

Climate Change and SRHR

exploring intersections through Body Mapping



Case Study of Good Practise

**Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique,
Laos and Myanmar | March, 2024**

1. Introduction

Body Mapping, a unique process of creating body maps using drawing, painting or other art-based techniques, was employed by Plan International Finland. This method, when complemented with climate change-related questions, provided a visual representation of young people's concerns and experiences regarding the impact of climate change on their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). This innovative approach is part of the My Body My Future 2 (MBMF2), a collaborative programme supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and implemented with country teams and partners in Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Laos and Myanmar.

2. Background

Project teams and partners conducted youth consultations in all six MBMF2 programme countries, supporting learning among participating youth and contributing to youth-led project planning to assess and address the impacts of climate change on SRHR.

SRHR and climate change

Understanding the linkages between climate change and young people's SRHR is a new practice. Climate change is a stark reality, already unfolding and set to worsen in the coming decades. Grasping the connections from climate change to SRHR is crucial for designing sustainable and effective programme strategies that cater to the needs of people in vulnerable situations, including adolescent girls, in all their diversity.

Adolescent girls and young women

Climate change has gendered impacts on health. For instance, droughts, floods, cyclones and heat exposure impact differently girls and women compared to boys and men. Exposure to heat can affect maternal and neonatal health negatively; droughts result in water scarcity which makes it harder to take care of menstrual hygiene, and conflicts increase the risk of gender-based violence. Due to gender norms, the burden of girls and young women increases during disasters and climate-related stresses because of the increased time used in care work and household chores, such as fetching water and ensuring the household has energy and

food. In some contexts, young girls and women also have poor access to health services, which creates increased danger for them during conflicts and disasters.

Gender and inclusion

Working towards the SRHR-related well-being and health of children, adolescents, and youth (CAY) in all their diversity is at the heart of the MBMF2 programme. Beyond gender and age, other intersecting vulnerabilities, such as socioeconomic status and disabilities, increase climate change's negative impacts on SRHR. Consequently, one aim of the body mapping methodology is to teach young people about the different ways climate change affects different people and to correct misconceptions related to it.

3. Our good practice

Description of the good practice

Body Mapping is a participatory, dialogue-oriented, and visual tool for learning. Mapping is conducted in small groups, usually consisting of young people with similar identities, to make discussions about a potentially sensitive topic easier and more comfortable for them. Groups can be separated by sex, age and ability. For instance, in Uganda, there were separate groups for boys and girls.

The entire process lasts approximately 2.5 hours and is organized in a private location, involving one facilitator and one notetaker. Facilitators should be respected and trusted

individuals. Young people who have previous knowledge of SRHR, gender, and climate change and are comfortable facilitating the discussion can act as facilitators. However, they may need the support of an adult mentor to prepare for the session and to reach out for support if needed during the consultation.

The facilitator starts by sharing knowledge on SRHR, ensuring everyone is comfortable and able to participate. The participants draw an outline of a body on paper and add different parts of the body linked to SRHR, while the facilitator encourages discussion with the help of guiding questions. After completing the drawing, the facilitator initiates a discussion on climate change and its impacts on health and well-being. To represent the climate change impacts highlighted by the participants, signs such as an image of water (for floods) and the sun (for drought) are placed on the body map. With the help of guiding questions, participants share their experiences and ideas on how climate change affects their health, well-being, and bodies. A body map provides a visual image and a shared reference to explore the intersection of climate change and SRHR.

The Body Mapping method

Overall goal: To learn about young people's concerns and experiences related to the intersection of climate change and SRHR to facilitate a safe and supportive space for them to explore this intersection.

Description of key partnerships

Plan International Finland designed the body mapping methodology with the support of international consultant Anjalee Kohli and a team from the African Centre for Trade and Development (ACTADE) in 2022. Country focal points, including Plan International staff and partners, shared feedback after applying the method in Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Laos and Myanmar in 2022. Youth from the I Decide project in Uganda, with the support of ACTADE, trained SRHR experts from Plan International at the end of 2023. The aim of the youth-led training was to share good practices and lessons learned,

facilitating the application of Body Mapping in other Plan International projects beyond the MBMF2 programme. Eevi Heikkinen, an intern at Plan International Finland in 2024, drafted this case study to share good practices.

4. Our Learnings

Successes

The main objective of the approach was to facilitate a space for young people to discuss and reflect on their experiences linked to the intersection of SRHR and climate change. One success that could be identified was that in the consultations the young people seemed comfortable about discussing stigmatized topics such as sex.

The questions enabled personal reflections and resulted in shared learning that inspired the young people to act on climate change. Many of the participants committed to sensitise others about climate change and SRHR.

It was also identified that the Body Mapping methodology is easily transferable and could be applied in various contexts as it is affordable and does not require a lot of staff or supplies. It can also be facilitated in various types of places if they offer privacy for the participants.

Gaps and Challenges

In some settings, the facilitators did not fully understand the tool, and instead of visualizing the intersection of climate change and SRHR, the body map illustrated the physical body and its parts. Henceforward, it is important to make sure that the facilitators understand the methodology well enough to lead a productive session where young people have the potential to learn and share effectively.

During the discussions, participants tend to come up with inaccurate information. It is the role of the facilitator to tactfully correct misconceptions, malpractices or any untrue information shared without discouraging open discussion and participation.

Innovation

The Body Mapping methodology is easily transferable to different contexts and does not require a lot of resources. It is an

innovative way for youth to explore the ever-increasing impact of climate change on their present life and future aspirations and the linkages between climate change impact and SRHR.

When implementing the Body Mapping methodology in Uganda, the youth participating enjoyed the discussion, and valuable information was gained from their experiences related to the intersection of SRHR and climate change.

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7. Pictures



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We strive for a just world, working together with children, young people, our supporters, and partners. We believe that gender equality is central to achieving long-term change. We have a vision of a world that values girls, promotes their rights and ends injustice.

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