



press release

UNFPA AND MINEKE FOUNDATION LAUNCH YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT THROUGH DIGITAL STORYTELLING

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The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Mineke Foundation (MF) will launch a new storytelling project for youth on Thursday 20th of October: “Youth empowerment through digital storytelling”. The project is aimed at getting an insight in the lives of adolescents and young people in Liberia with digital storytelling through social media. A group of young people will be reporting on their own lives and their friends’. They will show what social issues affect them in their communities and who and what inspires them. The goal of the project is to use these digital stories to give an insight into their lives and raise awareness for their day to day social challenges, barriers, needs, aspirations, lessons and successes. These stories will be used for advocacy and to get more attention for and focus on youth in Liberia..

“UNFPA and Mineke Foundation share similar objectives. Both organizations are committed to ensuring that young people fulfil their potential and seek ways to empower them to do so. We are very happy we can combine our strengths to empower Liberia’s youth.” Says Tonia Dabwe, Founder and Chair of Mineke Foundation.

“We want to inspire young people to use what they have and start where they are to make changes both in their own lives and in their communities. Providing them the opportunity to avoid early pregnancy, child marriage and sexual exploitation as examples of social barriers to their personal development”. Says UNFPA Liberia Country Representative Dr. Oluremi Sogunro.

Project method

In the first phase of the project selected members of Mineke Foundation’s adolescent and youth club will use mobile phones to document and report stories from different dimensions of their lives. Say their day to day social challenges, barriers to social services, needs, aspirations, lessons, successes etc. These stories show the various challenges Liberia’s youth is experiencing and gives them an opportunity to bring their plight to various key decision makers and stakeholders for action. While they are also lifting the voices of the very vulnerable young people in identified communities.

Advocating for change and social accountability

The project will also empower the young people behind the smart phones. They will be able to access knowledge on social media and internet, gain journalistic skills and positively utilize existing national and global forums of young social media activists to bring about desired change in communities. This result is expected to increase their active participation in advocating for change and constructively seeking social accountability from all concerned duty bearers.



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About UNFPA

UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA expands the possibilities for women and young people to lead healthy and productive lives. Since UNFPA started working in 1969, the number - and rate - of women dying from complications of pregnancy or childbirth has been halved. Families are smaller and healthier. Young people are more connected and empowered than ever before.

About Mineke Foundation

Mineke Foundation was established in 2009 by Tonia Dabwe to continue the work of her Liberian father and Dutch mother in Liberia. Tonia's mother has been missing since the Liberian civil war. The Foundation provides educational activities for children, youth and adults and encourages entrepreneurship. The basic philosophy of Mineke Foundation is that people are responsible for their own lives. The Foundation helps them shape this responsibility through direct involvement and long-term commitment. In commendation of her work, Tonia Dabwe received the International African Woman of the Year award in 2013 in London.

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