



HeR Liberty

ANNUAL REPORT
2022 - 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CAROLINE MKANDAWIRE
Executive Director

We are delighted to present the annual report for HeR Liberty, covering the period of 2022-2023, which delineates our strategic trajectory and outlines our achievements and challenges during this time frame.

This annual report encapsulates the milestones achieved and hurdles encountered by HeR Liberty in the implementation phase of 2022-2023. We extend heartfelt appreciation to all our partners whose unwavering support has profoundly influenced our current strategic approach. Special recognition goes to esteemed collaborators including Sonke Gender Justice, Youth Excel in collaboration with IREX and USAID, the Global Partnership on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), ActionAid Malawi, and AMREF-Youth Power Hub for their steadfast backing.

The invaluable feedback received from young people, development partners, and governmental agencies at global, regional, and national levels has played a pivotal role in shaping our initiatives to better address the needs of the communities we serve. In this period, we reached a total of 50,100 young individuals, engaged with traditional leaders to combat gender-based violence, and successfully launched the YEAH! board game in Malawi.

We extend our gratitude to the dedicated members of the HeR Liberty board and staff whose unwavering commitment and contributions have been instrumental in driving our mission forward throughout 2022-2023.

Looking ahead, HeR Liberty remains resolute in its commitment to advocating for and safeguarding health-related rights for all young people. The upcoming reporting year will be marked by a concerted focus on further enhancing organisational capacity and sustainability efforts, as we continue our journey toward positive social change.

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VISION AND MISSION

VISION

We exist to empower young people with knowledge, skills, and a supportive community that promotes gender equality.

MISSION

We envision safe and healthy communities where young people are leading sustainable change.



KEY ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSES

Tonse Tingathe

Tonse Tingathe (We All Can), a 3-year project generously supported by Sonke Gender Justice, has been instrumental in bolstering HeR Liberty's efforts to advance youth engagement in adolescent health and gender equality within Zomba District. Despite the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted our project activities and posed financial constraints, Tonse Tingathe has remained a beacon of support for our organisation. As part of this transformative project, HeR Liberty has received invaluable capacity support aimed at fortifying our institutional systems, enhancing resource mobilisation, and fostering financial resilience. Moreover, Tonse Tingathe facilitated the development of a comprehensive strategic plan to guide our endeavours over the next five years, ensuring sustainability and effectiveness in our mission.

One of the project's notable achievements is the establishment of a youth hub, serving as a haven for marginalised young individuals to connect, learn, and thrive. Within this nurturing environment, we provide crucial guidance to young people on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, facilitating career awareness and empowering them with entrepreneurship development opportunities and learnerships.

Additionally, Tonse Tingathe introduced two community parliament committees, located in Group Village Matache and Chikapa within Zomba District. Composed of diverse community stakeholders, including Village Development Committees members, youth leaders, mother group members, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and community members, these committees play a pivotal role in preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) cases. The community parliaments have successfully reached 22 households and provided guidance and support in response to 26 GBV cases to date. Their tireless efforts in raising awareness about GBV issues, facilitating reporting mechanisms, and offering assistance to victims have made a tangible difference in their communities.



Zathu Zomwe Initiative

HeR Liberty, in partnership with ActionAid Global Platforms, successfully implemented the Zathu Zomwe project, generously funded by ActionAid Denmark. This initiative aimed to enhance the leadership and development capacities of 80 youth leaders across multiple locations, including Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Blantyre, and Mchinji. We are thrilled to report significant successes achieved through the Zathu Zomwe project. Notably, five young individuals have secured positions in Village Development Committees and Area Development Committees, marking a notable milestone in youth representation where previously there were none. This achievement underscores the tangible impact of the project in empowering young leaders and fostering their meaningful participation in local governance structures.

Moreover, the Zathu Zomwe project has catalysed the emergence of a dynamic youth movement advocating for the establishment of a dedicated youth committee in parliament. This movement seeks not only to amplify the voices of young people but also to ensure their active inclusion in policy development and implementation processes.



My Period Our Story

HeR Liberty Malawi proudly executed the Research to Change (R2C) project, "My Period Our Story," from November 2022 to May 2023, with generous support from USAID and IREX. This groundbreaking initiative was implemented at Namikhathe Primary School in Zomba and Mbongozi Community Day Secondary School in Kasungu, aiming to tackle the pervasive challenges and stigma surrounding menstruation that hinder girls' education.

Recognising menstrual hygiene management as a crucial determinant of women and girls' overall well-being and empowerment, HeR Liberty embarked on this research endeavour to assess the effectiveness of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs in promoting girl child education, with a specific focus on menstrual health and hygiene.

The project culminated in the production of a comprehensive booklet, synthesised from the rich insights gathered from key stakeholders. Drawing from the experiences and perspectives of 135 adolescent girls and young women aged between 10 and 24 years, the booklet serves as a vital resource for understanding the multifaceted dynamics of menstrual health and hygiene in educational settings.

Through the "My Period Our Story" project, HeR Liberty continues to champion the rights and dignity of women and girls, laying the groundwork for a more equitable and inclusive future for all.

My Period, Our Story.

Perspectives from adolescent girls, young women and community members on improving access and utilization of menstrual hygiene and sanitation services in Public Government Schools in Zomba and Kasungu.



What Young People Want

"What Young People Want" is an initiative dedicated to amplifying the perspectives, opinions, and aspirations of young people aged between 10 to 24 years old worldwide. This has been part of the 1.8 Billion Young People for Change global campaign, supported by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (PMNCH).

In collaboration with Plan International, HeR Liberty serves as the Youth Focal Point under this visionary project, tasked with mobilising the voices of young people to ensure their needs are not only heard but also integrated into policymaking processes. In 2023, HeR Liberty conducted a training for 21 young people on harnessing chatbots and offline methods to mobilise the voices of young people effectively. Leveraging the newfound skills of these individuals, HeR Liberty successfully rallied over 50,000 voices from young people across Malawi, amplifying their collective call for meaningful change.

Furthermore, HeR Liberty forged direct partnerships with 22 stakeholders, including the Malawi Government and various youth-led organisations, to advance the campaign's objectives and ensure broad-based engagement in shaping policies that impact young lives. Through our collaborative efforts, HeR Liberty remains steadfast in our commitment to championing the voices and aspirations of young people, catalysing transformative change and building a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



Youth Power Hub

In response to the commitments made by the Malawi Government following the International Conference on Population and Development 2019 (ICPD), HeR Liberty, in partnership with AMREF Health-Youth Power Hub, Youth Forum for National Transformation, Southern African Regional Students and Youth Consortium, and National Young People Living with HIV, embarked on a series of capacity-building workshops.

These workshops, conducted in Lilongwe and Salima, brought together 50 youth leaders to deepen their understanding of the ICPD commitments and their role in translating these commitments into actionable initiatives at the local level. The training provided a vital platform for youth leaders to engage with the government and hold them accountable for achieving the targets set forth by 2030.

Through fostering dialogue and building capacity, we continue to advance the collective mission of ensuring that the voices and aspirations of young people are heard and integrated into the development agenda of Malawi.



YEAH!

HeR Liberty has pioneered the development of an engaging and educational tool called the YEAH! board game, designed to empower young people aged 14-18 years old with essential information on Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). This innovative game also serves as a gateway for facilitating referrals to Youth-Friendly Health Services (YFHS) and Community Victim Support Units.

Since its inception, the YEAH! board game has evolved into a staple recreational resource at YFHS corners and various youth clubs nationwide, contributing to the dissemination of vital information in an interactive and enjoyable manner.

The official launch of the YEAH! board game by the Ministry of Health on September 15, 2022, marked a significant milestone in our collective efforts to promote adolescent health and well-being. With support from UNFPA and the USAID Momentum Tiyezi project, HeR Liberty has conducted comprehensive training sessions for 30 youth leaders and Youth-Friendly Health District Coordinators. These individuals have been equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to serve as facilitators of the YEAH! board game in seven key districts: Chikwawa, Machinga, Mulanje, Lilongwe, Mchinji, Nkhata Bay, and Dowa.

HeR Liberty is keen to continue to expand the reach and impact of the YEAH! board game, ensuring that adolescents across Malawi have access to accurate information and support services to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.



KEY CHALLENGES

Monitoring and Evaluation System:

HeR Liberty acknowledges the necessity of a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for organisational growth and effectiveness. However, due to limited institutional resources, we have primarily operated on a project-based M&E approach rather than a comprehensive organisational one. Thanks to the support received from the Sonke Justice Capacity Building grant, we have made significant strides towards rectifying this gap. In particular, we have been able to recruit a dedicated M&E officer tasked with developing and implementing an M&E framework aligned with our strategic objectives. We anticipate that this framework will be fully operational at the beginning of the year 2024, enabling us to better assess and enhance our impact.

Resource Mobilisation:

During the period of 2022-2023, HeR Liberty encountered significant challenges in mobilising additional institutional resources, particularly due to the absence of dedicated staff to lead these efforts. Without experienced professionals focused solely on fundraising and donor engagement, our organisation has struggled to secure the necessary financial support to sustain our programs and initiatives for additional 2-3 years post the year 2023. Limited networks and credibility within the philanthropic sector further compounded these challenges, making it difficult to attract donors and secure grants. The absence of dedicated staff hindered our ability to develop and implement effective fundraising strategies, resulting in constrained resources and impacting our ability to scale our impact.

Staff Retention:

Staff retention emerged as a notable challenge for HeR Liberty during the years 2022-2023. Limited financial resources constrained our ability to offer competitive salaries and benefits packages, making it difficult to retain talented and committed staff members. These factors led to higher turnover rates, impacting institutional knowledge and continuity within the organisation.

Staff Capacity Building:

Enhancing staff capacity posed significant challenges for HeR Liberty during the reporting period. With limited resources to invest in comprehensive staff development and training programs proved to be difficult. The absence of dedicated experienced staff or Human Resource Manager focused on capacity building further compounded this challenge, as existing team members juggled multiple responsibilities with limited time and capacity for professional development. The rapid growth and evolution of our organisation necessitated ongoing skill-building initiatives. Support from Sonke Gender Justice had helped improve staff capacity especially for the Executive Director, however additional resources were needed to provide the necessary support and training to all staff team members, impacting our organisational effectiveness.



Future Plan Post-2023 for HeR Liberty

HeR Liberty is committed to diligently implementing our strategic plan 2023-2028 objectives to advance the well-being and empowerment of adolescents and youth.

- We will focus on promoting holistic health and well-being by expanding access to comprehensive health information using the YEAH! Board game.
- Empowering youth participation in decision-making and governance processes will remain a priority as we work to create platforms for young people to voice their opinions and influence policies that affect their lives.
- We will continue our efforts to ensure equitable and quality education for all adolescents and youth, advocating for enhanced educational standards in public government schools and improved facilities dedicated to addressing menstrual health and hygiene specifically for girls.
- Enhancing economic opportunities for adolescents and youth will also be a key focus, by establishing pathways to economic empowerment through fostering career awareness, and providing entrepreneurship development opportunities and learnerships through our youth hub.

Maintenance and Enhancement of Robust M&E System:

HeR Liberty recognises the importance of maintaining and enhancing our robust M&E system to track the progress and impact of our programs. We will continue to systematically collect and analyse for improvement. By leveraging data-driven insights, we will adapt our strategies and approaches to better meet the evolving needs of adolescents and youth. Additionally, we will invest in capacity building initiatives to ensure that our team members are equipped with the skills and resources needed to effectively utilise the M&E system for informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

Prioritisation of Social Entrepreneurship with the YEAH Board Game:

HeR Liberty remains committed to prioritising social entrepreneurship through the promotion and dissemination of the YEAH board game. We will continue to facilitate training and provide the tool to other organisations and development agencies, enabling them to integrate it into their sexual reproductive health programs. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, we will expand the reach of the YEAH board game to new communities and regions, empowering young people worldwide to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health. Additionally, we will explore opportunities for innovation and adaptation to ensure that the YEAH board game remains relevant and impactful in addressing the evolving needs and challenges in the field of sexual reproductive health and comprehensive sexuality education.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In 2022 and 2023, HeR Liberty recorded a total revenue/funding of MK169,796,902.52 (\$163,024.67).

Below is a table that illustrates the donor funds received.

DONOR	AMOUNT RECEIVED (MWK)	AMOUNT RECEIVED(\$) @ RATE 1041
Action Aid	41,816,362.80	40,140.33
IREX	47,974,692.75	46,085.20
Palladium	640,000.00	614.35
PMNCH	16,233,750.00	15,583.09
Sonke Year 1	11,251,084.96	10,800.13
Sonke Year 2	13,547,940.01	13,004.93
UNAIDS	14,002,100.00	13,440.88
UNESCO	15,493,560.00	14,872.56
Y-HUB AMREF	8,837,412.00	8,483.20
Grand Total	169,796,902.52	163,024.67

FINANCIAL SUMMARY CONT...

Our financial allocations in 2023 were as follows: 39% to program activities, 37% to staff salaries, and 24% to operational costs. This allocation strategy underscores our commitment to maximising impact through direct beneficiary support and efficient operational management. Additionally, in 2023, we successfully implemented Sage accounting software.



MEET THE TEAM

CAROLINE MKANDAWIRE

Executive Director

HASTINGS BANDA

Head of Programs for Development

WENDIE OKENZIE

Finance and Administration Manager

MOSES NHLANE

M&E Manager

SCHOLAR JIMU

Head of Programs for Health

WEZZIE MBENDERA

Programs Officer

SHEPHERD HAMBAYANI

Communications Officer

DINAH SALUNDA

Administration Assistant

