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NEWSLETTER



Turning Stories into Stages for Change-pg 2

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CONNECTING COMMUNITIES, TRANSFORMING LIVES

Dear Readers

Welcome to the September 2025 edition of the Pangaea Zimbabwe Newsletter. This month, our stories remind us that transformation begins when communities come together, whether through theatre, health systems strengthening, or open conversations about mental health.

From Lupane, where Village Health Workers are bringing life-saving services closer to the people, to Malawi, where young leaders turned their stories into theatre for change, we see the power of collective action. At the SHAZ Hub, young people continue to redefine what it means to access health services with dignity, choice, and respect. And on World Suicide Prevention Day, we joined the global call to change the narrative and affirm that every voice matters.

As you read through these pages, we hope you are inspired by the resilience, creativity, and courage that drive our mission. Together with partners, communities, and young leaders, we continue to envision a future where every individual life a healthy, productive, and quality life.

The Editorial Team

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

1 - PZ applauded for work in Mat North

2 - Voices of Change

4 - Choice. Respect. Dignity

5 - Thriving in the face if climate change

6- Every Voices brings hope



Egmont Trust applauds PZ's work in Lupane District

Wild4Life had the privilege of hosting representatives from The Egmont Trust, Ms. Louise Dixon and Mr. M. Kapuka, on a monitoring and appreciation visit to St Paul's Hospital in Lupane District. The purpose of the visit was to monitor progress and appreciate the strides made by the program in strengthening primary health care services in the district.

During the visit, the Egmont team engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including the District Health Executive representative, St Paul's clinic facility staff, program staff, Community ART refill groups, Village Health Workers (VHWs), and adolescents living with HIV. These interactions provided the donor with a holistic picture of how facility- and community-based efforts complement each other to improve health outcomes.

Community ART refill groups shared how peer-led support has made treatment more accessible while reducing stigma. "*We no longer feel alone; the group is our family, and it keeps us strong in our journey,*" one member said, drawing nods of encouragement from the visiting team. Adolescents spoke with courage about how youth-friendly services have given them confidence to manage their health while continuing with school and other pursuits.

Reflecting on the visit, Ms Dixon noted: "*We are encouraged by the strong collaboration between communities, health facilities, and local health workers. The stories we've heard today show how investments in primary health care are transforming lives and giving hope, especially to young people.*"

As part of demonstrating accountability to community health cadres, the program also provided incentives to strengthen the motivation and sustainability of grassroots health services.

A total of sixty-four Village Health Workers distributed across Jotsholo, Tshongokwe, Dongamuzi, Mdlankuzi, Dandanda, and Kanyandavu, and eight Mental Health Cadres in Jotsholo, Mdlankuzi, and Dongamuzi were incentivised.

This support ensures that VHWs and mental health cadres, who are often the first point of contact for health concerns in their communities, remain motivated and equipped to continue their life-saving work.

The visit concluded with reflections from both donors and community representatives, reaffirming the importance of partnerships in advancing quality, accessible, and sustainable primary healthcare services. Pangaea Zimbabwe remains committed to working alongside communities, health facilities, and donors to achieve lasting impact.

"...investments in primary health care are transforming lives and giving hope..."



Stories of Power, Voices of Change



Cohort participants after receiving their certificates

Pangaea Zimbabwe had the opportunity to participate in the second cohort of the Young African Leaders Academy (YALA), represented by Farai Artwell Manyemba and Princess Mharire. From South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, and Namibia, a vibrant group of changemakers gathered in Malawi, each carrying stories, dreams, and a passion for change. Over the course of ten days, these young leaders embarked on a transformative journey rooted in creativity, leadership, and the power of theatre.

The academy began with trust-building and teamwork activities. Through rhythm, laughter, and movement, participants grew into a community bound by a shared purpose. What started as a room full of strangers quickly blossomed into a circle of allies, each discovering the power of collaboration. They were not just learning how to facilitate; they were learning how to hold space for voices often left unheard.

Soon, the spotlight turned to storytelling, the heartbeat of theatre. With courage and vulnerability, participants wove real-life experiences into compelling narratives for promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).

As Farai Artwell Manyemba reflected, "*The YALA workshop was transformative for me, showing how personal stories and theatre can go beyond art to become powerful tools for sexual health promotion. I witnessed how lived experiences, especially from marginalized voices, can spark empathy, challenge stigma, and inspire change. This experience has deepened my belief that storytelling is central to advancing SRH in our communities.*"

As the journey deepened, character development took centre stage. Participants stepped into roles that mirrored their communities, shaping voices and gestures that reflected both struggle and resilience.



Farai Manyemba during one of the activities during the program.

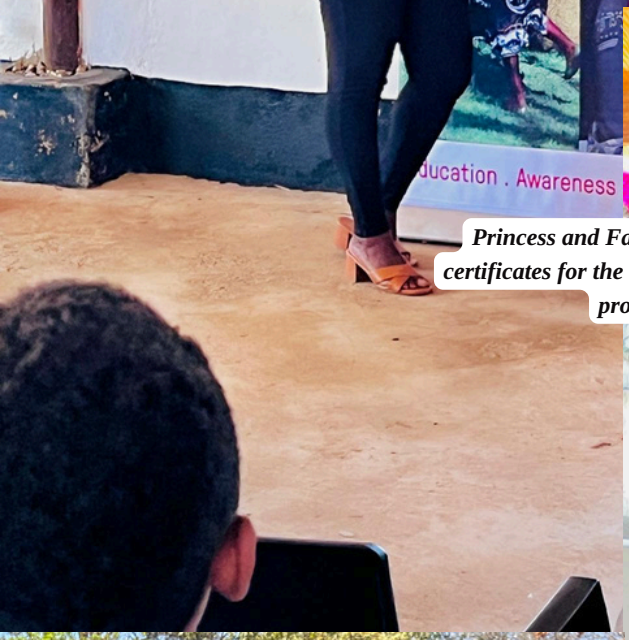
The stage became alive with characters that were not only believable but urgent, embodiments of the promotion each young leader was championing. In every performance, the line between art and activism blurred, until theatre itself became a mirror of society and a tool for change.

Princess Mharire also shared her reflections on the training's impact: "*This training has opened my eyes to the importance of involving men in SRH initiatives. I've also learned how to use theatre as a powerful tool to challenge stigma and misinformation. It's shown me that art can create meaningful dialogue and understanding in ways traditional methods often cannot.*"





Princess performing drama during the program



Princess and Farai, receiving their certificates for the Theatre for A Change program.





Farai making a presentation during one of the activities



Princess Mharire during the end-of-program interview.

Through this holistic approach, Theatre for A Change ensures that both men and women are actively engaged in SRH discussions, fostering mutual respect and driving more substantial impact across communities.

Interactive Theatre for A Change then brought a powerful twist. Scenes did not end when the curtain fell, instead, they opened. Participants paused, rewound, and reshaped moments, sparking conversations and inviting solutions. Theatre ceased to be performance alone; it became dialogue, a shared exploration of justice, and a bold reimagining of what communities could be.

The culmination came when Cohort 2 stepped onto the stage before civil society partners, the Malawi media, and esteemed allies including Oxfam, UN Women, FAWEMA, Plan International Malawi, Youth Wave, and Save the Children. With bravery and conviction, they performed stories rooted in lived realities, stories that challenged perceptions and inspired action. As Farai reflected on applying his learning back home,

“I returned to Zimbabwe equipped with new facilitation skills in forum theatre, character development, and narrative building. My goal is to create safe, creative spaces where young people can share their realities and shape the dialogue on SRH. Theatre can break barriers, dismantle stigma, and make conversations about health and rights more inclusive and relatable.”

As the program ended, one truth was clear: this was not an ending but a beginning. Each young leader now carries home not only the skills of facilitation and storytelling but also the spirit of solidarity and the courage to lead change. The stage in Malawi may have gone quiet, but across five countries, the echoes of Cohort 2 will continue to resound, in communities, in movements, and in every bold step taken toward justice.



The Year 2 cohort participants

Choice. Respect. Dignity

Each year on September 4, the world marks World Sexual Health Day, a reminder that sexual health is about more than the absence of disease; it is about choice, respect, consent, and dignity. For PZ, this day aligns with our mission to expand access to quality, youth-friendly SRH services.

Our flagship SHAZ Hub is a safe, innovative space where young people access comprehensive services like HIV prevention, family planning, and contraceptive care. Beyond health provision, it fosters open dialogue, challenges stigma, and builds confidence for informed decisions about their bodies and futures.

“*Visiting the SHAZ Hub has given me the tools to make informed choices about my sexual and reproductive health. It’s not just about accessing services, it’s about understanding my options, knowing my rights, and feeling empowered to make decisions that shape my future.*”- Patience, regular client at the Hub in Chitungwiza.

The SHAZ Hub empowers young people as peer educators and advocates, making them active drivers of change. Through digital tools, outreach, and community engagement, it connects facilities with communities to deliver inclusive, youth-friendly sexual health services.
Cleopatra Makura, who works with young women in tertiary institutions, noted:“*Access to HIV prevention tools like PrEP should be a right, not a privilege. The SHAZ Hub helps us protect our futures and live with dignity.*”



Cleopatra Makura, during the health wellness program in Zvishavane.

This World Sexual Health Day, we reaffirmed our commitment to advancing sexual health rights in Zimbabwe, ensuring young people have the knowledge, services, and supportive spaces they need to thrive.

Health Workers: Adapting, Thriving, Surviving



Presentation during the workshop

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, climate change is no longer a distant threat, it is already reshaping the way communities live, work, and access healthcare. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, floods, and droughts are placing additional pressure on local health systems, demanding urgent action.

In response to these pressing challenges, Pangaea Zimbabwe's Wild4Life program, with support from the Sanofi Foundation under the project "Strengthening Resilient Local Health Systems for Climate Impact Adaptation," conducted a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop in Binga and Lupane districts. The program targeted Nurses in Charge and Environmental Health Technicians drawn from seventeen health facilities, ten in Binga and seven in Lupane. These frontline health workers are often the first point of contact for communities during emergencies, making their role in climate adaptation crucial.

The training also brought together representatives from the District Health Executive teams, Agritex officers, and the Meteorological Services Department, ensuring a multisectoral approach to addressing climate-sensitive health issues. Participants were apprised of how climate change directly affects health outcomes, explored strategies for emergency response, and learned practical approaches to adaptation. Beyond knowledge sharing, the workshop was designed to strengthen the resilience of local health systems, enabling them to withstand and recover from climate-related health threats while promoting sustainable practices that reduce environmental risks.

"*This training opened our eyes to how climate change directly impacts our work. We are now better equipped to respond, and most importantly, to help our communities adapt,*" said one participant from Lupane.

By enhancing the capacity of nurses and environmental health technicians, the training equipped them with the tools and skills needed to cascade the knowledge to colleagues and communities. This creates a ripple effect of resilience, ensuring that health services remain accessible, responsive, and effective even in the face of climate disruptions.

"The health system must not only survive but thrive in the face of climate change."

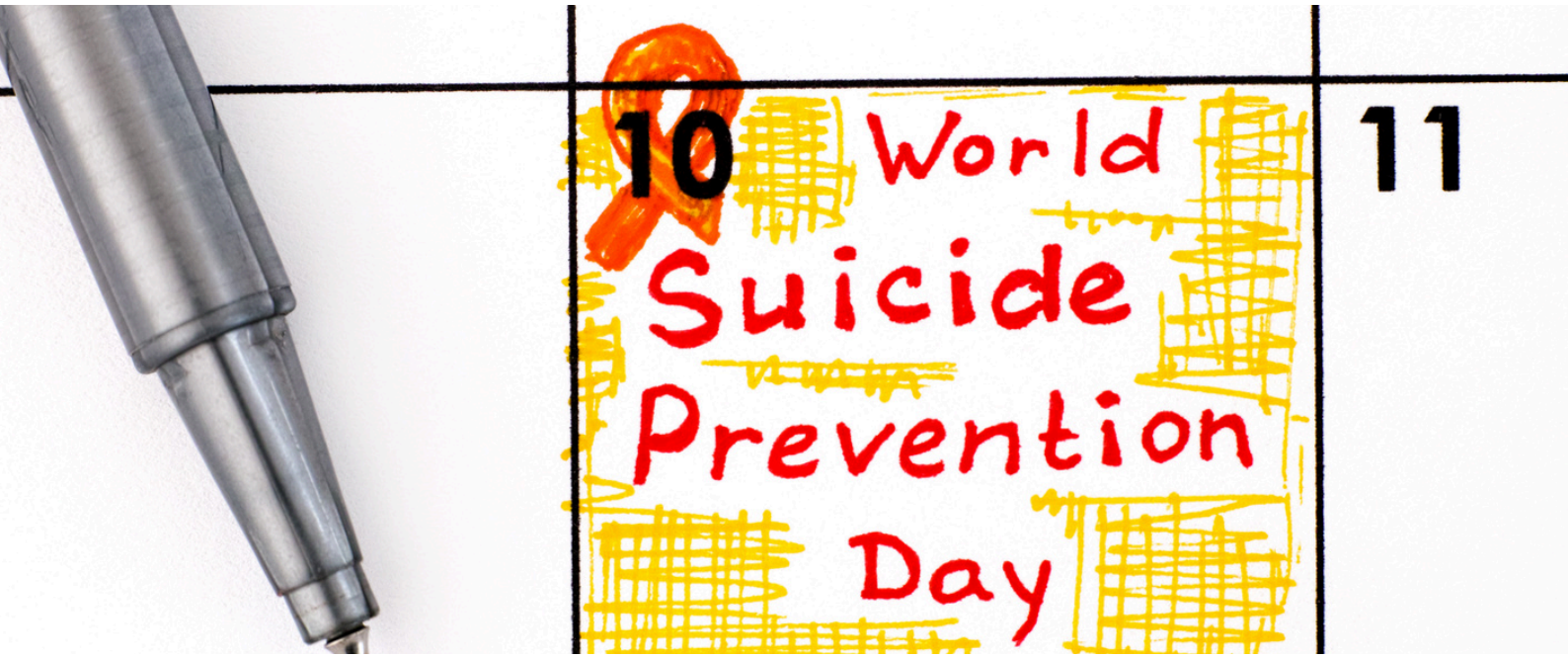
This initiative is more than just a workshop; it is an investment in the future of local health systems. As participants implement climate and health resilience strategies across their respective facilities, they will be contributing to stronger communities and a healthier tomorrow. Together, we are building a system that can withstand climate shocks while continuing to deliver quality healthcare to those who need it most





Did You Know?

Climate change is expected to increase the spread of diseases such as malaria, cholera, and respiratory infections in Zimbabwe. Strengthening health systems today means communities will be better prepared to face these challenges tomorrow.



Every Voice Brings Hope

On Wednesday, September 10, 2025, the world united to mark the World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) under the theme “Changing the Narrative.” Running from 2024 to 2026, this global focus is a call to challenge harmful myths, tackle stigma, and create spaces for open, compassionate conversations about suicide. Suicide remains a complex and deeply human issue, often surrounded by silence, misunderstanding, and fear. Stigma prevents many people from reaching out for the support they need, while myths perpetuate isolation and shame. Changing the narrative means replacing judgment with empathy, silence with dialogue, and hopelessness with hope.

Pangaea Zimbabwe (PZ), recognizes that mental health is an integral part of overall well-being, especially for young people and underserved communities. Our community-based programs emphasise peer-led support, mentorship, and youth empowerment, giving young people the tools to express themselves, share their stories, and seek help without fear of judgment. By integrating mental health into our broader health and promotion work, we are contributing to a shift in how communities talk about, and respond to, suicide and mental health challenges.

As we observed the World Suicide Prevention Day 2025, we were reminded of the role we all play in breaking the silence and creating a culture of care. Let us challenge harmful stereotypes about suicide and mental health, promote understanding and empathy, and encourage help-seeking behaviours by building supportive environments. Every voice matters, and every conversation has the power to save a life. Together, we can build a society were reaching out is always met with compassion and care. Look out for our upcoming podcast, where we will explore suicide prevention more deeply and share voices from the community.

ASHLEY NGWENYA, **COMPASS Global Coordinator**

“Unaddressed low self-esteem and trauma often lie at the root of suicide. The betrayed lover, the joker masking pain, the quiet soul battling within, all might have lived another day if met with a simple, genuine ‘Are you okay?’ Suicide can be prevented through self-love, seeking mental health support, compassionate relationships, and prayer. You are worthy, with purpose in this lifetime.”





PRINCESS RUDO MHARIRE, **BDU Officer**

"Your story isn’t over yet. Even in the darkest moments, reaching out can light a path to hope."

FARAI TALENT MANYEMBA, **Care and Treatment, Program Assistant**

"Mental health matters. Speak your truth, break the silence, and know that you are never alone."





BELINDA MAGARIRA, **BDU Officer**

“Behind every suicide is not just a statistic, but a story of pain, silence, and missed opportunities for support. On World Suicide Prevention Day, we are reminded that prevention is not only about services but also about compassion, community, and creating safe spaces where people can speak without fear of judgment. At Pangaea Zimbabwe, we believe that mental health is health, and every effort to prevent suicide is an investment in dignity, hope, and life itself.”

CLEOPATRA MAKURA, **Project Officer**

“Suicide is often the result of silent struggles and unspoken pain. On World Suicide Prevention Day, we are reminded to listen with compassion and create safe, stigma-free spaces. At Pangaea Zimbabwe, we believe every life matters, and even small acts of care can be the lifeline someone needs.”



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We envision an environment in which all human beings live healthy, productive, and quality lives.

We strive to transform the lives of underserved populations by working to increase access to quality, responsive, evidence based, client-centered comprehensive health services through facility and community engagement and policy advocacy

Equity

Intergrity

Inclusivity

Stewardship