



COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PEACE
AMBASSADORS NETWORK

PROGRESS REPORT
AUGUST 2021

The month of August has had quite a lukewarm feel. While major strides have been chalked with some amazing webinars like the Networks' Social Media Advocacy Training and Botswana's Youth Living with Disabilities and Leadership Engagements, we have had to deal with some disappointments like the cancellation of Nigeria's book project. Quite unfortunate also in Uganda, some citizens lost their lives in cold blooded murders in the districts of Masaka and Karamoja and the race to the major elections in The Gambia has enabled and empowered politicians to employ any means possible to secure victory resulting in serious cases of cyber bullying.

COVID 19 AND NATURAL DISASTERS

Pakistan is still battling with COVID 19 and the 4th wave is wrecking more havoc on the health and livelihood of the citizens.

Botswana and Uganda seem to be making massive recovery strides as the rate of infection and death is on the low. Also, the citizens are more open and accepting to take vaccines, hopefully the situation keeps getting better.

SOCIAL MEDIA, STAKEHOLDER AND VISIBILITY ENGAGEMENT

The CYPAN Coordinator Miss Christine Odera on the 31st of August joined the International Peace Institute to discuss the role of Youth in addressing Countering Violent Extremism in Middle East and North Africa. In efforts to share best practices from the Commonwealth nations, in her address, she emphasized on the need to work holistically as ideologies have no borders. She also emphasized on the impact Youth Networks like CYPAN continue to have across the board internationally, regionally, nationally and in the grassroots in addressing and identifying extremist and implementing policies.



CYPAN Botswana has successfully partnered with Aspiring Youth Organization. It was founded in November 2017 by Mr. Goabaone Sematho, the membership manager for CYPAN Botswana. The organization’s mission is to provide training, awareness and interventions for youth with regards to their personal, social and economic status.

CYPAN- Cameroon West region from July to August witnessed a fresh momentum as Partnership of voluntary organization for the promotion of leadership and innovative quality education (ALASCAM) organized, a 6weeks life-changing Summer Holiday Workshop training for the ambassadors holding in the halls of St Damien Catholic Primary School Premises – Lafe II –Baleng on the theme “Gathering Relevant Tools for a Purpose-Driven Life”

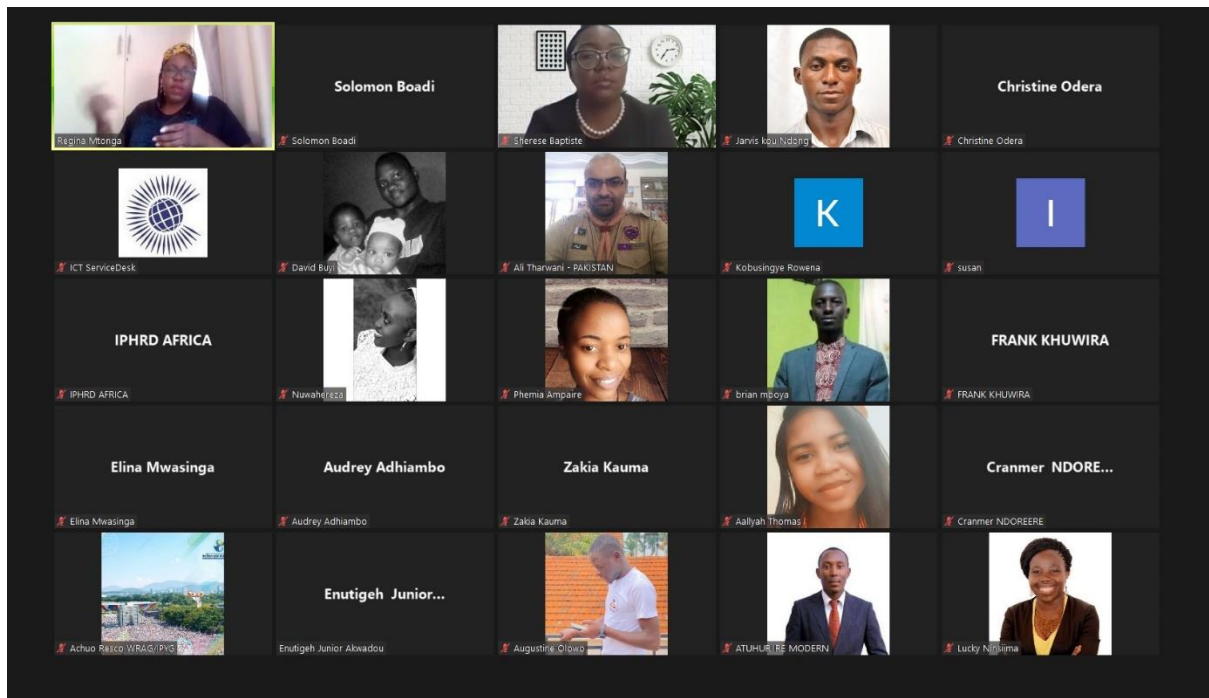


DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

Pakistan is Afghanistan's oasis in their current crisis. Coupled with the almost shattered economy due to covid, Pakistan has to become home to 3000 NATO soldiers and refugees from Afghanistan.

OUTREACHES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS AND PROJECTS

The CYPAN Secretariat organized a social media advocacy training that was held on 30th August via zoom. The event was facilitated by Regina Mtonga, the co-founder and director of Asinaka Network, Zambia. The training enlightened participants on the need to identify a niche media to embark advocacy campaigns on and to have control on access to the page, content posted and also the need to establish safe VPNs to ensure continued existence in event of government shutdown of social media.



Botswana in partnership with Aspiring Youth Organisation hosted a Zoom webinar on the theme, Leadership Engagement of Youth Living with Disabilities- A key to Sustainable Development. This took place on the 26th of August and streamed live on Aspiring Youth’s Facebook page. From the webinar, it was evident that Botswana has a long way to go in terms of ensuring that youth living with disabilities are empowered to take on leadership roles.

CYPAN Gambia was invited to participate in capacity building training for women’s political participation and strategic advocacy messaging during elections facilitated by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and conducted by the Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). Key issues discussed were the role of young people in politics, the influence of African parents on the civic decisions of young people, and an all-inclusive approach to exercising civic duties.

CYPAN Nigeria in conjunction with Centre for Peace Advocacy and Sustainable Development (CEPASD) hosted a global virtual event to commemorate this year’s International Youth Day. The theme was Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health. It was realised that there will be no success in transforming the food system without meaningful participation of young people and it has been acknowledged that there is a need for inclusive support mechanisms that ensure youth continue to amplify efforts collectively and individually to restore the planet and protect life, while integrating biodiversity in the transformation of food systems. The event brought together youth from 35 countries to debate and proffer solutions to transforming food systems as well as meaningful youth engagement.

CYPAN Pakistan’s country coordinator participated as a speaker in a webinar on Afghan crisis organised by CYPAN.

Moses Abolade, the Executive Director of Peace Education and Practice Network (PEPNET) and a member of CYPAN Nigeria held an online training on The Youth and Business Digital Management PEPNET issued certificates to participants and is monitoring their progress to ensure the initiative achieves its goal.

CYPAN St. Vincent and The Grenadines were invited by the CARICOM Youth Ambassadors Network to a “YES I Earn” session which focused on employment and entrepreneurship. This session took place online.

Victoria Unachukwu, the Assistant Country Coordinator for Nigeria represented CYPAN at the YALI Summit at Abuja. This is an annual event aimed at bringing young Nigerian leaders and partners in to an open dialogue on issues facing the country and developing strategies to solve them. Victoria was on the security panel session which was centred on the theme The Road Map of National Security for Nigeria. This session built the capacity of youth by equipping them with knowledge on realising social change and national development through peace building.



Trinidad and Tobago held a series of training sessions for its members to equip and enhance their skills to better deliver desired results and achieve set goals effectively. The trainings focused on the following areas; Administrative, Social Media Advocacy, Event Coordinating and Peace Building Approaches. The training was enabled by external facilitators from the Volunteer Centre of Trinidad and Tobago. The training identified the gaps in the knowledge, skills or abilities of each member and was tailored to fill those gaps to sustain changes in functionality.

CYPAN Uganda held a webinar on Conflict Resolution on 20th August, 2021. The keynote speaker was Dr. Charles Davidson, the president of Innovations in Peace Building International and a lecturer at George Mason University. The webinar was very informative, engaging and absolutely motivating. CYPAN was invited to participate in other relevant sessions of Innovations in Peace Building International.

Uganda also participated massively in the Social Media Advocacy Training held. Members across the country also decided to make identifying items such as t-shirts, jumpers and caps.



They youths in Cameroon were also lucky of having yet another mind blowing exchange with personalities like, Mme Amy Banda, (crtv journalist/ceo Target Peace) Mr. Mbameg Godwin, (Waste Management expert/ politician) Mme Sikimoki Winifred (trauma healing expert) Mr. Ngolefac Emmanuel (Open Dreams Coordinator for the West). The youths were educated on

sex education by madam Sikimoki Winifred where she defined it and she thought on how sex can be managed and the difference between men and women. Mr. Godwin took the rostrum to share his thoughts and experience on leadership outside the school setting. Some stunning words he made were “life is becoming and not having”, “we ought to have a charter of duties and not a charter of rights like udhr”. Mr. Ngolefac’s round gave him the floor to talk about the organization OPEN DREAMS with aims at recognizing and rewarding the performance of academically as well as community engaged outstanding youths. He said “services to humanity is the greatest job description and meeting someone’s needs is achieving peace.” “in life, if you do the simple things life will be difficult but if you do the difficult things life will become very easy for you.” And he

concluded by saying this; “volunteerism is the ticket to any door in life start doing the right thing now.” Mme AMY spiced and capped the day with her discourse on the need for a mentor. She gave an exercise which demanded participants to write down their mentors and what inspired them about the lives of the chosen mentor. Short videos were recorded on the poems composed by the participants mainly on the need to save our planet earth. She also presented magazines to all and some pairs of shoes to some outstanding youths.



With the assistance of the assistant country coordinator CYPAN Cameroon was able to get certificates of participation for the participants for the 6 weeks intensive training. The certificates carried three signatories; the asst.CC –Mr Njume A, the Pdt;ALASCAM-Mr. Edwin N. Eboa and the regional coordinator- Ajuadem Nixon. This award was capped in a small ceremony with the attendance of participants, their parents, the dd of social affairs, lawyers without borders representative and a host of other invitees.

The sentiments of the program were echoed in the speech presented by the participant delegate who called for continuous programs as such, praising the skills they have now acquired ready

to combat violence and be authentic and fearless ambassadors of peace. The feelings of the parents were similar. To crown it all, the DD for social affairs called CYPAN to come for partnership with the delegation of social affairs to upscale CYPAN's works of peace.

CHALLENGES

- Pakistan is dealing with covid and its restrictions on social engagements, the Afghan crisis and the NATO invasion and now frequent rape and harassment of females including children. Also due to the fact that almost every household has covid infected inhabitants, it is almost impossible to embark on membership drive activities.
- Botswana is experiencing low levels of participation, enthusiasm and zeal from its members.
- Gambia is still under stringent covid regulations hindering social activities.
- Nigeria's books distribution project had to be discontinued due to loss of funding. Other projects also had to be cancelled due to lack of finances. The Plateau State fire incidence is also impeding meetings and participation of members from that region.
- The advocacy training session did not draw the anticipated number of participants. The training team also had some difficulties in coordination and planning of the event.
- Some countries have been silent with no communications from the Country Coordinators.
- CYPAN Cameroon as of now has no roll-up or sticker to mount during events, Inadequate badges for participants, they lacked projector to facilitate their discussion session, Facilitators weren't supported commensurately due to lack of sponsorship,
- We lack facilities for proper documentation e.g computer.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

- The country coordinator for Pakistan has plans to engage more people to join CYPAN.
- The in- house meeting for Botswana which was anticipated to happen in August has been rescheduled to September. A webinar is also in the works to be held in the coming month.
- The Gambia plans to hold a webinar on peace in the context of elections and the role of different relevant stakeholders. CYPAN Gambia to commemorate the International Day of Peace will collate inspirational peace quotes and share on social media.

- The general secretariat has scheduled a training on Networking on 27th September, 2021 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (GMT).
- CYPAN St. Vincent and The Grenadines plans to hold a sustainable development session in collaboration with one of its members and a dispute resolution session with the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Trinidad and Tobago is anticipating an event dubbed, 12 Day of Peace- Using the power of culture and arts to bring people together, A road to Recovery to an equitable and sustainable world. This is proposed to take place from 9th September to 21st September 2021.

Recommendation

- It was suggested that CYPAN-Cameroon/ALASCAM to join the social affairs so that more youths can be brought to this network, so that together we build a better world.
- CYPAN clubs will be created in some secondary schools around the west region of Cameroon
- CYPAN has to extend to all other divisions beginning with Menou and the setting of respective divisional bureau in Cameroon.