

## Amua Accelerator II

### Overview

Amua Accelerator II is the second round of *UNFPA Innovation Accelerator*<sup>1</sup>. The accelerator focused on identifying, accelerating and scaling innovative inclusive solutions that aim to address challenges facing People With Disability (PWD) to access SRH information and services. The accelerator aims at identifying innovative youths in all fields across Tanzania who have creative ideas, product or services that can help to bridge the gap between PWD and SRH information and services.

*Sahara Ventures*<sup>2</sup> partnered with UNFPA to implement the first version of the Innovation Accelerator titled, *Amua Accelerator*<sup>3</sup> which was geared to generate innovative solutions to sexual and reproductive health-related challenges zooming in to the problem of teenage pregnancy in Tanzania. After a period of 6 months and accelerating 10 startups (social enterprises) 4 startups managed to receive technical support and seed fund launch their products to the market. The four products; *Maisha Package*<sup>4</sup>, *e-Shangazi*<sup>5</sup>, *Mkwawa Arts Space*<sup>6</sup> and *Harakati Za Lucy*<sup>7</sup> combined they have reached thousands of youths through digital engagements and the actual products and services they are currently producing and offering. The innovators have become leaders and SRH champions in their own communities helping youths to be informed about SRH. The teams combined they employ 22 youths who are actively involved with the startups.

Building up from the initial success and the manifesto that, big problems requires innovative solutions with an entrepreneurial mindset. UNFPA partnering with Sahara Ventures is adopting the same approach to encourage new innovations in the SRH sector but this time zooming in specifically to problems that face people with disability in the country. Tanzania has the second youngest population with a median age of the population being 18 years. The 10-24-year-old youth population constitutes 32 per cent of the total population. According to the *national disability survey in 2008*<sup>8</sup>, 3.2 million Tanzanians (7.8%) of the population aged 7 years and above have some form of disability and up to 5.4 million (13.2%) are affected by disability. The Tanzania mainland has a slightly higher prevalence of disability (13.3%) than Zanzibar (9.3%). The prevalence is also somewhat higher in the rural areas (8.3%) than in urban areas (6.36%). The 2012 census identified 2,640,802 of people with disabilities (5.93%), a lower percentage than the 2008

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<sup>1</sup> <https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/topics/innovation-accelerator>

<sup>2</sup> <http://saharaventures.com/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://amua.or.tz/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.maishapackage.co.tz/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.eshangazi.co.tz>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.mkwawarts.co.tz/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tai.or.tz/harakati-za-lucy>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.sida.se/globalassets/sida/eng/partners/human-rights-based-approach/disability/rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-tanzania.pdf>

survey explained by the fact that the survey involved sampling whereas a census is a house to house count, hence more accurate. Ensuring no one is left behind in all these interventions is key. Access to timely, reliable and accurate SRH information is a basic right of every youth. Poor access to SRHR has been associated with young people's vulnerability to sexual health risks, such as early pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Youths and women with disabilities are subjected to additional hardships and are more likely to be subjected to sexual abuse and violence as well as being refused access to SRHR services and income-generating activities. According to the *Africa Youth Report*<sup>9</sup>, in 2011 about 28 per cent of women aged 20-24 in the Sub Saharan Africa region gave birth before the age of 18, with almost half of them have had their first sexual experience before their 15th birthday. The situation can be worse for people with a disability.

People with a disability faces a lot of challenges including; access to transport and information, negative attitudes of others at home, school and at work, inaccessibility to public services/premises, poverty and inadequate representation. Very few children with disabilities access education. Depending on the source, the enrolment figures for children with disabilities in primary school range from 0.1% to 10%. Most of them lack knowledge and information about important things affecting their lives from the early stage of their lives.

The Tanzanian government has made commitments to include people with disability in the country's development agenda. The 2002 Census was the first national census to include a question on disability. The *National Policy on Disability of 2004*<sup>10</sup> defined disability as, "*the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical, mental or social factors*". In 2010 Tanzania adopted the person with disability act titled, *Disability Act 2010*<sup>11</sup>. The act contains both the earlier definition of "disability" in the National Policy on Disability and a separate definition of a 'person with disability' which is broadly in line with the UNCRPD: "*a [person with a] physical, intellectual, sensory or mental impairment and whose functional capacity is limited by encountering attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers.*"

With all the effort that has been adopted with the government and other stakeholders still there is a lot of work that needs to be done to ensure the inclusion of PWDs in different areas of social economic advantages.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/african\\_youth\\_report\\_2011\\_final.pdf](https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/african_youth_report_2011_final.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.childrightsforum.org/files/National%20Policy%20on%20Disability%202004.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.lrct.go.tz/download/laws\\_2010/09-2010%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20Act,%202010.pdf](https://www.lrct.go.tz/download/laws_2010/09-2010%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20Act,%202010.pdf)