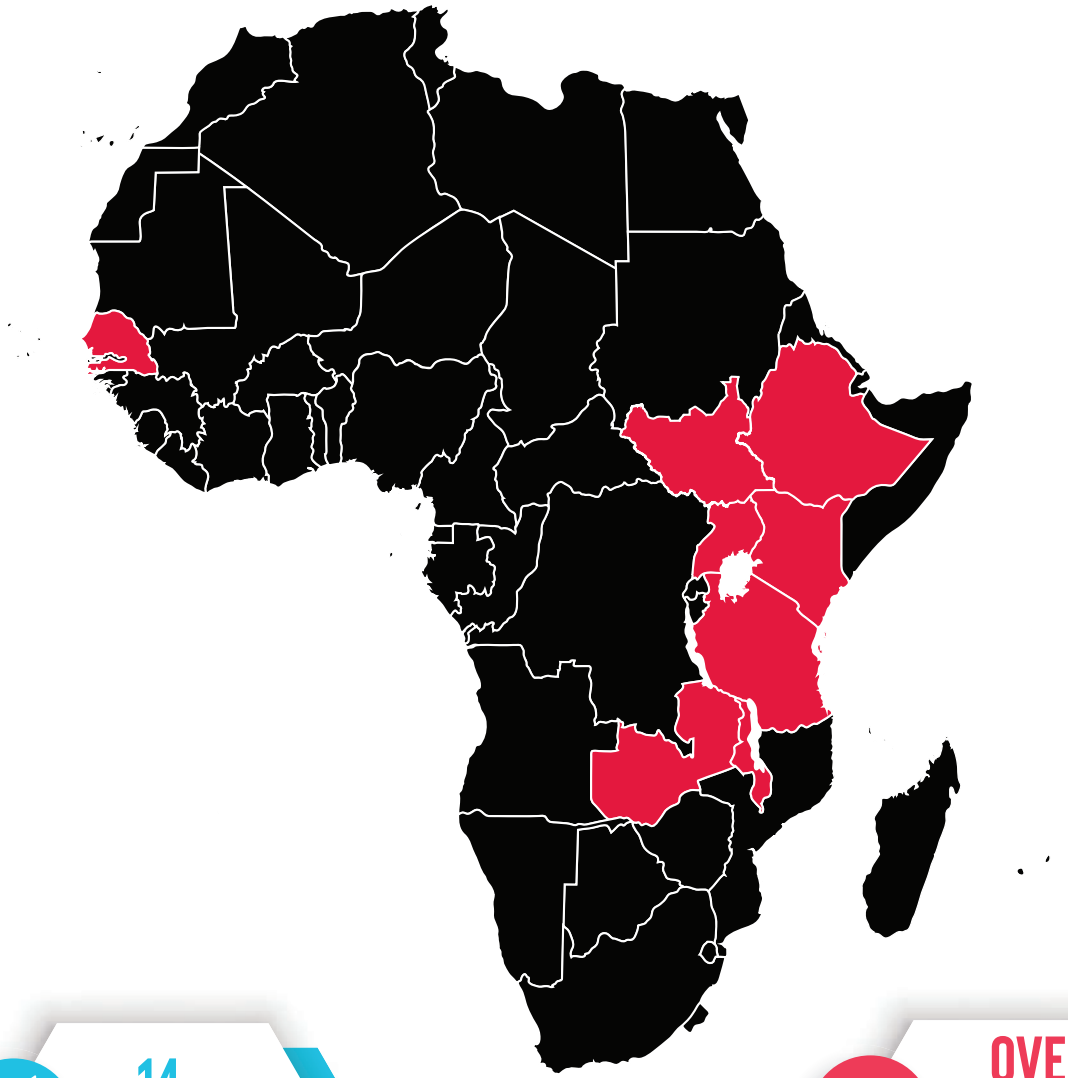
YOUTH IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19



14 MILLION

Over 14 million adolescents and youth reached through digital platforms and mass media.

...touching the lives of many households and communities in Africa.

OVER 150,000

Over 150,000 adolescents and youth reached through in-person interventions.

Africa Youth Rising

Since its genesis in the African continent in march 2020, the COVID-19 infections currently stand at over 1million, with a case fatality rate of 2% and recovery rate of about 70% of total cases, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control1.

For young people in particular, the pandemic continues to pose genuine health and socio-economic worries ranging from the ability of the already strained healthcare systems to handle increased demands, glaring income gaps and job losses due to movement restrictions, a spike in sexual and gender based violence among adolescents and youth, disruption of learning affecting millions of youth and increased stress and depression that have challenged the mental health and wellbeing of adolescents and youth.

In the midst of all this, youth are rising powerfully to respond to these changing times - identifying the challenges and needs in their communities, and rapidly addressing them. The pandemic is displaying the adaptability of youth and their ability to respond effectively to the emerging crisis situation in Africa.

Ubuntu: 'I Am Because We Are'

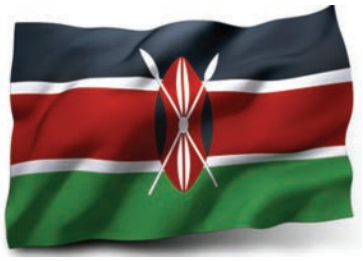
Amref health Africa has worked tirelessly to ensure our COVID-19 interventions embrace the ubuntu spirit that we truly believe in. We are embracing compassion based on our inherent shared humanity by ensuring that pandemic-focused interventions are not only attentive to community needs but are owned (holistically) by the communities themselves. From the coasts of Kenya to the ranges of Zambia, we realize that youth being the largest population in the continent require an equal amount of vigour and shared responsibility to meet their needs during this crisis.

This report is a reflection of our **'ubuntu'** interventions, working with the youth to respond to their needs in the countries where we operate. While this is just the tip of the iceberg, we believe that the fundamental steps taken within a course of four months are contributing to lasting change and opening doors to a longer run that still lies ahead.

1. https://africacdc.org/covid-19/

STAY SAFE
NOT FOR SALE
100ML

Amref Health Africa's Youth-Focused Interventions



KENYA

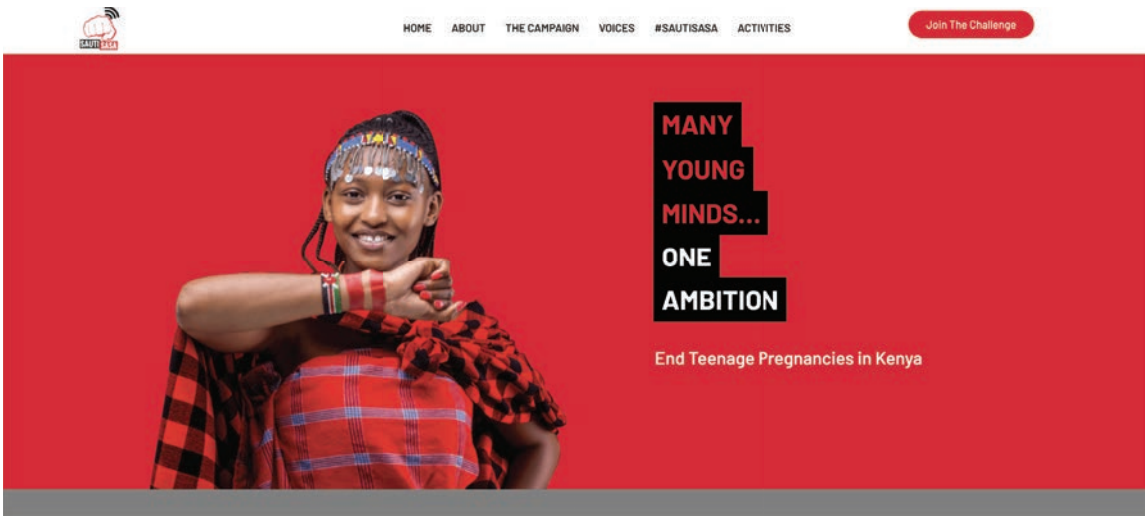
KENYA AND HEADQUARTERS

GOING SOCIAL

Y-ACT, Youth in Action and ***AfRika*** have reached over ***13 Million*** young people through digital platforms from March – August, 2020 through various social media campaigns. The digital content is both expert-generated and user-generated to ensure interactivity while fostering youth-ownership and relevance in the information that youth consume. The teams leveraged on Amref youth led digital platforms - AfRika (for youth Sexual and Reproductive Health), Y-ACT (youth-led advocacy), and in-country programmes including ***DESIP*** to launch over 5 digital campaigns with different hashtags: #ChampionsKwaGround, ***#EndPeriodPoverty, #ZuiaZogo, #LindaSiste, #SautiSasa.***

Youth COVID-19 info site: Y-ACT launched a youth-focused info site in May 2020 (www.yactmovement.org/covid) that provides accurate and up to date information and opportunities on webinars, employment, funding opportunities, campaigns and protection services specifically tailored for youth in Kenya during this time of the pandemic. The info site has an average of 20,000 visits to date.

Art and entertainment and coping with the pandemic: Amref Health Africa in Kenya through the DESIP Project in Homa Bay County worked with youth and used art and entertainment to hold online focus group discussions that highlighted the emerging challenges that youth are facing, particularly on reduced access to sexual and reproductive health services and recommendations for policy makers.



RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

Action Research on Youth and COVID-19: In partnership with Population Council, Y-ACT launched an action research to generate data on youth knowledge levels, attitudes, practices on COVID-19 and effects of the pandemic on the youth. The study revealed that about 30% of youth were experiencing mental health distress, while less than 10% had access challenges to sexual and reproductive health services. Close to 50% reported significant loss of income and jobs. The policy brief with recommendations is available online and was disseminated to policy makers in Kenya for development of youth-centric policies during this time. A pre-print of the manuscript is available on Research Gate

.... ON THE GROUND

Awareness creation...in the remotest areas and informal settlements:
The ***Ugunja Development Initiative***, in partnership with the Health Systems Advocacy Partnership hosted forums for adolescents and youth on mental health, sexual and reproductive health, menstrual hygiene management, psychosocial counselling support both at quarantine centres, homes and camps. ***Over 274*** youth champions were reached through these interventions. Further, the youth champions increased awareness in Siaya county through identified hot spots, contact tracing and distribution of face marks, hand washing facilities. Through the ***Ugunja Youth Parliament,*** the program engaged youth on social media platforms including Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and YouTube. These interventions have reached ***11,729 youth*** in Kenya.

Leveraging on technology, the Ugunja Development Initiative further developed a USSD platform to engage adolescents and youth on sexual and reproductive health (SRH), menstrual hygiene and life skills. ***Over 50 girls*** from Siaya County, have been enrolled in this platform.

Amref Health Africa in Kenya partnered with Juliani, a hip-hop artiste with great influence among the youth, to train ***20 Influencers*** in Nairobi's informal settlements of Dandora and Korogocho, on COVID-19 messaging and mobilization of youth to adhere to the government's COVID-19 prevention directives. Amref Health Africa in Kenya has also worked with community members to identify vulnerable families and provided them with food and basic products. Overall, the initiative has reached ***3000 people including adolescents and youth*** with personal protective equipment (PPEs) and food distribution.

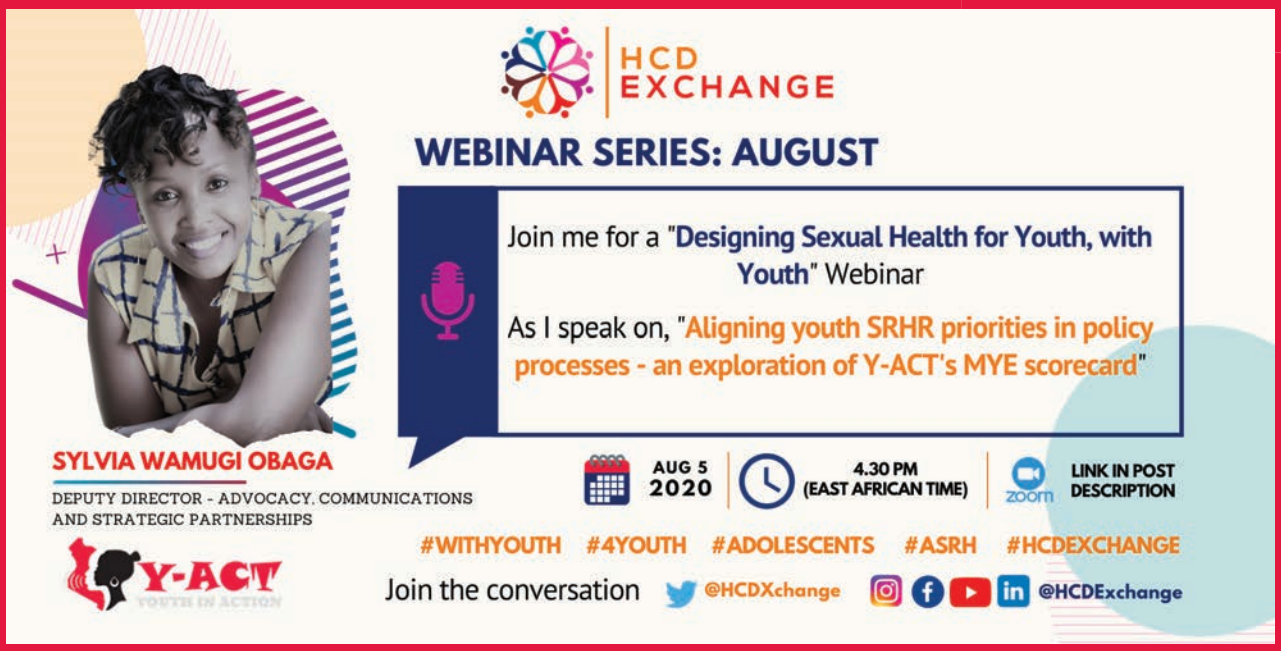
Strengthening the youth capital during COVID-19: In the wake of COVID-19, a number of youth have lost their sources of livelihood. Amref Health Africa in Kenya seized the opportunity to provide jobs and engage young people in its COVID-19 response interventions by employing ***41 young people*** to manufacture PPEs that were sold at subsidized rates to the community through the ***Amref Dagoretti Centre.***

Sanitary towel distribution to vulnerable girls in informal settlements: Y-ACT partnered with Procter and Gamble to distribute 16,000 sanitary towels to 5,000 girls in Nairobi, Kisumu, Kilifi and Samburu counties, through 39 youth-led partner organizations registered on the Y-ACT youth advocacy portal. The sanitary towels went a long way towards supporting the menstrual hygiene needs of vulnerable girls during the COVID-19 pandemic.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

2bonge Live: Y-ACT partnered with the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) to launch 2bonge Live - an innovative digital meaningful youth engagement (MYE) approach that enables youth to hold dialogues with policy makers at different levels of government, on key issues facing youth and development. Y-ACT has led 2bonge live sessions focusing on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and mental health. 2bonge Live sessions that take place on Facebook Live attract more than 200 participants per session with an option of cross posting to other pages and accounts. The sessions have informed concrete policy recommendations for parliamentarians to implement.

Webinar partnerships: During this period, the demand for us to share lessons learned with other youth advocates and decision makers working with the youth in Africa has increased dramatically. The youth teams at Amref Health Africa thus leveraged on thought leadership opportunities at national, regional and global level, to share insights and lessons learned in designing and implementing youth led programmes in the new normal. Several such opportunities are highlighted in the picture-speak below.



WEBSITE LINKS

1. https://yactmovement.org/

2. https://www.af-rika.com/

3. https://yactmovement.org/amref-policy-brief-youth-and-covid-19/

4. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342253206_Knowledge_attitudes_practices_and_the_effects_of_COVID-19_on_health_seeking_behaviors_among_young_people_in_Kenya

5. www.sautisasa.org/sauti-sasa-youth-voices-report

6. https://ecampus.amref.org/?redirect=0

7. https://yactmovement.org/establishing-and-safeguarding-meaningful-youth-engagement-in-kenyas-parliament-a-youth-and-parliamentarians-partnership/

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS DURING COVID-19

#ChampionsKwaGround – celebrating outstanding youth
Y-ACT launched the #ChampionsKwaGround campaign in April 2020 to celebrate outstanding and heroic youth who have devoted their time, effort and resources to combat COVID-19 in their communities. The campaign sought to ensure that the stories of these young hearts do not remain untold, by featuring them on our online platforms and social media channels. Y-ACT received 18 individual nominations during the campaign and continues to receive more.

#ZuiaZogo – advocacy on sexual and gender based violence
Y-ACT launched the Zuia Zogo campaign in June 2020 in partnership with Tunawiri, a local grassroots gender justice network, to address the rise in sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases in Kenya since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a petition seeking to compel swift government action, the campaign sought to advocate for a robust SGBV response and protection mechanism that is effective. So far, the online petition has gained over 819 signatories, with more diverse voices being plugged into the campaign, particularly those of youth-led and grassroots organizations.

#Sauti Sasa – advocacy on ending teenage pregnancies
Y-ACT launched the Sauti Sasa campaign report during the World Population Day in July, 2020. Sauti Sasa is a revolutionary youth-led multi-stakeholder campaign to end teenage pregnancies in Kenya. The report underscored 670 youth voices from across 47 counties, sharing solutions on ending teenage pregnancies. The youth voices report has been shared with the National Council for Population and Development for consideration by the national taskforce to end teenage pregnancies.

MASS MEDIA

Through mass media including radio, Amref Health Africa in Kenya has reached over 150,000 adolescents and youth in hard to reach counties including in Homabay, Garissa, Turkana and Samburu. We engaged local, knowledgeable and influential youth to discuss COVID-19 prevention, home-based care and emerging issues such as gender-based violence, mental health and sexual and reproductive health issues.

ONLINE RESOURCES AND TOOLS FOR YOUTH

Y-ACT launched the first digital advocacy curriculum for youth in Africa, hosted on Amref Health Africa's e-campus, to provide critical skills and tools for youth in advocacy and campaigns. The curriculum has been simplified to nine seamless modules that youth can take at their own pace. The curriculum has interactive animations and case-studies, providing insights on developing and implementing advocacy goals, communications and campaigning, planning for action, tracking progress, resource mobilization and budget advocacy. Y-ACT in partnership with the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) launched the first ever National Meaningful Youth Engagement Framework (MYE) for Parliament that seeks to provide an innovative platform through which youth and parliamentarians can engage unequivocally and navigate the bureaucracy and systems that have posed as barriers to MYE for decades.

One in every five girls between ages 15 and19 years, became pregnant or gave birth in Kenya in 2019, resulting in 380,000 teenage pregnancies. The reproductive health needs of adolescents in Kenya cannot be ignored, especially during the pandemic.

MALAWI

.... ON THE GROUND

Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) for Adolescents and Youth: Amref Health Africa in Malawi through the ***Yes I Do Project*** has intensified its efforts to work with young community-based distribution agents to ensure that youth have access to contraceptives while social distancing directives are still in effect.

Champions4Life, a 17- member team of peer educators, under the Stand Up for Adolescents project, were also oriented on COVID-19 and encouraged to reach out to their peers. The Champions meet and train about 20 school going adolescents regularly, and will collectively reach out to about 400 students in 11 primary schools on COVID-19 and SRHR once schools re-open, possibly in July. Through COVID-19 community sensitizations campaigns so far, Amref Health Africa in Malawi has reached out to ***13,365 adolescents (6257 males, 7108 females)***.

Malawi- Distribution of dignity kits by young community distribution agents

Young people are providing leadership through innovations and interventions around self-care on Sexual and Reproductive Health.

SOUTH SUDAN

.... ON THE GROUND

Training on COVID-19 Prevention: Amref Health Africa in South Sudan, is working closely with ***22 community-based organizations*** for and with youth on matters of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Gender Based Violence (GBV) and HIV prevention in two of its project sites, Maridi and Yambio in Western Equatoria State. Further, a component of COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) in the recent past has been incorporated into the project. ***Over 40 youth*** have been trained by Amref in collaboration with other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with the RCCE unit of the State Level Taskforces for COVID-19 prevention. As a result of the training, the youth networks, through local leadership and guidance from Amref project team leads, came up with action plants to implement interventions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Amref Health Africa in South Sudan is the co-lead for the State level youth partners' coordination forum in Maridi and Yambio Counties. Through this forum, Amref on behalf of the government of South Sudan strengthens coordination and galvanizes the efforts of various stakeholders working with and for youth at the state level.

ZAMBIA

.... ON THE GROUND

Reaching youth in all their diversity including the visually impaired: Amref Health Africa identified the hard to reach areas in Zambia and innovating ways of ensuring equitable access to health services. The team mapped out populations in informal settlements, nomadic communities and people with disabilities. Amref Health Africa in Zambia supported towards printing 3000 Information, Communication and Education (IEC) materials in braille for the visually impaired. The materials will be distributed to 71 focal reading points including 18 primary and secondary schools for adolescents and young people who are visually impaired. It is expected that up to 2,700 adolescents and young people living with visual impairments will access and benefit from these materials.

Awareness creation on COVID-19: Amref Health Africa in Zambia team is currently supporting the Government's efforts in responding to COVID-19. Our strategic interventions are at the community level with the aim of improving information dissemination and capacity building of Community Health Workers (CHWs) to take up their roles in community education, health promotion, case detection, contact tracing and referral among others. A number of young CHWs were trained on COVID-19 awareness, prevention and protection, through integrating COVID-19 prevention training in ongoing project activities. This will ensure that the young CHWs are able to effectively take up their responsibilities in supporting adolescents and young people in their communities.

COVID-19 materials developed in braille to reach visually impaired communities including adolescents and youth in school

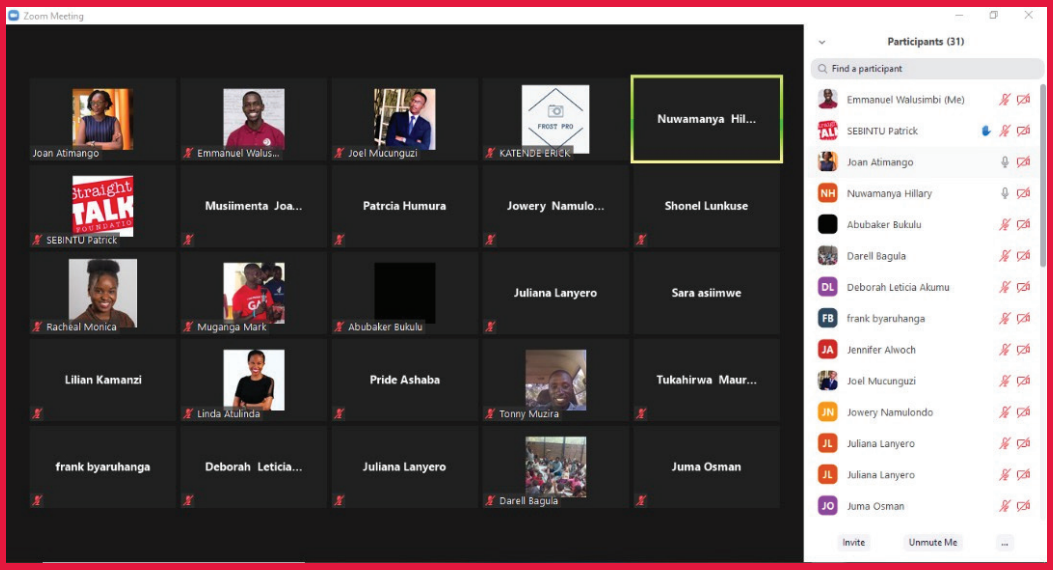
UGANDA

.... ON THE GROUND

Amref Health Africa in Uganda has provided thought leadership on matters adolescents and youth at country and regional level through digital campaigns and webinars. The team hosted a webinar and twitter chat in June, 2020 on addressing sexual and gender-based violence dubbed "No More Violence" campaign that reached ***35,992*** young people. Further an interactive inter-generational dialogue on digital platforms on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services during COVID-19 was held in July reaching hundreds of youth in Uganda with information on SRH and providing asks to policy makers related to SRH policies.

MASS MEDIA

COVID-19 Awareness: Through the Health System Advocacy Partnership, youth-led district organisations have been vibrant in engaging their peers to advocate for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. The two organizations, Kabale Women in Development in Kabale district and GLOFORD in Lira district have held interactive radio talk shows on SRH service provision for youth during the COVID 19 crisis.



Today's society needs to acknowledge both the innovative power and capabilities of collective youth movements and the untapped groundbreaking leverage by the youth.

SENEGAL

.... INTERVENTIONS AU SEIN DES COMMUNAUTÉS

Version française

Amref Health Africa en Afrique de l'Ouest depuis le début du COVID-19, a mis en place un certain nombre stratégie via à informer, former et à sensibiliser les adolescents et jeunes sur mesures de prévention et à faire face à la pandémie.Des VAD par binôme ont été organiser dans les communes et environnantes pour protéger les jeunes. L'équipe a également utilisé la communication visuelle avec des affiches dans les principaux quartiers des villes. Des émissions radios ont été tenues et avec la reprise des cours pour les examens, des relais communautaires et des agents et de la croix rouge ont été formés et envoyer au niveau des écoles pour sensibiliser les jeunes. Des jeunes ont été former et placer à l'entrée des villes pour sensibiliser les jeunes.
Nous avons aussi créé des plateformes d'échange pour les jeunes et nous avons mis à leur disposition des vidéos et des images de sensibilisation sur la COVID-19.
Ces stratégies nous permis d'atteindre :
Pour les post réseaux sociaux et les médias de masse

- 135002 moins de 18 ans (masculin)
- 67501 plus de 18ans (masculin)
- 140512 moins de 18 ans (filles) et 70256 pour les plus de 18 ans (filles)

Les visites au niveau des marchés ont permis d'atteindre 413272 jeunes et membres de la communauté
Et les visites par binôme au sein des ménages ont permis de sensibiliser 85711 Jeunes.

.... ON THE GROUND

English Version

From the onset of COVID-19, Amref Health Africa West Africa put in place a number of strategies to inform, train and sensitize adolescents and young people on prevention measures and coping with the effects of the pandemic. The sensitization was organized in the municipalities and surrounding areas to enable young people protect themselves. Further, the team used visual communication with posters in the main access areas of the cities.The team utilized various mass media platforms including radio broadcasts. Further, with the resumption of classes for exams, Amref worked with community intermediaries and agents of the Red Cross who were trained and sent to schools to sensitize their peers on COVID-19.

Young people were formerly trained and placed at the entrance of cities to raise awareness among their fellow youth. We also created exchange platforms for young people and provided them with videos and visual images to raise awareness about COVID-19. These strategies enabled us to achieve:

Through social and mass media networks

- 135,002 under 18 years (male)
- 67,501 over 18 years (male)
- 140,512 under 18 years (female)
- 70,256 for over 18 years (female)

Visits to market places reached more than 413,272 young people and community members

The paired visits to households made it possible to sensitize 85,711 young people.

TANZANIA

.... ON THE GROUND

Awareness on COVID-19: Amref Health Africa in Tanzania conducted youth mobilization activities on COVID-19 awareness, prevention and protection, with some of the project interventions integrating COVID-19 response with ongoing youth activities. A total of ***372 community health providers*** were trained and managed to reach ***8,792 Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW)*** who benefited through the provision of re-usable sanitary pads and education on menstrual health management coupled with creation of awareness on COVID-19 prevention as directed by the Ministry of Health. The awareness creation messaging included highlighting the key symptoms of COVID-19 and measures to prevent infection. This was achieved in collaboration with Amref Health Africa's Global Fund Sub–Recipient on AGYW interventions, TAYOA.
Amref Health Africa in Tanzania through the ***Uzazi Uzima project,*** used information, education and communication (IEC) materials to sensitize the community including youth on COVID-19 prevention measures such as social distancing, hand washing and proper use of masks, as well as the importance of seeking medical attention in the event that they contract COVID-19. ***75 young people*** were reached and 150 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials with COVID-19 awareness messages distributed
.
From June 2020-May 2021, Amref Health Africa in Tanzania plans to conduct community sensitization with secondary school students (form 5&6) and 500,000 youth in WASH and on COVID-19 related messages, all of which will be documented by use of short videos and student and youth stories.

Sanitary towels distribution: Amref Health Africa in Tanzania, through the support of Procter & Gamble distributed a total of 69,000 sanitary towels to 21,350 vulnerable in-school adolescent girls and young women in Dodoma, Morogoro, Singida and Iramba Regions of Tanzania. The girls have also been taking part in numerous health-related activities by the Global Fund Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) program prior to and during COVID-19.

amref
health africa
OPEN HERE
DISPOSABLE
FACE MASK
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health africa
3-PLY
50
PCS
Made by Amref Dagoretti Youth
DISPOSABLE
FACE MASK
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health africa
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PCS
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ETHIOPIA

.... ON THE GROUND

Amref Health Africa in Ethiopia's Youth Advisory Parliament (AYAP) launched its COVID-19 response through community outreach initiatives to sensitize communities from the 9 sub-cities in Addis Ababa. AYAP's COVID-19 response has countered the negative impacts of the pandemic with the community outreach, and has expanded digital awareness creation through a virtual learning platform for rural and semi-urban youth across different regions in Ethiopia. The community outreach and digital awareness creation focuses on COVID-19 prevention, and ways to cope with the socio-economic effects of the pandemic. As part of the community outreach, free toll numbers have been issued for people with COVID-19 symptoms to ensure that youth, among other citizens are at the fore of protecting themselves as well as others from the virus.

Further, Amref Health Africa in Ethiopia has mobilized more than 237 young volunteers in Ethiopia to disseminate key messages on COVID 19 to young people and the community that they live in. Prior to their mobilisation, Amref provided orientation on COVID prevention, and community surveillance. The trained young people have then reached out more than 2,155 households, nearly 9,700 communities house to house over the past few months

CONCLUSION

It goes without saying that a multi-sectoral approach is the way to go if we are to flatten the curve in Africa. Partnerships with youth-led and youth-serving organizations, state and non-state actors and the private sector will be profoundly instrumental in reaching as many young people as possible. We are truly privileged to have such a young and vibrant population who must not be left behind in the fight against COVID-19. Young people must be empowered and engaged enough to take up full ownership of interventions geared towards fighting this global health crisis.

Youth are a powerhouse in their unique way. Engage youth meaningfully to flatten the curve and improve health in our communities.

OUR NEW NORMAL: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

1 - 6 months (March - August, 2020)

Thought Leadership

Evidence Generation and Policy Influence:

-Youth knowledge levels, attitudes, practice related to COVID-19

-Qualitative Inquiry on lived experiences of youth in the wake of COVID-19 and effects on policy and programming Innovations

-Speaker sessions in webinars and policy dialogues

Power of digital engagement

Digital Advocacy Campaigns

-Showcasing youth at the frontline of reducing the spread of the pandemic

-Country and Regional Campaigns related to youth sexual and reproductive health and sexual and gender based violence

Strategic Partnerships – Amplify Youth Work and Grassroots Reach

Engagement of Private Sector, Governments, Young Parliamentarians

-Meaningful Youth Engagement in developing plans and policies on COVID-19

-Health and economic empowerment of youth through distribution of dignity packs and sanitary towels

6 months - 1 year (September, 2020 - February, 2021)

Thought Leadership

Overarching Youth and Adolescents Strategy for Amref (2021-2022)
-Embed lessons from programme learnings, research – future proof strategy

Virtual Think-tank:
-Evidence generation to inform youth policies and programming

Power of digital engagement

Regional Digital Engagement Platform:
-Educate youth on the SDG last decade of action
-Youth engagement in targeted policy advocacy
-Collective mobilization of youth in social accountability for the SDGs

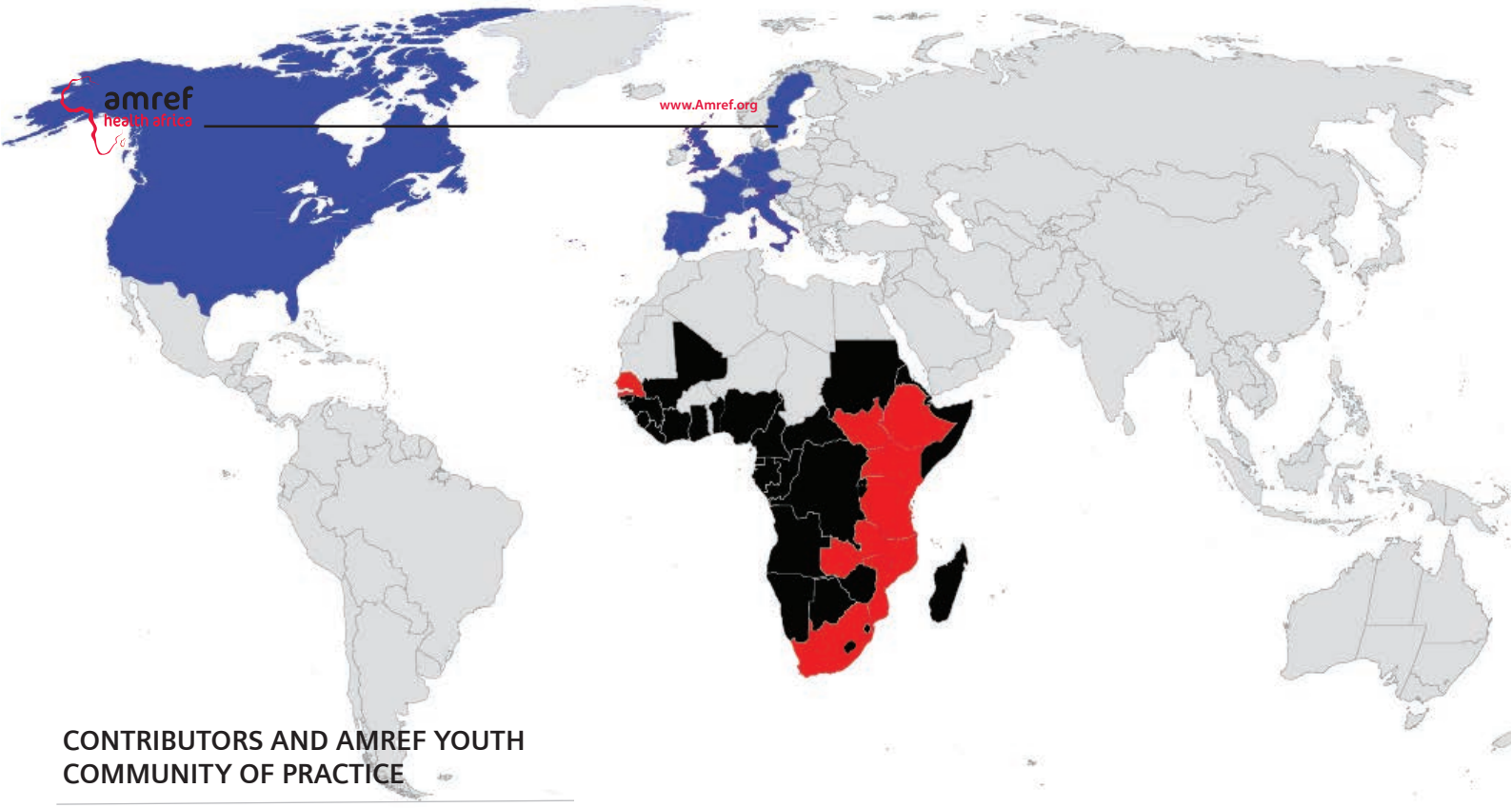
Digital-based resources and tools for youth-led advocacy

Strategic Partnerships – Amplify Youth Work and Grassroots Reach

Engagement of Private Sector, Governments, Young Parliamentarians

Design Thinking Innovation Labs
-Youth co-create solutions to cope with the effects of the pandemic and to contribute to the broader Universal Health Coverage agenda

Leveraging on Regional and Country Level Youth Movements hosted by Amref Health Africa
Y-ACT, Youth in Action I Youth4UHC Movement I AfRika



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Y-ACT YOUTH IN ACTION

YOUTH Join the movement 4 UHC

RiKA

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