

Strengthening Adolescent Health: Highlights from SHARP's Annual Reflection Meeting in Zambia

As the Solutions for Supporting Healthy Adolescents and Rights Protection (SHARP) project reaches the end of its third year, partners from across the Great Lakes Region gathered in April in Livingstone, Zambia for our Annual Reflection meeting. This important milestone offered a space to assess our progress, celebrate our collective achievements, and strategically plan for the fourth and final year of the project. As we strive to secure ongoing funding, we remain committed to finishing strong and maximising our impact for adolescents in the region.



The SHARP Consortium met from 2-4 April for the 2025 Annual Reflection.

We were warmly hosted by our Zambian partner, Medicines Research and Access Platform ([MedRAP](#)), and energised by the shared commitment of seven consortium members to advancing adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR) in Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia and DRC.

The meeting opened with calls to action and reflections on progress from key local stakeholders. Honourable Dr. Malungwe Kalaluka, District Health Director from Zambia's Ministry of Health, highlighted recent efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery. He emphasised the Ministry's push for more inclusive decision-making, noting that technical working groups and adolescent representatives have been established in various districts, with the support of MedRAP. Faith leaders and community members are also actively engaging in efforts to support adolescent health. Looking ahead, key priorities include stakeholder consultations with the Ministry of Health, support for new task forces, and closer collaboration with local

decision-makers to monitor progress and ensure essential services reach those who need them most.

The Mayor of Livingstone, her Worship Constance Nalishebo Muleabai, officially welcomed us, and affirmed the City Council's commitment to ongoing collaboration. She commended the SHARP consortium for its efforts in improving adolescent health and called for holistic and sustained interventions that go beyond service delivery; emphasising education, contraception access, and community support as essential pillars.

The opening also featured a performance by the Tusole Youth Theatre Group, a member of the local multistakeholder platform on ASRHR, a key pillar of SHARP's work in the province. Their message *"Unity and solidarity in the face of sexual and reproductive health rights barriers"* set a compelling tone for the week ahead.

Over the following two days, each partner organisation shared top achievements to date and laid out priorities for the year ahead. These sessions were rich with insight, learnings, and practical discussions on how to best maximise our collective efforts in the final phase of the project. A standout moment was the participation of six SHARP Youth Champions: Blessing, Petronella, Cassandra, and Innocent from Zambia, Abdiaziz from Kenya, and Daniella from the DRC. Their reflections provided vital, first-hand insights into the state of ASRHR in their countries, including the experiences of young people with disabilities. They shared inspiring progress alongside the ongoing challenges young people continue to face in accessing vital services and support.



SHARP Youth Champions present on the challenges and experiences of youth in rural parts of Zambia.



Southern Province, Minister, Hon. Credo Nanjuwa reaffirmed Government commitments to supporting adolescent SRH in Zambia.

The final day of the Annual Reflection featured MedRAP's scorecarding exercise, a dynamic, community-led process carried out in collaboration with the local MeTA multi-stakeholder platform. This session brought together local councillors, healthcare workers, youth advocates, media, and civil society members to collectively assess the availability and quality of SRHR services in their community.

We were honoured to be joined by Southern Province Minister, Hon. Credo Nanjuwa, who passionately advocated for stronger action on adolescent health. He expressed deep concern that Southern Province currently has Zambia's highest teenage pregnancy rate, 42.5%, and issued a call to action:

"We need to really intensify this relationship, and the Southern Province administration will engage in gear 8 in the fast lane to fight this issue."

To close the week, we visited Simonga Rural Health Post, where a Youth Friendly Space has recently been launched. This dedicated area allows adolescents to access contraceptive services and support in a welcoming, stigma-free environment. For SHARP partners, the visit was a valuable opportunity to see impact in action, and a hopeful, energising way to end an inspiring week.



Youth Friendly Space at Simonga Rural Health Post, where adolescents can access SRH services and support.