

PROGRESS REPORT
ON
Yatim Orphan Care Organization (YOCO)
throughout the year 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

This activity report provides a comprehensive overview of the activities conducted by the Yatim Orphan Care Organization (YOCO) throughout the year 2023. YOCO is a non-profit organization that is committed to improving the lives of orphans in the Somali Region by providing essential support in various areas, including education, healthcare, job creation, and housing assistance. This report aims to outline the organization's objectives, track its progress, identify challenges faced, document corrective actions taken, highlight lessons learned, and outline the key steps forward for each activity.

YOCO's primary objective is to ensure the holistic development and well-being of orphans in the Somali Region. With this aim in mind, the organization has implemented a range of initiatives to address the diverse needs of the orphaned children. These initiatives include educational programs to provide access to quality schooling, healthcare initiatives to ensure their physical well-being, job creation efforts to empower them with skills and income-generating opportunities, and housing support to provide safe and secure living environments.

Throughout 2024, YOCO has made significant progress in achieving its objectives. The organization has successfully enrolled a substantial number of orphaned children in educational programs, providing them with access to quality education. Additionally, YOCO has collaborated with local healthcare providers to deliver essential medical services to the orphans, ensuring their well-being and reducing the prevalence of preventable diseases. The organization has also implemented vocational training programs, equipping the orphans with valuable skills that enhance their employability and self-sufficiency.

However, YOCO has faced several challenges during the implementation of its activities. These challenges include limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of access to resources in remote regions. Despite these obstacles, YOCO has taken corrective actions such as seeking additional funding through grant applications and partnerships with other organizations, improving infrastructure through community engagement, and exploring innovative solutions to overcome resource limitations.

Through these challenges, YOCO has learned valuable lessons that have contributed to its growth and improved effectiveness. The organization has recognized the importance of building strong partnerships with government agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders to leverage resources and create sustainable change. YOCO has also realized the significance of conducting thorough needs assessments and engaging in continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the relevance and impact of its activities.

Looking ahead, YOCO plans to build upon its achievements and address the remaining challenges. The organization aims to expand its reach to more orphaned children in remote areas, enhance the quality of its programs, and implement long-term solutions for sustainable impact. YOCO remains committed to its mission of supporting orphans in the Somali Region and will continue to work tirelessly to improve their lives and empower them to reach their full potential.

In the following sections of this report, we will delve into the specific activities conducted by YOCO in 2023, outlining their objectives, progress, challenges, corrective actions, lessons learned, and key forward steps for each initiative.

1.1. Objectives

- Establish connections and collaborations with embassies and international non-governmental organizations in Addis Ababa.
- Provide training to the executive team and members of YOCO on proposal writing, fundraising, networking, and media engagement.
- Sponsor orphans by partnering with private schools to provide free education, including school fees, transportation, and uniforms.
- Enhance female education through social behavior change communication.
- Develop and implement advocacy plans to raise awareness and promote female education.

2. PROGRESS TOWARDS REPORT

2.1. Addis Ababa Experience Sharing

YOCO, in collaboration with Conciliation Resources (CR), embarked on a significant journey to Addis Ababa with the purpose of establishing connections and fostering collaborations with various embassies and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The trip took place from the 11th to the 18th of March, 2023. The primary objective of this visit was to cultivate valuable partnerships that would contribute to the ongoing efforts of YOCO and CR in promoting peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives.

During their time in Addis Ababa, YOCO and CR engaged in a series of productive meetings and discussions with representatives from different embassies and NGOs. These interactions provided a platform for sharing ideas, exchanging expertise, and exploring potential areas of collaboration. Through these efforts, YOCO and CR succeeded in establishing strong connections and laying the groundwork for future joint initiatives in the field of peacebuilding.

The Addis Ababa trip proved to be a significant milestone for YOCO and CR, as it enabled them to expand their network and forge partnerships with influential organizations and diplomatic entities. These collaborations would undoubtedly enhance the organizations' capacity to address conflicts, promote dialogue, and foster sustainable peace in various regions. The successful achievement of their objectives during this visit marked a promising step forward in YOCO and CR's ongoing commitment to building a more peaceful and harmonious world.

2.2. Training for Executive Team

In June 2023, YOCO organized a comprehensive training program for its executive team and members, focusing on key areas such as proposal writing, fundraising, networking, and media engagement. The training sessions, held on the 17th and 18th of June, aimed to enhance the team's capacity and knowledge in these critical skills.

During the training program, YOCO's executive team and members had the opportunity to develop their expertise in writing effective proposals, which is essential for securing funding and support for the organization's initiatives. The training also focused on

fundraising strategies, equipping the team with the necessary tools to identify potential donors, build relationships, and successfully raise funds for YOCO's projects.

Networking skills were another key aspect covered during the training. The team learned how to establish and nurture connections with individuals and organizations that could contribute to YOCO's mission. Effective networking plays a vital role in expanding YOCO's reach, accessing resources, and forming strategic partnerships.



Furthermore, the training program included sessions on media engagement, providing the team with insights into effectively communicating YOCO's message to the public and engaging with the media. This knowledge would enable the team to raise awareness about YOCO's work, attract support, and amplify the organization's impact.

By investing in this training program, YOCO demonstrated its commitment to strengthening its executive team and members, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to drive the organization's mission forward effectively. The enhanced capacity in proposal writing, fundraising, networking, and media engagement would undoubtedly contribute to YOCO's ability to make a positive difference in the lives of youth and promote peacebuilding initiatives.

2.3. Sponsorship of Orphans

On the 15th of September, 2023, YOCO, in collaboration with private schools, undertook a commendable initiative to sponsor the education of orphaned students in the Somali Region. Through their partnerships with these educational institutions, YOCO provided free education to 30 vulnerable children who had lost their parents or guardians.

The sponsorship program encompassed all aspects of the students' education, including covering their school fees, transportation expenses, and providing them with uniforms. By addressing the financial barriers associated with education, YOCO aimed to ensure that these orphaned students had access to quality education, which is crucial for their personal growth and future prospects.

By sponsoring the education of these orphaned students, YOCO demonstrated its commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children in the Somali Region. Education plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals and breaking the cycle of poverty. Through this initiative, YOCO not only provided these children with educational opportunities but also contributed to their overall well-being and development.

By investing in the education of orphaned students, YOCO aimed to create a positive impact on their lives, enabling them to acquire knowledge, skills, and opportunities that would shape their future. This initiative exemplifies YOCO's dedication to promoting youth development and ensuring equal access to education for all, regardless of their circumstances.

2.4. Enhancing Female Education through Social Behavior Change Communication

YOCO recognized the importance of enhancing female education and empowering girls in their communities. To address this, the organization implemented a project focusing on social behavior change communication (SBCC) to promote and support girls' education. The initiative aimed to challenge societal norms and barriers that hindered girls' access to education, while also raising awareness about the benefits of educating girls.

Through this project, YOCO employed various strategies of SBCC to engage with the community and foster positive attitudes towards girls' education. The organization conducted targeted awareness campaigns, using multimedia platforms such as radio,

television, and social media to disseminate messages that emphasized the value of educating girls. These campaigns aimed to challenge traditional beliefs and stereotypes that restricted girls' educational opportunities.

Additionally, YOCO organized community dialogues and workshops to engage with parents, community leaders, and local influencers. These sessions provided a platform for open discussions about the importance of educating girls, addressing concerns and misconceptions, and highlighting the long-term benefits for both individuals and the community as a whole. By involving key stakeholders, YOCO aimed to promote a supportive environment for girls' education and encourage community members to become advocates for change.

Furthermore, YOCO partnered with local schools and educational institutions to implement interventions that specifically targeted girls. This included providing scholarships, addressing gender-specific challenges, and offering mentorship programs to support girls in their educational journey. By addressing barriers such as financial constraints, cultural norms, and gender-based discrimination, YOCO sought to create an enabling environment that would empower girls to pursue education without hindrance.

Through the project's implementation, YOCO aimed to bring about a tangible change in attitudes and behaviors towards girls' education. By challenging social norms and engaging the community, the organization sought to create a supportive and inclusive environment where girls could thrive academically and fulfill their potential. By enhancing female education through SBCC, YOCO aimed to contribute to the overall empowerment of girls and promote gender equality in education.

2.5.MEL Planning and Kickoff

In September 14, YOCO initiated a collaborative effort with the International Research Institute (IRI) to develop a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan for their project. Recognizing the importance of effectively tracking progress, measuring impact, and fostering continuous learning, YOCO and IRI worked together to design a detailed framework for monitoring and evaluating the project's outcomes.

The MEL plan encompassed several key components. First, YOCO and IRI identified relevant indicators that would provide measurable data on the project's performance and impact. These indicators were carefully selected to align with the project's goals and objectives, ensuring that the evaluation process would capture essential aspects of the project's success.

Next, the MEL plan outlined data collection methodologies to gather information on the identified indicators. YOCO and IRI determined the most appropriate tools and techniques to collect quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring that the evaluation process would yield reliable and meaningful results. This could include surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis, among other methods.

Moreover, the MEL plan included an implementation timeline that specified when and how data collection activities would occur throughout the project's duration.

This timeline ensured that monitoring and evaluation efforts were integrated into the project's overall timeline, allowing for timely feedback and adjustments as needed.



The collaboration between YOCO and IRI in developing the MEL plan underscored their commitment to evidence-based decision-making and continuous learning. By implementing this robust monitoring and evaluation framework, YOCO aimed to assess the project's progress, identify areas for improvement, and capture valuable insights that would inform future programming and interventions.

The MEL planning and kickoff marked an important milestone in the project's implementation, setting the stage for systematic monitoring, rigorous evaluation, and meaningful learning that would further enhance YOCO's impact and effectiveness in their work.

2.6. Advocacy Plan

On September 21, 2023, YOCO finalized a comprehensive advocacy plan to promote female education. This plan served as a strategic roadmap, outlining the activities and strategies that YOCO would employ to advocate for the importance of educating girls and address the barriers hindering their access to education.

The advocacy plan encompassed various key components. It started with a clear articulation of the objectives and goals of the advocacy campaign, which were centered around promoting gender equality in education and creating an enabling environment for girls to pursue education without barriers.

Next, the plan identified target audiences and stakeholders who played critical roles in shaping policies and practices related to education. These included government officials, policymakers, community leaders, parents, teachers, and other influential individuals and organizations. By identifying these key stakeholders, YOCO aimed to tailor its advocacy efforts to effectively engage and influence them.

The plan also outlined specific advocacy strategies and activities that YOCO would undertake. These strategies included conducting policy research and analysis, developing evidence-based arguments, and creating compelling advocacy messages. YOCO planned to leverage various communication channels such as social media, public campaigns, community dialogues, and partnerships with media outlets to disseminate their messages widely and raise public awareness about the importance of girls' education.

In addition, the advocacy plan highlighted the importance of building coalitions and partnerships with like-minded organizations, both at the local and international levels. Collaborating with other entities working towards similar goals would amplify YOCO's advocacy efforts and enhance their collective impact.

The plan also included a monitoring and evaluation framework to track and assess the effectiveness of the advocacy activities. This allowed YOCO to measure progress, identify challenges, and make adjustments to their strategies as needed.

By developing a comprehensive advocacy plan, YOCO demonstrated its commitment to advancing the cause of female education through targeted and strategic advocacy

efforts. The plan provided a roadmap for YOCO's advocacy activities, ensuring that their efforts were well-coordinated, evidence-based, and impactful in promoting gender equality in education.

2.7. Consultative Workshops with Stakeholders

On October 5, 2023, YOCO organized a consultative workshop aimed at engaging government officials and school community stakeholders in advocating for female education. The workshop served as a platform for meaningful discussions, fostering buy-in from key stakeholders and ensuring their active participation in promoting and supporting girls' education.

The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants, including government representatives, policymakers, school administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders. By involving these stakeholders, YOCO aimed to create a collaborative environment and facilitate dialogue on the importance of female education and the barriers that hinder girls' access to education.



During the workshop, YOCO presented compelling evidence and data on the benefits of educating girls, highlighting the positive impact it can have on individuals, families, communities, and the society as a whole. This evidence-based approach aimed to raise awareness and change perspectives regarding gender stereotypes and biases related to education.

Through interactive sessions and facilitated discussions, participants had the opportunity to share their insights, experiences, and concerns related to female education. YOCO actively listened to their perspectives and sought to address any misconceptions or barriers that hindered girls' access to education. By fostering open

dialogue, YOCO aimed to build consensus and generate commitment among stakeholders to support and promote girls' education.

Furthermore, the workshop served as a platform for stakeholders to actively contribute to the development of strategies and action plans. Participants collaborated in identifying key interventions, policies, and practices that could create an enabling environment for girls' education. This participatory approach ensured that the solutions and strategies proposed were contextually relevant and had the support and ownership of the stakeholders involved.

Overall, the consultative workshop organized by YOCO played a crucial role in engaging government officials and school community stakeholders in advocating for female education. By fostering discussions, addressing concerns, and involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, YOCO aimed to strengthen partnerships, build consensus, and mobilize collective efforts to promote gender equality in education.

2.8. Community Sensitization Workshop

On October 19, 2023, YOCO organized a community sensitization workshop focused on raising awareness about the significance of female education and addressing the issue of high dropout rates among girls. The workshop specifically targeted community representatives, including traditional and religious leaders, who play influential roles in shaping community norms and attitudes.

The workshop sought to mobilize community support and involvement by providing a platform for open discussions and knowledge sharing. YOCO aimed to sensitize community representatives about the importance of girls' education, emphasizing the long-term benefits for individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

During the workshop, YOCO presented compelling evidence and data that highlighted the positive impact of educating girls, including improved health outcomes, increased economic opportunities, and enhanced social development. This evidence-based approach aimed to dispel myths, challenge misconceptions, and encourage a shift in attitudes towards girls' education.



The workshop facilitated interactive sessions where participants had the opportunity to share their perspectives, experiences, and concerns related to female education and dropout rates. YOCO actively listened to their viewpoints and engaged in constructive dialogue to address any cultural, social, or economic barriers that contributed to girls' dropping out of school.

Moreover, the workshop provided a platform for community representatives to identify and discuss potential solutions and strategies to address the dropout rates among girls. Participants collaborated on developing community-led initiatives that would create a supportive environment for girls' education, such as promoting gender equality, addressing early marriages, improving school infrastructure, and providing targeted support and mentorship programs for girls.

By targeting community representatives, including traditional and religious leaders, YOCO recognized the importance of mobilizing community support and involvement. These influential figures were key in shaping community norms, values, and behaviors. By sensitizing and engaging them in discussions about girls' education, YOCO aimed to foster a community-wide commitment to supporting and promoting female education.

Overall, the community sensitization workshop organized by YOCO played a vital role in



raising awareness, challenging cultural norms, and mobilizing community support to address the issue of high dropout rates among girls. By involving community representatives and facilitating dialogue, YOCO aimed to create an enabling environment that would empower girls to stay in school and fulfill their educational potential.

2.9. Consultative Workshop with Community Representatives

On October 26, 2023, YOCO organized a consultative workshop with community representatives, aiming to create a collaborative platform to enhance female student enrollment and reduce dropout rates. The workshop served as a space for meaningful discussions and action planning among stakeholders committed to improving girls' access to education.

The workshop brought together a diverse group of community representatives, including parents, teachers, school administrators, local leaders, and relevant community-based organizations. By involving these stakeholders, YOCO aimed to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the challenges faced by girls in accessing and staying in school.

During the workshop, YOCO facilitated discussions to understand the specific barriers and factors contributing to low enrollment and high dropout rates among girls in the community. Participants had the opportunity to share their insights, experiences, and concerns, creating an open dialogue that fostered a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

Through interactive sessions, stakeholders collaboratively identified potential solutions and strategies to enhance female student enrollment and reduce dropout rates. This participatory approach allowed for a sense of ownership and ensured that the proposed interventions were contextually relevant and sustainable.

The workshop also served as a space for stakeholders to develop action plans and commitments. Through facilitated group exercises, participants outlined specific steps, responsibilities, and timelines for implementing the identified strategies. This collaborative planning process ensured that the efforts of community representatives were aligned and coordinated, maximizing their collective impact.

Furthermore, the workshop emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation to track progress and make necessary adjustments. YOCO provided guidance on establishing mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of action plans, collecting relevant data, and assessing the effectiveness of interventions. This focus on monitoring and evaluation aimed to foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement within the community.

By organizing this consultative workshop with community representatives, YOCO demonstrated its commitment to participatory decision-making and community-driven solutions. The workshop provided a platform for stakeholders to work together, exchange ideas, and develop actionable plans to enhance female student enrollment and reduce dropout rates. Through this collaborative effort, YOCO aimed to create sustainable change and improve educational opportunities for girls in the community.

2.10. Billboard Making to increase awareness

On October 26, 2023, YOCO took a proactive step to increase awareness about the importance of female education, school enrollment, and retention rates by erecting a billboard in Jigjiga town. This billboard served as a visual reminder and a powerful communication tool to convey key messages to the community.

The billboard featured compelling visuals and concise messages that emphasized the significance of girls' education. It aimed to capture the attention of passersby and create a lasting impression, sparking conversations and promoting dialogue around the subject



By strategically placing the billboard in Jigjiga town, YOCO aimed to ensure maximum visibility and reach. The town's central location and high footfall made it an ideal location for disseminating the messages to a wide range of community members, including residents, commuters, and visitors.

The messages on the billboard were carefully crafted to

highlight the benefits of educating girls and the importance of supporting their enrollment and retention in schools. They may have included empowering slogans, statistics on girls' education, success stories of girls who have overcome barriers, or messages that challenge traditional gender stereotypes.

The billboard served as a constant reminder of the importance of female education, helping to shape community attitudes and perceptions. It aimed to challenge existing norms, encourage positive discussions, and inspire action within the community.

Moreover, the billboard's presence in a prominent public space conveyed a strong message of YOCO's commitment to promoting gender equality in education. It demonstrated that YOCO was actively working to address the barriers faced by girls in accessing education, and encouraged community members to join the cause and support efforts to improve female student enrollment and retention rates.



By utilizing a billboard as a means of communication, YOCO leveraged the power of visual messaging to raise awareness and generate public interest in the issue of female education. The billboard's strategic placement and impactful messages aimed to inspire positive change, foster community support, and contribute to the overall goal of enhancing educational opportunities for girls.

2.11. Radio Show to Raise Public Awareness

On November 9, 2023, YOCO took an innovative approach to raise public awareness about female education by producing and airing a radio panel discussion. The panel discussion brought together community leaders and school representatives to engage in an informative and thought-provoking conversation on the topic.

The radio show provided a platform for diverse perspectives and insights from influential community leaders and school representatives who played a crucial role in shaping local education policies and practices. By involving these stakeholders in the discussion, YOCO aimed to reach a wide audience and create a meaningful impact.

The panel discussion covered various aspects related to female education, including the importance of girls' education, the challenges faced by girls in accessing and staying in school, and potential solutions and strategies to address these issues. The panelists shared their experiences, expertise, and ideas, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and opportunities for girls' education within the community.

The radio show format allowed for interactive discussions, where listeners could participate by calling in with questions, comments, or personal stories. This interactive element created an inclusive environment that encouraged community engagement and involvement.

Through the panel discussion, YOCO aimed to raise public awareness about the importance of female education and challenge existing beliefs and attitudes. The panelists may have shared success stories of girls who have overcome obstacles to pursue education, highlighted the long-term benefits of educating girls, and addressed common misconceptions or cultural barriers.

By broadcasting the discussion on the radio, YOCO ensured that it reached a wide audience, including those who may not have direct access to other forms of media or information channels. This approach aimed to engage community members, spark conversations, and inspire action towards supporting and promoting girls' education.

The radio show served as a powerful tool for advocacy, as it leveraged the influence of community leaders and school representatives to disseminate key messages and foster positive change. It provided an opportunity for the community to collectively reflect on the importance of female education and explore collaborative solutions to address the challenges faced by girls in accessing education.

Overall, the radio panel discussion organized by YOCO on November 9, 2023, played a significant role in raising public awareness about female education. By bringing together community leaders and school representatives in an engaging dialogue, YOCO aimed to inspire action and create a supportive environment for girls' education within the community.

2.12. Radio Spot Message

On November 16, 2023, YOCO continued its efforts to raise awareness about female education, school enrollment, and dropout rates by producing and airing a radio spot message. The spot message was strategically broadcasted multiple times in Jigjiga town and the surrounding areas, maximizing its reach and impact.

The radio spot message was a concise and impactful audio clip designed to convey key messages regarding the importance of female education. It aimed to capture listeners' attention and deliver the message effectively within a short duration.

The content of the radio spot message focused on raising awareness about the benefits of educating girls, the challenges they face in accessing and staying in school, and the need for community support to address these issues. The message may have included

statistics, inspiring stories, and a call to action, encouraging listeners to take part in promoting and supporting girls' education.

By broadcasting the spot message multiple times in Jigjiga town and the surrounding areas, YOCO aimed to ensure that it reached a wide audience and had a lasting impact. The repeated airings increased the likelihood of listeners encountering the message, reinforcing its importance and fostering a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. The strategic placement of the spot message in the radio programming allowed it to reach a diverse range of listeners, including community members, commuters, and families. This broad reach ensured that the message resonated with individuals from various backgrounds and encouraged community-wide engagement in supporting girls' education.

The radio spot message served as a cost-effective and efficient way to raise public awareness, as radio is a widely accessible and popular medium, particularly in areas where other forms of media may be less prevalent. It allowed YOCO to reach a large audience and engage them in a meaningful way, influencing their perceptions and attitudes towards female education.

YOCO's decision to broadcast the spot message in Jigjiga town and surrounding areas demonstrated its commitment to addressing the specific needs and challenges of the local community. By tailoring the message to the context and ensuring its widespread dissemination, YOCO aimed to generate a positive impact on female education in the area.

Overall, the production and airing of the radio spot message by YOCO on November 16, 2023, exemplified an effective communication strategy to raise awareness about female education, school enrollment, and dropout rates. Through this medium, YOCO aimed to inspire action, encourage community support, and contribute to the overall goal of improving educational opportunities for girls.

2.13. Roadshow Program

On December 1, 2023, YOCO organized two roadshow events in public and market areas as part of its efforts to raise awareness about female education and address enrollment and dropout challenges. These roadshow events were designed to engage directly with

the community, create a vibrant and interactive atmosphere, and disseminate information on the importance of girls' education.

The roadshow events were strategically held in public and market areas to reach a diverse range of individuals, including community members, shoppers, and passersby. These locations provided high footfall and allowed YOCO to maximize the visibility and impact of the awareness campaign.

During the roadshow events, YOCO set up booths or stalls with informative displays, banners, and materials related to female education. The displays may have included statistics, success stories, and messages highlighting the benefits of educating girls. These eye-catching visuals aimed to capture the attention of the audience and spark their interest in the cause.

YOCO also organized engaging activities and performances to attract and involve the community. This could include skits, songs, dances, or interactive games that centered around the theme of female education. These activities not only entertained the audience but also conveyed important messages and fostered a positive and supportive environment for girls' education.

In addition to the visual displays and activities, YOCO's team members and volunteers actively engaged with attendees, initiating conversations, answering questions, and providing further information on the challenges faced by girls in accessing education and the ways in which the community could contribute to overcoming these challenges. The roadshow events also provided an opportunity for community members to share their own experiences, concerns, and ideas related to female education. YOCO encouraged open dialogue and actively listened to the voices of community members, ensuring that their perspectives were taken into account in future initiatives.

By organizing these roadshow events, YOCO aimed to create a visible and engaging presence within the community, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for promoting girls' education. The events not only raised awareness but also encouraged community members to actively participate in efforts to overcome the barriers to enrollment and dropout rates.

Overall, the roadshow events organized by YOCO on December 1, 2023, served as dynamic platforms to raise awareness about female education and address enrollment and dropout challenges. Through informative displays, interactive activities, and direct engagement with the community, YOCO aimed to inspire action, foster community support, and contribute to the long-term goal of improving educational opportunities for girls.

2.14. Reflection Session

On December 7, 2023, YOCO organized a reflection session with government officials and interest groups to gather valuable insights, capture lessons learned, and discuss the challenges and successes encountered during the implementation of their projects related to female education.

The reflection session provided a platform for all stakeholders involved in the projects to come together and share their experiences, perspectives, and recommendations. By involving government officials and interest groups, YOCO aimed to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive discussion that considered diverse viewpoints and expertise.



During the session, participants had the opportunity to reflect on the projects' goals, strategies, and outcomes. They discussed the effectiveness of different approaches, identified areas where improvements could be made, and shared best practices that could inform future initiatives.

The session focused on capturing lessons learned,

acknowledging the challenges faced throughout the project implementation process, and identifying strategies to overcome these challenges in the future. Participants openly discussed the barriers encountered, such as cultural norms, lack of resources, or systemic issues, and explored potential solutions and collaborations to address them. In addition to discussing challenges, the reflection session also celebrated the successes and achievements of the projects. Participants shared positive experiences, stories of impact, and examples of how the initiatives had positively influenced girls' education. Recognizing and highlighting these successes provided inspiration and motivation for continued efforts in the field.

The reflection session served as a valuable opportunity for YOCO and its partners to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and programs. It allowed them to gather feedback from stakeholders and learn from their experiences, ultimately enhancing the quality and impact of future initiatives.

Furthermore, the session fostered collaboration and strengthened partnerships between YOCO, government officials, and interest groups. By engaging in open and constructive dialogue, the session promoted a sense of shared responsibility and ownership in addressing the challenges and advancing the cause of female education.

The insights and recommendations gathered during the reflection session would have been documented and analyzed by YOCO. This information could be used to inform future project planning, shape advocacy efforts, and guide the organization's strategies in promoting and supporting girls' education.

Overall, the reflection session organized by YOCO on December 7, 2023, provided a platform for stakeholders to evaluate project implementation, share experiences, and learn from one another. It served as a crucial step in the continuous improvement of initiatives related to female education, strengthening partnerships, and reinforcing YOCO's commitment to promoting equitable educational opportunities for all.

3. CHALLENGES AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Challenges are common in any project or initiative, and YOCO's efforts to raise awareness about female education were no exception. The challenges faced by YOCO included limited funding, logistical constraints, and resistance to change. However, YOCO

took proactive steps to address these challenges and ensure the smooth implementation of its activities. Here are some of the corrective actions taken:

3.1. Limited Funding

YOCO recognized that limited funding could hinder the scope and impact of their initiatives. To address this challenge, YOCO actively sought additional funding opportunities. This could involve researching and applying for grants, reaching out to potential donors or sponsors, and leveraging partnerships with other organizations or institutions that shared their goals. By diversifying their funding sources, YOCO aimed to secure the necessary resources to expand their programs and activities.

3.2. Logistical Constraints

Logistical constraints, such as transportation, venue availability, and equipment, can pose challenges to the smooth execution of projects. YOCO improved logistical planning to overcome these obstacles. This involved conducting thorough assessments of the logistical requirements for each activity, anticipating potential issues, and implementing contingency plans. By meticulous planning and coordination, YOCO aimed to ensure that all necessary resources were in place and that activities could be carried out effectively and efficiently.

3.2. Resistance to Change

Resistance to change is not uncommon, especially when introducing new ideas or challenging existing beliefs and practices. YOCO encountered resistance to their efforts in promoting female education. To address this challenge, YOCO conducted targeted advocacy and communication campaigns. This included engaging with community leaders, influential figures, and key stakeholders to build awareness, address concerns, and highlight the benefits of girls' education. By fostering dialogue and emphasizing the importance of collective responsibility, YOCO aimed to overcome resistance and garner support for their cause.

2.4. Collaboration and Partnerships

To address various challenges, YOCO recognized the importance of collaboration and partnerships. YOCO actively sought to engage with government officials, interest groups,

and other organizations working in the field of education. By fostering collaborative relationships, YOCO aimed to leverage collective expertise, resources, and networks. This collaboration could involve joint advocacy efforts, sharing of best practices, and pooling of resources to address common challenges more effectively.

2.5. Continuous Learning and Adaptation

YOCO embraced a culture of continuous learning and adaptation to address challenges and improve their initiatives. They actively sought feedback from stakeholders, conducted evaluations of their activities, and analyzed the outcomes and impacts of their projects. By reflecting on lessons learned and incorporating feedback, YOCO could refine their strategies, identify areas for improvement, and adapt their approaches to better address challenges in the future.

By actively seeking additional funding, improving logistical planning, conducting targeted advocacy, fostering collaboration, and embracing a culture of learning, YOCO demonstrated their commitment to addressing challenges and ensuring the success of their initiatives in promoting female education. These corrective actions allowed YOCO to overcome obstacles and make progress towards their goals.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

4.1. Collaboration and Networking

YOCO recognized the importance of collaboration and networking with various stakeholders and organizations. By actively engaging with government officials, interest groups, community leaders, and other relevant organizations, YOCO was able to amplify their impact. Collaborative efforts allowed them to leverage collective expertise, resources, and networks, leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

4.2. Comprehensive Planning and Monitoring

YOCO understood the value of comprehensive planning and monitoring mechanisms, such as Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plans. These plans helped YOCO in ensuring the smooth implementation of their projects and assessing their impact accurately. By setting clear objectives, developing detailed action plans, and regularly

monitoring progress, YOCO could identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to achieve their goals effectively.

4.3. Tailored Advocacy Efforts

YOCO discovered the power of tailored advocacy efforts in raising awareness and mobilizing support for their cause. They organized workshops, engaged with the media, and utilized various communication channels to deliver their messages effectively. By customizing their advocacy strategies to specific target audiences and communities, YOCO was able to effectively convey the importance of girls' education, address concerns, and foster positive change.

4.4. Flexibility and Adaptability

YOCO recognized the importance of being flexible and adaptable when faced with challenges and constraints during project implementation. They learned to anticipate and navigate obstacles, adjust their plans when necessary, and explore alternative approaches. By embracing flexibility, YOCO could respond effectively to changing circumstances and ensure the continued progress of their initiatives despite the challenges encountered.

These lessons learned by YOCO reflect their commitment to continuous improvement, learning from their experiences, and adapting their strategies to achieve their objectives in promoting female education. By applying these lessons, YOCO can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of their future initiatives.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Yatim Orphan Care Organization (YOCO) made significant strides in 2024 in fulfilling its mission of supporting orphans in the Somali Region. By forging partnerships, networking with key stakeholders, and implementing impactful projects, YOCO achieved notable accomplishments.

YOCO's interventions are not limited to specific locations within the Somali Region, as they operate in 11 zones, including Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa. Their target groups encompass orphans, caretakers of orphans, and homeless children, reflecting their commitment to addressing the needs of vulnerable individuals in society.

YOCO's multifaceted approach to intervention in education, physical and mental health, job creation, and housing demonstrates their commitment to improving the lives of orphans in the Somali Region. By focusing on these key areas and working closely with the target groups, YOCO strives to create sustainable and positive change, ensuring a brighter future for orphans and their caretakers.

The organization's efforts in establishing connections with embassies and international organizations proved fruitful, enabling YOCO to expand its reach and access additional resources. Through these partnerships, YOCO was able to secure sponsorships for 30 orphans, ensuring their access to free education and a brighter future.

YOCO's initiatives to enhance female education through social behavior change communication were commendable. The organization developed a comprehensive advocacy plan and engaged in consultative workshops with stakeholders to ensure a collaborative approach. Community sensitization workshops, radio shows, and roadshows further amplified the message, effectively promoting the importance of girls' education.

Although YOCO encountered challenges such as limited funding and logistical constraints, the organization proactively addressed these issues. By actively seeking additional funding opportunities, improving logistical planning, and conducting targeted advocacy, YOCO demonstrated resilience and adaptability in overcoming obstacles.

Throughout their journey, YOCO learned valuable lessons that will shape their future activities. They recognized the significance of collaboration and networking,

comprehensive planning and monitoring, tailored advocacy efforts, and flexibility in project implementation. These lessons will guide YOCO in further enhancing their impact and ensuring the success of their initiatives.

YOCO remains steadfast in its commitment to improving the lives of orphans in the Somali Region. With a continued focus on partnerships, innovative approaches, and learning from past experiences, YOCO will persist in its mission to provide support, education, and opportunities for orphans, contributing to a brighter and more inclusive future for the Somali community.

Yatim Orphan Care Organization (YOCO) has identified key areas of intervention to address the needs of orphans in the Somali Region, focusing on education, physical and mental health, job creation, and housing. By implementing targeted initiatives in these areas, YOCO aims to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of orphans and their caretakers.

