Illuminating Impact:
Insights and outcomes from grantee partners

AMPLIFYCHANGE

Introduction

> *AmplifyChange has a bold ambition - to be a global leader in building stronger and more inclusive movements for SRHR, by effectively supporting those who are best placed to lead change and amplifying their voices.*
>
> AmplifyChange Strategy (2021-2025)

Building upon nearly a decade of experience and roughly £100 million of grantmaking in support of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocacy, AmplifyChange recently entered a new phase. Guided by a new Strategy through 2025, AmplifyChange now defines itself an independent, not-for-profit, Global South-focused platform supporting SRHR advocacy, with the following mission: "To be a global leader in supporting grassroots organisations and building stronger, more inclusive movements for SRHR for all, especially in challenging contexts."

As it aims to solidify this new global leadership role, AmplifyChange is eager to understand the impact of its work to date. This report, the result of a review of 60 semi-annual grant reports, represents one contribution toward this understanding.

It is important to note that this review is *not* a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative impact of AmplifyChange's grantmaking, which comprises more than 1000 grants to date. It also does not touch on how the AmplifyChange staff, board, and members have additionally contributed to the success of the organisation on a global scale. Rather, the review, commissioned by, but conducted independently of AmplifyChange, attempts to capture key outcomes and changes that have been reported by a sample of grantees in their recent grant reports. As such, it should be seen as synthesis of just some of the many impacts made and reported by grantees at a moment in time.

The review team comprised two individuals with a combined 40 years of experience in programming, research, and grantmaking related to SRHR. In addition to contributing toward AmplifyChange's goal of amplifying the work and voices of community-based and grassroots organisations that are working toward the full attainment of SRHR for all, our team hopes that the organisation's staff, board, and members find this report valuable in understanding the impact its grants are making toward its vision. We also anticipate this report can help demonstrate to a broader range of stakeholders the types of changes that can be made when donors support organisations most knowledgeable about their respective local contexts.

Beyond the reported changes and impacts synthesised here, we also provide several recommendations that we believe may help AmplifyChange both better capture the impacts of its grantmaking and more effectively support its grantees toward the goal of building stronger and more inclusive movements for SRHR.

The report is structured as follows:

- First, we present a brief discussion of the **methodology and data** used in our analysis. This section includes a list of grantees whose reports were reviewed and the countries in which their work focused.

- We then shift to a discussion of the **findings** of the review. These findings begin with a discussion of how closely the impacts reported by grantees align with the aims and value statements made in the AmplifyChange Strategy. They expand to cover broader topics and themes generated through the independent analysis of grant reports. We include in this section numerous examples and quotes from grantees to illustrate these themes.

- Finally, we provide a set of **recommendations** that AmplifyChange may wish to consider moving forward.

Methodology and Data

AmplifyChange provided the review team with a set of 60 semi-annual, interim, and final grant reports submitted by 58 grantees between 2022 and early 2023. These grants ranged in size from £45,455 to £93,682 for 51 strengthening grants (mean value £84,341), and from £318,182 to £1,500,000 for nine (9) partnership/strategic/network grants (mean value £664,773). The selected grants were awarded by the newly independent AmplifyChange. The reports included work across all five of the AmplifyChange thematic focus areas. (See Box 1).

The majority of the reports (52) were for grants focused on work in 21 individual countries. Eight (8) grants covered multiple countries, adding another 15 countries. In total, work supported by this set of grants took place in 46 countries. Of these, 44 are in Africa, with only two (India and Pakistan) outside that continent. (See chart and map below.)[1]

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Box 1: AmplifyChange SRHR Focus Areas

- Gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation/cutting, domestic and sexual violence.
- Safe abortion choices
- Challenging stigma and discrimination, including for LGBTI groups.
- Better sexual health for young people.
- Access to SRHR services for poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups including persons living with disabilities or with HIV/AIDS.

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[1] We note that this geographic breakdown is not representative of the full set of grants made by AmplifyChange, which include additional countries in Asia and the Middle East.

GRANTS REVIEWED

Aastha Parivaar	India	International Center for Reproductive Health Kenya	Kenya
Adult Rape Clinic	Zimbabwe	Jan Sahas Foundation	India
Amahoro Human Respect	Rwanda	Kachere Progressive Women's Group	Malawi
Anonymous	Tanzania	Muslim Family Counselling Services	Ghana
Anonymous	Djibouti	New Millennium Women Empowerment Organization	Ethiopia
Anonymous	Pakistan		
Anonymous	Multiple	Nzeve	Zimbabwe
Anonymous	Multiple	Organisation pour de Nouvelles Initiatives en Développement et Santé	Burkina Faso
Cameroon Association for the Protection and Education of the Child (CAPEC)	Cameroon		
		Partnership for Sustainable Development	Liberia
Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS	Cameroon	PRAVAH	India
Centre De Recherche En Reproduction Humaine Et En Demographie	Multiple	Projet Jeune Leader	Madagascar
		Reach Out Cameroon	Cameroon
Centre for Community Regeneration and Development	Cameroon	Réseau des jeunes pour la promotion de l'abandon des MGF/E	Senegal
Centre for Solutions Journalism	Malawi	SAHAYOG Society for Participatory Rural Development	India
Circuit Pointe	Nigeria		
Club des Jeunes Filles Leaders de Guinée	Guinea	Samburu Girls Foundation	Kenya
Coalition on Violence Against Women	Kenya	Sangama	India
Community Innovation Hub	Pakistan	Sesotho Media & Development	Lesotho
Conseils et Appui pour l'Education à la Base	Multiple	Solidarité des Femmes pour le Développement Intégral	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Deaf Women Included	Zimbabwe	South India AIDS Action Programme	India
Dynamic Femmes	Cameroon	The People's Matrix Association	Lesotho
Eagle Wings Youth Initiative	Tanzania	Transgender Equality Uganda	Uganda
Encadrement des Femmes Indigènes et des Ménages Vulnérables	Multiple	Tranz Network Uganda	Uganda
		Troupe des Personnes Handicapées Twuzuzanye	Rwanda
Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Enhancement Uganda (Eco-Agric Uganda)	Uganda		
		Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health	Multiple
Forum for African Women Educationalists (Benin)	Benin	Vision Spring Initiatives	Nigeria
		Voice of Disability Initiative	Nigeria
Gender Links	Multiple	Wogagen Charity Association	Ethiopia
Gender Links	Multiple	Women's Health and Equal Rights Association RWANDA	Rwanda
Ghana National Association of the Deaf	Ghana		
Groupe des Volontaires pour la Promotion de la Maternité Sans Risques en RDC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Young & Alive Initiative	Tanzania
		Young Women's Christian Association of Tanzania	Tanzania
Haguruka	Rwanda	Youth Women for Action	Senegal

Countries covered by reviewed grants
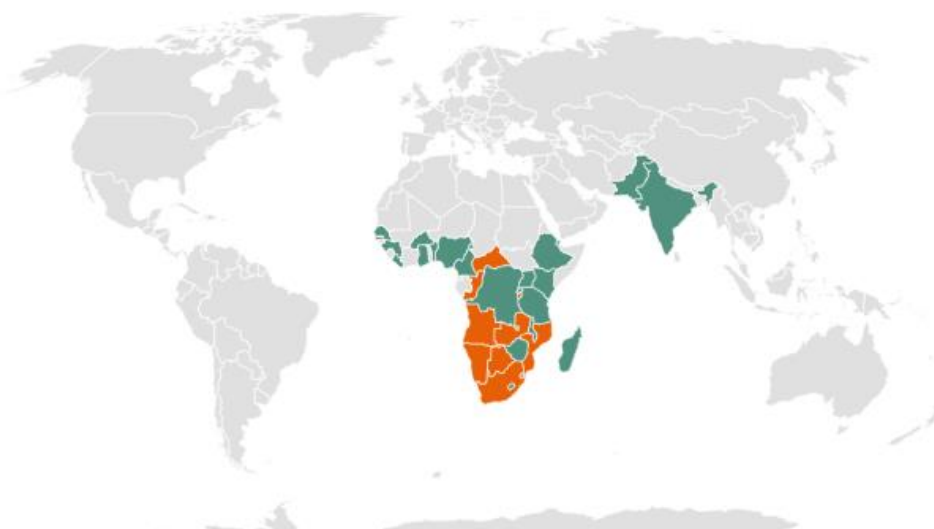
Countries of individual focus	Additional countries included in multi-country grants
Benin	Angola
Burkina Faso	Botswana
Cameroon	Burundi
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Central African Republic
Djibouti	Comoros
Ethiopia	Eswatini
Ghana	Gambia
Guinea	Kenya
India	Mauritius
Kenya	Mozambique
Lesotho	Namibia
Liberia	Republic of Congo
Madagascar	Seychelles
Malawi	South Africa
Nigeria	Zambia
Pakistan	
Rwanda	
Senegal	
Tanzania	
Uganda	
Zimbabwe	

With the grant reports in hand, the independent team of consultants developed a brief guidance document for the review, along with a report review template. The template guided the reviewers to identify the key impacts reported by the grantees; compelling stories of change that resulted from the grantee's work; how technical assistance and/or organisational strengthening support from AmplifyChange may have resulted in significant learnings or changes for the grantee; what staff indicate has been important for them as a result of their grants; whether and what type of peer-to-peer learning, collaboration, and/or community-building the grantee has had with both other AmplifyChange grantees and other partners; what additional funding or resources the grantee reported on as being associated with their AmplifyChange grant; key learnings from the grantee's work that might be shared with others; and more.

The reviewers then conducted and shared their initial reviews with each other to ensure a suitable level of consistency across the reviews. Upon completion of their respective reviews, and using grounded theory to conceptualise patterns and themes, the reviewers produced a synthesis document that captured findings from across their respective set of reports. These documents aimed to bring together some of the key and more consistent ideas, impacts, and outcomes reported by grantees, including changes at the level of the individual, community, systems, and, for many, their own organisations. The documents highlighted broader trends seen across grantee partners, compelling stories of change and examples that could potentially be developed further into case studies, and other findings of interest. Finally, they identified areas where AmplifyChange may be able to improve its systems and processes for the greater benefit of its grantees and the broader community. These individual reviews and brief synthesis reports formed the basis for this final report.

Limitations

We note above that this review is not intended to be either comprehensive or representative of impacts and themes across all AmplifyChange's grants. To document changes taking place as a result of the grants, our reviews are inherently biased toward successful, compelling outcomes and stories that demonstrate impact. We have brought our decades of experience in the field to identifying some of the issues and areas where we believe AmplifyChange grants truly are supporting innovative work at the "cutting-edge" of SRHR, and filling gaps in the field, where they exist.

We have tried to balance this more positive focus by also including some of the many challenges faced by the grantees, as well as recommendations for improved reporting, analysis, and even implementation by both grantees and AmplifyChange staff.

Further, we note that we did not review the full set of materials submitted by the grantees, including any previous semi-annual reports or attachments that may have added depth or nuance to our reviews, nor did we have other knowledge about the grantees that AmplifyChange staff may have developed over the course of the full grant periods. This, combined with the wide variance in the quality of the grantee reports, undoubtedly limited our understanding of the full impacts the grantees may have had over time.

Overall, however, having reviewed dozens of reports that cut across all of the AmplifyChange priority areas and diverse types and sizes of grants and grantees, we feel confident that this report is sufficiently illustrative of the diverse and even pioneering ways in which the full complement of AmplifyChange grantees are making a difference in their respective communities. As such, we believe that what is presented here will be useful for learning purposes, particularly in association with other monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities being undertaken by AmplifyChange. We further believe that components of this report can be utilised for external sharing, so that the broader community of SRHR stakeholders, including donors, civil society organisations (CSOs), policymakers, allied organisations, and others can have a better understanding of the contributions that AmplifyChange grants have made across 44 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and two in South Asia.

Findings[2]

Our review of the reports demonstrates AmplifyChange is indeed reaching dozens of *local and grassroots organisations working in some of the most fragile, remote, and challenging settings and on the most challenging SRHR issues*. We further find that the grantees, in aggregate, are making important contributions toward the achievement of universal access to SRHR in their respective communities and countries. This is particularly the case for the most marginalised and otherwise underserved communities, and for issues that are among the most neglected and/or controversial - in many of these countries and around the world.

Indeed, it is abundantly clear through our review that grantees are creating change by *tackling some of the most sensitive and challenging SRHR issues*, which are otherwise ignored or avoided by other donors. In doing so, they are demonstrating close alignment with perhaps the most fundamental value proposition of AmplifyChange.

In its new Strategy, AmplifyChange notes that *specific attention will be focused on emerging and cross-cutting themes that impact on SRHR and well-being, such as menstrual health, youth empowerment, engaging with male change agents, inclusion, sex-positivity, and mental health*. We find elements of all these themes in the existing grants, most of which were made before the new strategy was issued. These grants, and the lessons described in their reports, can thus serve as building blocks for future grantmaking in these areas.

Through these grants, AmplifyChange has enabled many grassroots and CSOs to advance forward-looking, innovative work on issues like abortion, adolescent SRHR, and LGBTQI rights, including in contexts where it is the most challenging.

There are numerous potential case studies and lessons to be considered around these and the other focus areas seen in **Box 1**. For the purposes of this report, we look beyond these areas to consider other themes and strategies that make the work of AmplifyChange grantees particularly bold and unique, especially when considering impact.

In brief, we describe in the following pages that the AmplifyChange grantees are:

- Identifying and meeting the needs of marginalised and underserved individuals;
- Finding ways to effectively expand awareness of and access to safe abortion, despite restrictions;
- Using pleasure-based approaches to sex and sexuality to shift attitudes and behaviours;
- Employing gender transformative approaches, including male engagement, to boost success;
- Implementing multi-level interventions to spur lasting impact; and
- Demonstrating an understanding that SRHR cannot be addressed through a narrow, single-issue approach.

The grantee reports also demonstrate that the right kind of partnerships are often critical to success; that advocacy and norm change are central components of many grants; and that, even though large-scale norm change may not always be possible, the impacts that the grantees are making on individual lives matter greatly.

The review demonstrates that displacement, insecurity, inflation, and other economic challenges, in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, have impacted the work of numerous grantees. Grantees greatly appreciate the flexible, responsive grants and support of AmplifyChange, which help them to manage in light of these challenges.

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[2] In this section of the report, note that some of the identified impacts are called out in **blue, bold** font. Examples of where grantees' reports demonstrate alignment with key value propositions named in the new AmplifyChange Strategy appear in *orange italicised* font.

The final component of this section describes some areas where grantees' reports and AmplifyChange's vision do not always align. Here, we provide some recommendations that are intended to enhance AmplifyChange's responsiveness to grantees' needs, as well as its aims of building a movement.

Discussion of these themes and issues follow, along with illustrative examples and quotes.

Identifying and meeting the needs of marginalised and underserved individuals

One of the most compelling and consistent themes to emerge from our review is the critical and unique role that AmplifyChange plays in funding and supporting organisations that are engaging in extremely challenging work with **highly marginalised and underserved individuals in some of the most conservative contexts in the world.** AmplifyChange grants are, as intended, filling gaps in funding for some of *the most pressing regions, issues, and abuses*, including *working with and for those whose sexual and reproductive health needs are often overlooked*.

- A grantee in Ethiopia is providing peer support networks for **perinatally infected HIV+ adolescents**, who are typically neglected in SRHR and HIV programming. *Transgender Equality Uganda* and *Tranz Network Uganda* are increasing access to SRHR services for **transgender women and sex workers** in Uganda. *Aastha Parivaar* and *Sangama* provide access to legal aid and alternative livelihoods for **sex workers and gender and sexual minorities** in India. And the *Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS* supports **LGBTQI individuals**, including through visiting those who are incarcerated and supporting their reintegration of into society.

- *Encadrement de Femmes Indigènes et des Ménages Vulnérables (EFIM)* works with partners to question and change toxic gender norms and foster a cultural shift to reduce **sexual and gender-based violence against indigenous Batwa girls and women** in Burundi, Rwanda, and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- Support to organisations of **persons with disabilities**, such as *Deaf Women Included* and *Nzeve* in Zimbabwe, *Voice of Disability Initiative* in Nigeria, *Troupe des Personnes Handicapées Twuzuzanye* (Rwanda), and *Ghana National Association of the Deaf*, among others, is helping to expand the provision and accessibility of gender-based violence (GBV) and SRHR services to persons with disabilities across numerous communities and countries. This takes place through trainings in sign language for service providers and parents, case management and training for childcare workers and hospital staff, and the development of codes of conduct for service providers to uphold the rights of GBV survivors with disabilities, among other activities.

In addition to direct service provision, training, and case work, most grantees working to advance the SRHR of these most marginalised populations are directly **tackling the stigma** that these individuals face. They have done this through innovative, context-specific solutions that are informed and co-developed by, and that provide meaningful impact for, key constituents. Such solutions include developing and implementing public awareness campaigns, training community volunteers to act as peer supporters, collaborating with underserved individuals in co-developing health care guidance that best meets their needs, supporting local champions to engage in advocacy, and engaging service providers and government officials to affect lasting change.

These efforts are having an effect.

- *Tranz Network Uganda*, for example, reports that the media campaigns and advocacy they have conducted with local leaders, including police, have contributed to **improved respect for transgender rights**. As an example, they note that the local police have begun to reach out to the organisation when they encounter cases involving LGBTIQ+ persons, and that local council leaders have started defending the rights of transgender persons when they are reported to them by community members.

- Due to the advocacy of *Aastha Parivaar*, local government offices in Maharashtra stopped marking the food stamps of sex workers with "SW," **ending a seemingly trivial behaviour that had, in reality, perpetuated stigma** against these individuals.

- Through the work of *Nzeve* and *Deaf Women Included*, **deaf women and young people in Zimbabwe now have greater access to SRHR information and services**, with reported increases in visits for STI treatment, family planning, menstrual health, and GBV services, as well as families and providers who are better equipped to respond to their needs.

- And *EFIMV*, like many other grantees, reports a **greater sense of agency and empowerment among female GBV survivors** who have benefited from their support for education and financial assistance. They also report more positive engagement by these women's male partners in SRHR issues, following community education sessions.

Finding ways to effectively expand awareness of and access to safe abortion, despite restrictions

Access to safe abortion is partially or severely restricted in the majority of countries included in this review, and the global environment is not necessarily supportive of change. Several grantees note that the overturning of the federal right to abortion in the United States has directly affected their advocacy, with opposition actors using this decision to spread disinformation, galvanise communities and religious leaders against abortion, and increase their anti-abortion rights rhetoric.

Despite this challenging environment, many grantees are working on the topic, with eight (8) of the 60 grants prioritising abortion as a primary theme. They are doing this using a variety of strategies.

- *Dynamic Femmes* carefully selects and trains community leaders who are committed to the cause of safe abortion in Cameroon. With this training, these leaders are able to engage in community dialogues around abortion, well-equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to confidently help to shift norms in favour of safe abortion. Between this community engagement, mass media campaigns, and a growing movement of advocates in the country, they report "**a strong evolution in the perceptions and attitudes [of community leaders] on abortion** in general," as well as an increasing "ease with which people from different origins, religious backgrounds, and beliefs were able to agree on a topic as sensitive as abortion."[3]

- Malawi now has a body of **religious leaders who stand up in support of safe abortion**, as well as a more supportive media, due to the work of the *Centre for Solutions Journalism*. More than 60 traditional and religious leaders trained and supported by the organisation are advocating for safe abortion within their communities and have signed and sent to parliament a petition calling for the enactment of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill, which would liberalise abortion laws in the country.

- Grantee *Solidarité des Femmes pour le Développement Intégral* employs several strategies to improve access to and quality of care for abortion and post-abortion care for rape survivors in South Kivu, DRC. This includes clinical trainings and values clarification exercises for health care providers in both public and faith-based facilities; awareness building for local tribunals, police departments, and others on the importance of safe abortion and post-abortion care; and ensuring that survivors and their communities are knowledgeable about the right to access treatment for rape and respectful post abortion care, and to live free of sexual violence. Among other effects, they report that **health care facilities, particularly faith- based ones, are providing more compassionate and less discriminatory care for survivors**. They also note an increase in the number of people seeking post-abortion care for complications following unsafe abortion, which they attribute to their community education sessions.

- Through a large network grant, *Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health* (TICAH), through the MAMA Network, provides important information and referral to services on its own and re-grants to dozens of community-

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[3] Our translation

based organisations working to advance abortion rights and access across eastern, western, and southern Africa. These grants exemplify AmplifyChange's approach of *responding to challenges that advocates in the Global South identify as their priorities for action*. As a network hub, and in addition to its small grants, the MAMA Network provides its members with a virtual environment for sharing and learning; training on online tools, such as virtual hotlines and mentoring; support for evidence generation and research in support of advocacy; and technical assistance in areas such as resource mobilisation and monitoring and evaluation. Through this grant, AmplifyChange and the MAMA Network are able to **reach smaller and more nimble organisations** working to advance safe abortion in more than 20 African countries.

Using pleasure-based approaches to sex and sexuality to shift attitudes and behaviours

In another example of how grantees are advancing SRHR in what might be seen as a sensitive manner is the promotion by many of **pleasure-positive approaches to sex and sexuality**. The reports of numerous AmplifyChange grantees demonstrate that such approaches can help increase awareness about sexuality, consent, bodily autonomy, GBV, couple communication, and the importance of sexual pleasure. Many of these grants have not only **directly improved the wellbeing of the individuals they target, but have also had ripple effects on families and communities, as well as on other programs and donors**.

Grantees report examples of **improved marital relationships, adolescents who have been able to prevent sexual abuse and coercion, sex workers who have shifted their approach to safe sex with clients, and health care providers who feel better equipped to promote healthier behaviours** – all as a result of a focus on pleasure-based principles.

- *Young & Alive*, for example, reports success in using pleasure-based approaches as a means to help **break taboos around adolescent and youth sexuality** in Tanzania (see **Box 2**).

- Focusing on pleasure-based approaches has enabled *South India AIDS Action Programme* and *Transgender Equality Uganda*, among others, to more consistently and deeply engage sex workers and community-based organisations that work with them. The sex workers, in turn, are using these approaches to convince their clients **to embrace safe sex practices**.

- And as grantees like *Young & Alive* and the *Women's Health and Equal Rights Association* of Rwanda report, **colleague organisations and donors are looking to model these approaches, as they recognise the broader and more effective SRHR work they can achieve by integrating pleasure-inclusive approaches** into their work.

> **Box 2: A sex positive approach to advance youth SRHR**
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> Young leaders trained by *Young & Alive* use a "bold and sex positive approach" to promote SRHR among young people in Tanzania. The organisation's pleasure-focused approach has been recognised at global levels - featured in *The Guardian* and winning the Phil Harvey SRHR Innovation Award, among others. As a result of this grant, *Young & Alive* leaders secured opportunities to sit on national SRHR decision making platforms. The grant also helped the organisation mobilise resources from other donors, including Grand Challenges Canada and USAID/IREX. With new funds from these donors, they are piloting digital media campaigns that include pleasure-based dialogues, and that promote responsible reproductive health among adolescents and young men in southern highlands of the country. They have also been approached by organisations in Tanzania and elsewhere that want to learn about pleasure-based approaches.

Employing gender transformative approaches, including male engagement, to boost success

Gender transformative approaches, which "seek to challenge gender inequality by transforming harmful gender norms, roles, and relations, while working towards redistributing power, resources, and services more equally,"[4] are increasingly seen as a critical component to the achievement of universal access to SRHR. While these approaches may not be seen as sensitive or controversial in many contexts, they are by no means universally utilised or accepted. Further, a recent evidence gap map identified male engagement as a particularly neglected area in gender transformative SRHR programming.[5] This neglect makes it all the more important to note that a number of grantees are demonstrating an **understanding that gender transformative approaches and the meaningful and positive engagement of men and boys is critical to achieve success**, whether in relation to GBV, abortion, youth, or other programming.

- The *Cameroon Association for the Protection and Education of the Child (CAPEC)* stands out in this area. CAPEC has made SRHR and GBV-related issues "a household topic" in their target communities through their gender transformative training and support of both males and females as change agents. They have learned that men and boys in their target communities are more likely to discuss issues of SRHR with friends, so while they had previously tackled these issues "purely from the girl's perspective," they now recognise that involving males in the conversation and in designing messages that will resonate with their peers "presents a real opportunity for a crucial change."

> ### Box 3: The Importance of Male Engagement
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> *"After being a member of this association through the help of CAPEC for close to 3 months, I came up with a strategy. I bought some condoms on my way home and when I reached home I placed them on the table and that drew the attention of one of my sons. Immediately after dinner, I showed them the condom and asked them what it was. The boys were very excited to talk about it but my daughters ran away from the sitting room, and did not want to hear about it. Nevertheless, all of our three sons knew the condom and 2 of them had even used it. From that day the boys became so friendly with me and even shared some of their secrets. The girls on the other hand did not like the discussions but after almost two months of regular talk, they are now receptive of the talk."*
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> Men's group member - Report from CAPEC, Cameroon

Members of CAPEC's men's groups are engaging other men in their communities to advocate for SRHR, and are acting as **supportive partners and contributing more equally to household and SRH decision making**, among other activities (see **Box 3**, for example). Beyond impacts at the couple and household level, CAPEC attributes to this project the fact that women have now been elected to traditional councils, which had typically only admitted men. These **women are now paving the way for the broad acceptance by the communities of SRHR for all**.

- In another example, *Kachere Progressive Women's Group* of Malawi engaged in community conversations and talk shows around SRHR to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and refer people to services. Their broad inclusion of men, women, and youth in these conversations, as well as their specific targeting of men and boys in the places they gather - such as sporting venues, beer halls, and fishing grounds - has led to a "zeal for learning" and a "**remarkable improvement in the attitudes of men and boys**" regarding SRHR and family planning.

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[4] UNFPA. Gender Transformative Approaches to Achieve Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. 2023.
[5] WHO. Cochrane Collaboration. Queen's University Belfast. Engaging Men in Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Outcomes and the proportions using a Gender Transformative approach and Global Distribution: An Evidence and Gap Map of Systematic Review.

The result of their work with all members of their communities has been significantly **increased demand for family planning**.

- In India, the *Society for Participatory Rural Development (SAYAHOG)* formed and facilitated both men's and women's groups, engaging the men's groups to tackle harmful gender norms and encourage greater male participation in maternal and child health care, family planning, and household tasks. SAYAHOG reports positive changes in the attitudes of male participants (whose numbers total more than five times that of participants of the women's groups), including as related to their participation in health care and reproductive health decision making with their spouses and partners. They note that "**men are ready to leave the patriarchal privileges they were getting and turned into responsible partners**," including regarding family planning and childcare. Many of these men have emerged as change makers, **promoting the benefits of shifting gender norms in their respective communities**.

- Back in Cameroon, *Reach Out Cameroon* reports that a key success of their project "has been the **adoption of positive masculinity ideologies and the reduction in negative sociocultural norms** that used to restrict women's access and enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive health." They are now tailoring more gender-responsive messages that target men and boys to ensure lasting support for gender equality in their typically male-dominated societies.

Implementing multi-level interventions to spur lasting impact

AmplifyChange Theory of Change   **Socio-ecological Framework**

The above Theory of Change[6] presents outcomes that AmplifyChange anticipates taking place along the socioecological framework, namely:

- *Individual*: Increase individual awareness of SRHR as human rights
- *Interpersonal/Family/Household*: Access to SRHR resources, information, and services
- *Community*: Access to SRHR resources, information and services/Transform social norms
- *Societal/Institutional*: Changes in, and implementation of, policies and laws/Transform social norms

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[6] See "Explaining Our Theory of Change User Guide #1" for more

Apart from a few grants that primarily provide clinical care or basic social services to marginalised individuals, the majority of the reports indicate that grantees are implementing interventions that work at all levels of the socioecological framework; that is, the work of most grantees – whether on their own or in partnership with others –engages at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal or institutional levels.

Grantees clearly recognise that, to ensure sustained impact, their work must go beyond supporting individuals to also engaging with families and community leaders to shift norms and behaviours, and with health care leaders and policymakers to improve health systems and access, as well as policy, for example. Some examples follow:

- The *Adult Rape Clinic* (ARC) provides social support and referrals for abortion in cases of GBV and rape in Zimbabwe. They provide clinical training to providers on how to offer and perform abortions and overcome attitudes that inhibit access to respectful care. They also engage peer educators to raise awareness within communities about the importance of safe abortion and educate adolescents about GBV and SRH. At a national level, ARC is part of a growing movement to liberalise the country's abortion law. The data provided in ARC's report illustrate some of the impacts they have had across these multiple levels. For example, 80% of providers were more **confident in their ability to perform abortions** and demonstrate empathy post-training. Peer educators in the project reached 2000 people through community campaigns, as well as and 4000 students through school-based education clubs focused on GBV and SRHR. These activities at the community level, alongside the health systems strengthening work at the societal/institutional level, led to the **provision of services** to more than 1200 women and girls during the reporting period, 60% of whom were adolescents and youth.

- In partnership with other Beninois organisations, the *Forum for African Women Educationalists* (FAWE) has supported work in schools, at the community level, and with policy makers to reduce stigma related to menstruation and to increase access to menstrual hygiene materials and facilities in schools in Benin. At the individual level, FAWE reports that girls who have been supported to lead Youth Awareness-Raising Clubs have not only become **change makers on issues related to menstruation discrimination** in their schools and communities, but also report being **better equipped to tackle a range of other issues** they may face, due to their newly built leadership, community organising and advocacy skills.

  FAWE's advocacy at the community level and with policymakers has also had an impact. In February of 2022, the **government modified an existing law to newly require secondary schools to provide a separate sanitation space** that is private and respectful, which includes soap, potable water, menstrual hygiene products, changes of clothing, and covered waste removal bins for used sanitary napkins. FAWE attributes this positive change to its advocacy efforts, and is now ensuring that local school officials are aware of and implementing this new regulation.

- The advocacy work done by *Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Enhancement Uganda (Eco-Agric)* at district, sub-county, and national levels in Uganda emphasises the importance of integrating SRHR at all levels of the socio-ecological framework, from laws and policies to ground-level service delivery to self-care. While the project centred on improving SRH services, Eco-Agric saw improvements in roads, which **enhance women's ability to reach health care; parents advocating for their girls to be enrolled in schools; and students who are making and accessing sanitary pads**, for example.

> **Box 4: Working at all levels of the socioecological framework**
>
> FAWE-Benin implemented a multi-level intervention to combat menstruation stigma, improve menstrual hygiene, and ultimately help girls participate fully in school and society while menstruating. They worked with existing school health clubs to provide education to girls and boys on menstruation and puberty, using an app they developed called *Sang sans tabou* (*Blood without Taboos*). They also worked with *reine-mère* (*queen mothers*), who hold significant power at the community and village levels in Benin, equipping them as champions to reduce stigma around menstruation and increase access to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) services. FAWE also engaged local authorities to ensure they were aware of and implementing effectively a recently passed modification to a law in Benin that requiring secondary schools to offer dedicated spaces and products for MHM. At the time of reporting, 68% of girls involved in the program indicated their school attendance during menstruation had improved and that they were less stressed while on their period. Some 83% of girls indicated having greater confidence and sense of self-efficacy in talking to resource people about SRHR issues, and 72% of parents and *reine-mère* felt better equipped to talk with their daughters and other girls about these issues.

- *Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW)* has undertaken an impressive number and range of activities across the socioecological framework to achieve their goals of mitigating GBV and reducing unsafe abortions in Narok County, Kenya. They have provided individuals with legal assistance, psychosocial support, and referrals in response to GBV via a toll-free line; trained community activists who have, in turn, educated diverse community groups, including medical personnel and traditional birth attendants, religious leaders, young people, and district health officials to raise awareness about SRHR and GBV; worked with schools to promote SRHR among adolescents and youth; formed watchdog committees to identify and address GBV; and engaged in advocacy and media campaigns, including to end female genital mutilation (FGM). The impacts they report are align with these approaches. Specifically, they have seen **increased numbers of individuals accessing SRHR services** and **increased calls to their toll-free line**. The watchdog committees have helped communities **understand the existence of formal referral mechanisms for GBV**, so they have alternatives to bringing cases to community elders for informal dispute resolution. The committees are also helping to embed a sense of accountability within the communities for protecting women and girls from GBV. Finally, COVAW reports several advocacy wins, including a new **county-wide anti-FGM policy**, which comes with government-financed case management and the establishment of safe houses for GBV survivors and girls at risk of being cut.

Understanding that SRHR cannot be addressed through a narrow, single issue approach

While some grantees may focus their work on a single component of SRHR, such as expanding access to abortion or contraception, or ending FGM or GBV, nearly all of them seem to understand the importance of addressing SRHR in the holistic, comprehensive way that individuals experience it. The experience of Kachere Progressive Women's Group in Malawi provides an excellent example.

- With its AmplifyChange grant, *Kachere Progressive Women's Group* initially aimed to expand access to and the availability of modern contraception, including for young people in Blantyre, Malawi. They soon realised that they could use their engagement with diverse communities, including through a radio talk show, to tackle the region's high rates of HIV and cervical cancer. They shifted their approach so that they are now promote male and female condoms for HIV prevention, cervical cancer screening, and a broad range of contraceptive methods to prevent unintended pregnancy.

Other grantees similarly demonstrate the benefits of comprehensive approaches to SRHR.

- Through participation in 16 sub-county and four district health sector meetings, *Eco-Agric*, for example has helped decision makers at all levels of Uganda's health systems to approach SRHR in a more comprehensive manner. Namely, their advocacy helped the government realise that SRH services are currently provided through a number of vertical programmes, which are not optimal to deliver the services needed by individuals. They provided specific recommendations for making these services more effective and efficient. These include integrating a full range of SRHR components into existing services and programmes, such as those covering maternal care, adolescent and youth health, STI and AIDS control, GBV prevention and management, emergency response, cancer screening, and school health, for example.

- And *Reach Out Cameroon* collaborated with technical partners to ensure the availability and provision of antiretroviral medications for HIV; with reproductive health units of the regional health delegations to acquire and stock family planning commodities; and with community health facilities to ensure that GBV survivors are provided with appropriate health care, including psychosocial support.

Partnerships – of the right kind - are critical to success

Building and sustaining partnerships and coalitions can be important strategies for ensuring wide-reaching and sustained change. This is particularly true when dealing with issues or groups that are marginalised and stigmatised, and when targeted funding is short-term.

Our review demonstrates that most AmplifyChange **grantees understand the importance of partnerships**, and many are **galvanising important stakeholders**, including unlikely champions, to address traditionally stigmatised topics. They also understand a lesson offered by *Young & Alive* - that engaging key stakeholders, including government actors, from the very beginning of interventions may be critical in generating buy in and support to help break taboos around SRHR.

- *Circuit Pointe* has engaged local and religious leaders, traditional birth attendants, health workers, and women's association members as change agents toward ending FGM in Nigeria. Advocacy workshops and support sessions have built the confidence and competence of these actors to carry out education campaigns, sensitise community members on the dangers of FGM, and act as *StopFGM* monitoring agents in their respective communities. Providing alternative livelihoods opportunities for traditional birth attendants, who had previously profited from performing FGM, has proven a successful way to engage this critical group to help end the practice. Indeed, the organisation reports **improved attitudes across different stakeholder groups toward zero tolerance of FGM**, as well as increased accountability and **commitment to end the practice**.

- Even with one of the smallest grants in our review, the *People's Matrix Association* of Lesotho appears to have made quite an impact toward their goal of increasing awareness of LGBTIQ+ issues and of SRHR as human rights. Among other positive outcomes, their grant report cites **increased visibility of the LGBTIQ+ community** across the country; **community members who are aware of their rights and empowered to identify and report cases of GBV; increased uptake of supportive psychosocial and pastoral care services; increased enforcement of restorative justice;** and the **enactment of new national legislation** (the Counter Domestic Violence Act of 2022), which specifically **accommodates sex characteristics, gender diversity, and sexual orientation**. The organisation uses multiple strategies, including digital media, policymaker engagement, community organising, advocacy, and case management, but recognises that one of the most critical elements of their success has been their partnership strategy. Among others, they have

collaborated with the Christian Council of Lesotho to provide pastoral care, counselling, and family mediation services, and with the Lesotho Association of Psychologists and Baylor College Lesotho to provide mental health services, including expanding mental health services for LGBTIQ+ survivors of GBV. To **ensure sustained community ownership, they have shifted capacities from their own organisation to these and other groups**, and have developed partnerships with various public and private entities at the district level.

- Several grantees, including an anonymous one in Djibouti and *Voice of Disability Initiative* (Nigeria), noted that their **approaches have shifted toward enabling more community-led and community-owned engagement.** They cite shifts in their own language and strategies, from "training and sensitising beneficiaries" to "empowering and equipping individuals with the skills and capacities to act as their own advocates," for example.

> *"The project taught us the importance of investing into community groups for sustainability of the movement in Lesotho. Community-led initiatives generate up-to-date evidence-based information to enhance programming and to easily monitor the responsiveness of the programs." in addressing the needs of the communities."*
>
> People's Matrix Association

- *Solidarité des Femmes pour le Développement Intégral* (SOFEDI) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) offers an excellent example of coalition-building to support sexual violence survivors in accessing person-centred post-abortion care (PAC) and other services. SOFEDI brought together 14 local organisations to form the "Coalition 14," which they then led to engage district level authorities and health officials in **ensuring the institutionalisation and implementation of DRC's commitments to survivors of sexual violence under the Maputo Protocol and the country's recently revised standards and guidelines on woman-centred PAC**. SOFEDI reports that Coalition 14 has gained significant traction in the province of South Kivu, and has **drawn other disparate groups into a larger umbrella advocating for improved SRHR** for girls and women. One example is an association representing various Pygmy groups living in the South Kivu forests, which joined Coalition 14's efforts to promote menstrual hygiene management, contraception, and sexual health education in their respective communities.

- *COVAW* credits their engagement with religious leaders in preaching about and advocating on SRHR issues as undergirding the success they have seen in the form of increased uptake of SRH services, formation of anti-FGM schools, and even reductions in unplanned pregnancies and unsafe abortion in Narok County.

- Finally, *SAHAYOG* supported the establishment of village help desks in 12 villages across four districts in India. These help desks, staffed by members of the respective communities, provide frontline care for GBV survivors, and act as a community-based distribution centre for contraceptives. They have not only become trusted sources of information and services at the community level, but they have also improved social cohesion between communities and frontline health workers.

Several grantees also recognise, however, that **organisations that could otherwise become supportive partners may stand in the way of progress**, and some may overstate the benefits that partnerships may provide.

- A grantee in Liberia experienced **pushback from traditional leaders** in regard to FGM and SRHR. They have dealt with this by hiring experienced, community-oriented and/or based facilitators, who have built relationships with community members and leaders. They are also now previewing presentations for traditional leaders before they are presented more widely to the communities.

- *Young & Alive* learned that it is okay to **withdraw from partnerships** if those partners do not share one's core values. In the example they provided, Young & Alive left a partnership with a youth and adolescent reproductive health coalition, as their members did not support the inclusion of young persons with disabilities or other marginalised communities.

- *Muslim Family Counselling Services* in Ghana centres their work on empowering **faith and traditional leaders as educators and agents of change** around adolescent SRH and GBV, with the aim of shifting cultural and social norms. They assert that "faith and traditional leaders are the best allies in promoting SRHR and ending SGBV… especially in hard-to-reach communities…" Similarly, in discussing the strong opposition to abortion across southern Africa, *Gender Links*, which holds a large partnership grant through which they provide grants to smaller organisations throughout the region, argues that advocacy campaigns on abortion "must include faith-based and cultural leaders."

Indeed, while many grantees have demonstrated the supportive and even leading role that faith and traditional leaders can play in advancing SRHR, however, not all do. Without robust evidence and a clear understanding of the groundwork that must be laid for their positive engagement, however, assertions such as these may be harmful overgeneralisations, as not all faith or community leadership will be supportive.

Advocacy and norm change at scale are central to AmplifyChange's stated approach, and are key elements of many, but not all grants

> *"We provide grants to hundreds of civil society organisations across the world. They advocate for improved policy and action on the most neglected SRHR issues."*
>
> AmplifyChange website

AmplifyChange has an overt emphasis on advocacy, and for many of the grantees, this is a priority strategy. Indeed, there are many advocacy-centric grants, and **numerous advocacy successes** – from the local to national levels. Many of these successes come about because the grantees understand what is happening and what is most needed within their communities. This is the result of a value that AmplifyChange uniquely brings – an explicit focus on supporting community-based and grassroots organisations. These organisations are able to communicate the needs they identify with great credibility and authority. They often know who to target to create change, and they have concrete "asks" that are undergirded by real world data and evidence.

- *Vision Springs Initiatives* of Nigeria, the smallest grantee reviewed, provides advocacy trainings to sex workers, dialogues with traditional and digital media on how they portray sex workers, and engages in advocacy, such as on sex education in schools and through education on the dangers of unsafe abortion. They **collaborated with CSOs and the Lagos State Ministry of Health to develop a 40-page safe abortion guideline**. (While it has been set aside due to opposition, they are continuing advocacy to ensure the document is reinstated.) In response to the Federal Government directing the removal of sexuality education from the Basic Education Curriculum, VSI started a petition on Change.org and is "continuously working with feminist movements and organisations" to secure the return of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).

On the other end of the grant size spectrum are several partnership grants that have **advocacy at the core of their efforts**.

- *Conseils et Appui pour l'Education à la Base*, for example, supports a network of advocacy-oriented groups in nine countries in West Africa. Their support has enabled partners to the disseminate understanding of the

SRHR law in Niger and Mali; supported direct advocacy with health officials in Togo around GBV reporting; bolstered advocacy for SRHR funding and budget allocations in Benin; and engaged religious and traditional leaders in SRHR advocacy in Ivory Coast and Mauritania.

- *Jan Sahas Foundation* aims to build a national platform to strengthen the collective initiative against sexual violence in India, with more than 275 CBOs and CSOs engaged in a network and alliance across 21 states. The grantee hosted a helpline for women and children; trained survivors as "barefoot lawyers" who reach and support other survivors; and engaged with hundreds of policymakers, with the aim of building a multi-stakeholder platform for jointly developing strategies with the government, philanthropy, private sector, and CSOs to tackle the challenges faced by survivors of violence.

- *Gender Links* laid the groundwork for a new sub-granting portfolio called the [Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund](#). This challenge fund will respond to ideas presented by CSOs to strengthen SRHR across Southern Africa, with a focus on advocacy across the AmplifyChange five priority themes. Grant applicants were asked to "think strategically about their local movements and define a role that will make the most effective contribution to change." As this Fund had not yet been launched at the time of their report, there were no impacts to review.

While many grantees centre advocacy and communications to influence policies, many others do not. A number of them focus on improving access to services, including through specific activities like training health workers, equipping health facilities, offering telemedicine technology, providing sanitary pads, and even improving roads. Some grants lean heavily toward internal capacity building, and at least one (an anonymous grantee) is heavily research oriented.

As demonstrated in some of the following examples of grantee advocacy successes, even when it is not prioritised as a strategy, advocacy is often woven into the fabric of many of the grants. These examples demonstrate that service deliverers, educators, and case workers, for example, can - with sufficient training and support - be effective advocates and communicators because they know the topics well and can bring their lived experiences to their advocacy targets.

- *Reach Out Cameroon* provides excellent examples of how **local, service-oriented advocacy can make an impact.** They identified health facilities that did not have anti-retroviral medications for patients who tested positive for HIV. Follow up by the project team with health district officials and HIV-focused organisations resulted in these medications being provided and a treatment centre being created. Additionally, because of increased demand for family planning, due in part to their work, some health facilities experienced contraceptive stockouts. The project was able to engage with appropriate officials to get these commodities to the facilities, which enabled individuals and couples to access them efficiently.

- Advocacy and lobbying by *EcoAgric Uganda* with local government officials helped ensure that **pregnant girls can remain in school, girls and their families are not charged more for school fees than is required, girls can access sanitary pads, and roads linking communities to SRHR and antenatal care are made more accessible**.

- A grantee in Kenya provides services to GBV survivors, including children, while also expanding awareness about GBV through podcasts and community engagement. They have gained the trust of their communities through collaborating with Area Advisory Councils, composed of village elders, community leaders, teachers, chiefs, and opinion leaders in the sub-counties with the highest prevalence of sexual violence in Mombasa County. This has helped them **solidify their position in influencing GBV-related policy** within the county.

- *Ghana National Association of the Deaf* reported that, in response to using their research findings to advocate with the government, the Special Education Division of **Ghana Education Services developed a document on Adolescent Reproductive Health and Development for special schools** (i.e., schools for the Deaf).

- With the support of champions they have cultivated within the national Ministry of Education, the life skills education model and lessons that *Projet Jeune Leader* of Madagascar developed is now **influencing national standards**. Last year, the organisation signed a three-year partnership with the Ministry of Education to provide technical assistance in the integration of life skills education in national structures. "This would not have been possible without AmplifyChange's support over the past four years helping us to innovate, refine, and generate evidence (of) our model and the demand for it from constituents," they write in their report.

> *"This (collaboration with the government) would not have been possible without AmplifyChange's support over the past four years helping us to innovate, refine, and generate evidence (of) our model and the demand for it from constituents."*
>
> Projet Jeune Leader

Even as we provide these examples, it is important for AmplifyChange to understand that grants focused on service provision, case management, research, and internal capacity building, for example, will not necessarily be successful in advocacy or, as discussed in the next section, achieving social norm change, if they are not specifically supported to do such work. This will be something for the organisation to consider as it advances its new Strategy.

Achieving large scale norm change is not always possible – but individual impacts matter

Related to the above point, large scale norm change, considered by AmplifyChange as central to its aims, will likely not happen for all grantees. Many grantees report that they have reached hundreds of decision makers and many thousands of individuals through their advocacy and outreach on a range of SRHR issues. This type of reach, along with the right set of context-specific strategies, is likely an essential component of shifting social norms. Many others, however, do not achieve such scale in their work.

Box 5: AmplifyChange Values and Principles

- Accessible and responsive to applicants and grantees.
- Supportive and flexible in engaging with applicants and grantees.
- Open and transparent, committed to making information widely available.
- Demand-led, using grantee feedback and lessons to adapt ways of working.
- Results focused, with performance metrics jointly developed with grantees.
- Sound management and stewardship of financial resources.
- Independent from external policy pressures and guided by our Members.

AmplifyChange Strategy, 2021-2025

This said, grantees that provide specific services and case management to individuals, particularly those most marginalised, may be contributing directly to life-altering or even life-saving effects for individuals. Depending on the type of work they do, and whether scale is embedded as part of their approach, however, their reach may total just dozens, or perhaps hundreds of individuals. But for those 32 LGBTQI incarcerated Cameroonians visited in jail by the *Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS,* an organisation that supports their rights in a country that does not, and that will help them reintegrate into society when they are released; for those 45 transgender individuals in India who now have access to government social support schemes due to the advocacy that *Sangama* engaged in on their behalf; for the female student in Rwanda who stopped having sex with her boyfriend because she now understands the importance of consent and feels empowered to say "no" as a result of the *Haguruka* training she participated in; and for the young LGBTQI person in Tanzania who, due to awareness raising activities from *Eagle Wings Youth Initiative*, now knows they are not a criminal, all *because of the support of AmplifyChange grants*, the focus on scale may not be as important.

> "(W)hen I came to accept my sexuality, I never knew I had any right, or if the government can protect me. I thought I was a crime, even when I experienced abuse and violence, I didn't go to the police. But these training of awareness that you have been giving us, has provided us with the capacity to be able to defend ourselves. Now I know that I am not a criminal. I can go to the police or local government to report any incidence that threatens my wellbeing. I know lawyers that I can call and they know who we are and have accepted us, and they know how to defend us. That's a major change in my life."
>
> *Eagle Wings Youth Initiative participant*

Indeed, many of these grants are thus not likely to achieve large scale, nor will they shift social norms on their own, but the lives of these individuals and those closest to them may be forever changed. That, in itself, may be worth the investment.

Displacement, insecurity, inflation, and other economic challenges have impacted numerous grantees

Many of the grantees have had to manage their AmplifyChange grants in the face of the health and economic consequences of COVID-19, cholera outbreaks, inflation, armed conflict, displacement, and other forms of insecurity. In addition to these insecurities that plague their broader communities, some grantees - particularly those working on particularly controversial issues, such as the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals, transgender women, or sex workers, or on safe abortion, for example - have been faced with significant security concerns. *Transgender Equality Uganda* and *Centre for Community Regeneration and Development* (Cameroon) experienced the destruction of property and being victimised by disinformation campaigns, including those that put their staff at personal risk.

A lesson shared by grantees is that it is **critical to conduct security monitoring and to keep staff and program participants updated on safety and security issues**, whether during their regular work or special events that draw attention. The *MAMA Network* has produced videos for its digital university on enhancing security and **developing security strategies**, as well as a holistic security manual, which may be useful to others.

Engaging local government officials can also help. In response to security officials forcing the cancellation of a community dialogue on LGBT rights due to the idea they were "promoting homosexuality," *Amahoro Human Respect* (Rwanda) engaged the director of the local health centre to explain to the security officials about the importance of addressing these issues, especially in the context of the national HIV response. The planned dialogue was then allowed to proceed.

Grantees appreciate the flexible, responsive grants and support of AmplifyChange

Grantees overwhelmingly appreciate the responsive and respectful way in which AmplifyChange engages with them. This feedback demonstrates that AmplifyChange is indeed seen for its *values of being responsive, supportive, forward-thinking, transparent, and respectful.*

The flexible nature of the grants and the way in which AmplifyChange staff has supported shifts when requested were positively commented on by many. The fact that AmplifyChange funds covered staff salaries, allowing grantees to hire and retain appropriate staff; office equipment and software; and many of the core costs that most other donors do not, for example, has **boosted the morale of CSO staff** and, in some cases, enabled them to **emphasise collective healing and self-care**, which grantees recognise is important in sustaining the challenging work they do.

The grants from AmplifyChange have also **enabled grantees to focus on the issues and areas they prioritise, strengthened the capacities of their organisations in ways they identify as most essential, and provided them with the breathing room to learn and grow**, both thematically and in terms of resource mobilisation.

Tranz Network Uganda, Young & Alive, Voice of Disability Initiative, FAWE-Benin, and Women's Health and Equal Rights Association, for example, cited some of the work they were able to do in this area with AmplifyChange support. This included conducting their own organisational capacity assessments, developing institutional capacity strengthening plans, drafting strategic visions, instituting trainings on board governance, and engaging boards of directors to review organisational policies. This work has resulted in shifts toward **greater professionalisation** by grantees, such as hiring more staff rather than relying on volunteers; purchasing and training staff in QuickBooks for financial management; equipping offices that are more appropriate for their work; improving board governance and oversight; and instituting policies and procedures that make them more viable candidates for funding from other donors, such as in regard to Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Travel, and Whistle Blowing.

Areas in need of strengthening... and some recommendations

In this section, we discuss some areas where grantees are not (yet) fully implementing AmplifyChange's vision, and present some recommendations designed to support even greater responsiveness to the demands of the grantees, and toward building a movement.

Partnerships between AmplifyChange grantees are not happening, which limits the potential for movement building

While we discuss above some examples of how grantees have engaged in productive and beneficial partnerships, we also note that very few of these partnerships are with other AmplifyChange grantees. In their reporting, grantees are asked to respond to a question of whether they have engaged with other AmplifyChange grantees. The majority replied that they have not. For those that indicated that they did (other than the larger partnership grantees), the engagement was fleeting, i.e., they were on a call together, they connected to share resources, or they jointly discussed the grant reporting template.

There are a few exceptions. *Vision Spring Initiatives*, which works to promote the rights and dignity of female sex workers in Nigeria, reported that they met other AmplifyChange grantees at a coalition meeting, partnered on a safe abortion training, and agreed to collaborate further. *Tranz Network Uganda* reported that they joined a coalition with *Trans Equality Uganda* and the *Center for Health, Human Rights, and Development* to stop maternal

mortality and morbidity due to unsafe abortion in the country. But these are among the very few examples of cross-grantee collaboration.

For the most part, grantees seem unaware of what other organisations in their countries or regions are AmplifyChange grantees. This – and the few numbers of grantees that indicate they are collaborating with others - suggests that AmplifyChange's *"raison d'être" of building stronger and more inclusive movements through strengthening and connecting* the organisations it supports, is not as successful as it could otherwise be. It is not possible to build inclusive movements when the organisations that are supposed to be moving together do not know each other.

This said, the grantees overwhelmingly indicated that **they want opportunities to learn from and/or collaborate with other grantees**, and they requested that AmplifyChange bring them together to launch this effort. Indeed, this request was the most one commonly seen one in the grant reports.

Gender Links, for example, commended AmplifyChange for organising a meeting of implementing partners in October, but noted that only one other grantee joined. They suggested that future gatherings be more structured around the needs identified by the grantees, possibly with technical experts brought in to offer practical help and solutions. They also recommended that AmplifyChange establish communities of practice for its grantees and offered to open their *Voice and Choice Summit* to AmplifyChange grantees, so they can meet face to face

There were indeed **many** requests by grantees for additional support in the form of peer learning workshops, information exchanges, and collaboration, as well as publicising the grantees' work so that they can learn from each other and mobilise additional resources. Several grantees offered to host online capacity building sessions for other AmplifyChange grantees, including on child protection, online safety, how best to work in hostile environments, and other skills for effective program delivery, and they suggested that other grantees could lead similar sessions and share good practices. *South India AIDS Action Programme* offered to showcase their programming adaptations based on a webinar AmplifyChange had previously organised on pleasure principles, to help others learn from their experience.

Some suggested a virtual format for ongoing learning, while others preferred the idea of in-person meetings of grantees within specific regions and perhaps annual workshops for *all* grantees to get together and learn from one another. Others suggested exchange trips, like the one *Club des Jeunes Filles Leaders de Guinée* organised to visit grantees in Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal. Grantees also requested that AmplifyChange circulate newsletters on grantee projects for lessons learning and experience sharing.

In one of the strongest pleas for learning and sharing amongst partners, a grantee wrote that AmplifyChange is "obligated" to coordinate sessions where grantees can share their experiences and learn from each other.

RECOMMENDATION: This is both a common, almost universal, request, and one that could be answered easily by AmplifyChange. AmplifyChange staff and/or consultants could provide structured opportunities for knowledge exchange to foster greater learning and collaboration between grantees. In addition to listing the grantees on its website (something planned for late 2023), they could create listservs of grantees, facilitate regularly scheduled webinars, and publish briefs and newsletters on an ongoing basis that showcase the work of grantees, share lessons learned, and otherwise enable the grantees opportunities to brainstorm together around challenging issues. These types of events and products, as well as broader gatherings of grantees, can help the organisation achieve one of the aims shared in the new Strategy, which is to "*share learnings in accessible formats including grantee-owned, accessible, digital communities of practice.*"

This type of donor-fostered learning and collaboration could go a long way toward building a sense of community amongst the grantees, and in turn, fostering a movement. External facing webinars could further demonstrate to potential partners and donors the type of work that AmplifyChange is supporting, which could open the doors to additional resources for the grantees, and perhaps for AmplifyChange itself.

Intersectionality is not embedded in the grantees' work

The new AmplifyChange strategy notes that "*working towards social justice, we will continue to reflect on the stigma created by the intersectionality of issues including gender, disability, climate and racial justice."* Many of the grantees overtly tackle stigma; indeed, for some, it is at the very core of what they do. In particular, **discrimination and stigma on the basis of gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression are of prime consideration for several grantees**. These and some others seem to understand how sexual orientation and gender identity, poverty, disability, age, religion, ethnicity, caste, or migratory status, among other factors, may interact to reproduce deprivations, though only a few reflected on the ways in which these issues might affect their work. Only one (*Gender Links*) explicitly addressed climate justice, none reflected on racial justice, and just a few use the term "intersectionality."

RECOMMENDATION: Intersectionality as a term and as an explicit concept do not appear to be ones that the vast majority of grantees have taken on board. While the terminology used in the new strategy may be geared toward a different audience, *if* AmplifyChange wants its grantees to reflect on these critical intersections, it should foster more targeted learning and collaboration to make this happen.

Using the principles of trust-based philanthropy as a guide

As a donor, AmplifyChange exhibits many of the core elements of trust-based philanthropy.[7] A sizeable portion of its grant funding comes with **limited strings attached**, which allows grantees the flexibility to assess and determine where grant dollars are most needed, and which allows for innovation and sustainability. It is a **transparent and responsive** donor that fosters relationships with grantees rooted in trust and mutual accountability. It **offers "beyond the check**" **support,** bolstering the leadership, capacity, and health of its grantees. As this commissioned review indicates, it is **open to soliciting and acting on feedback**, with a recognition that grantees may offer valuable perspectives that may improve the success of its work over time. Finally, it is committed to **simplified and streamlined paperwork**, not requiring its grantees to spend an inordinate amount of time on funder-driven applications and reports, which can distract them from their mission-critical work.

There are ways in which AmplifyChange can, however, become an even more transparent and responsive donor. Following are a few examples:

Clarify the role of AmplifyChange in supporting organisational capacity building

We discuss above the fact that many of the grantees have used their flexible grants from AmplifyChange to strengthen their organisational capacity across a variety of areas. Indeed, AmplifyChange allows for up to 40 percent of its grants to be used for organisational strengthening support. For some, institutional strengthening has been at the very core of their grants, and they have demonstrated considerable progress as a result.

The majority appear to have done this work on their own or through consultants and activities they have led. Only a very few report on such changes as a direct result of technical assistance or capacity building support from AmplifyChange, though AmplifyChange has, in the past, developed resources and tools designed for strengthening organisational capacity. Several grantees do, however, request more direct support from the donor and/or other grantees.

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[7] Elements adapted from www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org

RECOMMENDATION: To avoid confusion, AmplifyChange might clarify in its external-facing materials and engagements with grantees that its support to strengthen grantees' financial and operational systems is (or is not) something the core team provides or can provide. If the intent is for the grantees to be able to use their grant funds for capacity building purposes as they see fit, this should be made clear. If AmplifyChange does see itself taking on a more proactive role in strengthening the capacities of the organisations it supports, it should develop and promote a programme for such support. This might include activities ranging from webinars to field-based consultancies on topics and themes identified and prioritised by grantees, such as board governance, proposal writing, or working in hostile environments, for example.

Help grantees prioritise reporting on impact – and help AmplifyChange receive better quality reports

In a demonstration of *simplified and streamlined paperwork*, AmplifyChange has used a standard template in which it *asks all grantees to measure and report on their progress against the AmplifyChange outcomes.* This request centres the grantees' own perspectives regarding the important progress they are making, which aligns well with the core principles of trust-based philanthropy. At the same time, however, it makes the process of aggregating and comparing impact across the grantees challenging.

RECOMMENDATION: Even as it introduces a new reporting template, AmplifyChange can make slight changes to its reporting processes that retain the principle of simplified paperwork while producing more *results-focused grantee feedback*. Among others, adaptations might include:

- Adding a short section at the beginning of the reporting template to include key information about the project, grant dates, target population, and the main outputs seen in the reporting period. This would allow for easier understanding of the respective grants by external reviewers and others not familiar with the details of each grant.

- Providing clearer guidance for grantees regarding what is meant by reporting on "progress against AmplifyChange outcome areas." Terms like "progress" and "story of change," both used in the new reporting template, may have different meanings and nuances, depending on context. Clear definitions, with a focus on understanding the true **impact** of the grants, would help reduce confusion, increase comparability across reports, and generate a better understanding of the diverse ways in which AmplifyChange is supporting change.

The quality of the reports varied considerably, with some being so weak it was challenging to understand what they were doing, no less what impact they had made. It is important to note that the reports themselves did not contain all of the information that would have been included in a more comprehensive review of the impacts reported by grantees. Indeed, in many cases, this information – including means of verification for reported impacts - may have been contained in supplemental materials submitted by the grantees. This said, it is clear that numerous grantees can benefit from tailored support in establishing logic models, developing indicators to assess outcomes and impacts, developing mechanisms to track progress, and better articulating the impact their programming has had on the communities they are trying to reach. Here again is a topic AmplifyChange may want to include in its offering of webinars and technical assistance moving forward.

All this support could improve the clarity of reporting while upholding the goals and principles behind AmplifyChange's philanthropic approach.

Conclusion

In its 2021 annual report, AmplifyChange wrote: "*Through strategic review during our transition, we shaped our onward approach to grant making to maximise the learning from our experience so far whilst responding to the ways in which our world - and the work of our grantee partners - has changed over the past decade.*"

This report synthesises some of the many impacts AmplifyChange grantees are making and presents some ways in which the organisation can be even more responsive to the needs of these grantees moving forward. In doing so, we hope that it forms at least a small contribution toward helping AmplifyChange "maximise the learning" from its experiences.

Acknowledgements

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