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| Danish organisation | Dreamtown |
| Title of the intervention | Her Story |
| Partner name(s) | Yellow World  |
| Amount applied for | 99.961,00 DKK |
| Country(ies) | Zimbabwe |
| Period (# of months) | 15.01.2022 – 14.01.2023 (12 months) |

**1. Objective and relevance (the world around us)**

Young women in urban communities in Bulawayo face many social justice issues, such as gender-based violence, unequal access to education and work and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, which they cannot always speak out loud about. They do not dare to voice out issues out of fear for their own or their families’ security or due to shame, and they do not always have the support or channels to raise important issues. This leads to low participation of women in community development and decision-making processes. This is very unfortunate, as young women and their participation are a strength to community development and should be seen as such. Therefore, it is the ambition of this project, *Her Story*, to support young women to voice their concerns and raise awareness around the social justice issues they face, through channels that are very popular and relatable in Zimbabwe: art and culture. By including artivism, it is possible to explore creative expressions and methods that raise awareness on social justice issues and urge to changes in the communities and potentially on a higher level. We call this project *Her Story*, because it will give a voice to young women, and encourage and empower them to tell their own stories – and raise awareness on issues that affect them. The project will be implemented in the city of Bulawayo, engaging women from six urban communities, and equipping them with capacities to raise issues faced by many young women in fragile urban areas. Since 2020, Dreamtown have been working together with the Bulawayo based youth organisation Yellow World (YW) focusing on safety and inclusion of young people in urban communities. This project will help build both the capacities of young women, as well as strengthen the partnership between Dreamtown and YW, and the capacities of YW as a fairly young, but fast growing, organization. Since YW started in 2018, they have built an extensive network of more than 400 young and creative people, and they have additionally created relationships with local authorities and strong collaborations with people in the art and culture industry, alongside with engaging in different creative events, projects and awareness campaigns. The overall purpose of this project is to empower young women to address social injustice through art, and thereby impact both the targeted women, but also the communities and authorities around them. It is the hope for this small intervention that it can be the beginning of something bigger and more long term. We have the ambition of further unfolding, strengthening and upscaling this project, and reach a far greater number of people going forward.

* 1. **What do you want to achieve through the intervention?**

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| **Development objective:** Youngwomen in urban Bulawayo are empowered to address social injustice through art  |
| Specific objectives | Results |
| **Specific objectives 1:**Strengthened capacity of YW to support the involvement of young women in action and advocacy on social justice issues | **1.1**. YW have gained capacities within mentoring, artivism, social injustice and digital literacy |
| **Specific objectives 2:**Young women take the lead in action and advocacy on social justice issues through artivism  | **2.1.** 30 young women trained and mentored in voicing social justice issues through music **2.2**. 30 young women are trained and mentored in voicing social justice issues through film |
| **Specific objectives 3:**Improved awareness among and support from community members and local authorities on social justice for young women | **3.1.** 500 people reached through social media campaign on social justice issues faced by young women **3.2**. 300 people, including local authorities are engaged through the festival focusing on social justice issues faced by young women **3.3**. Her story has been evaluated, and follow up potentials have been identified  |

The specific objectives presented in the table above aim at three overall achievements. Objective 1 aims at strengthening the capacity of YW through artivism, mentoring, and digital literacy workshops, and planning and designing of the project. Objective 2 aims at empowering the young women in the six communities, through a music bootcamp and a film school, where they will produce songs and films addressing social injustices. Objective 3 aims at creating awareness in communities, through a social media campaign and a music and film festival airing the produced songs and films. Additionally, objective 3 aims at creating awareness among local authorities, as they will be invited to the festival, for dialogue cafes where social justice issues will be discussed. Here, the aim is to establish a good contact and relation to the local authorities and to create a strong foundation for future collaboration.

**1.2. Why is the intervention important?**

**Social injustice** (Development objective):Social justice means an array of important principles, like equality, peace, safety and freedom. Upholding social justice means valuing the rights of all individuals, and unfortunately, Zimbabwe is not quite there yet. Thousands of girls and women face injustices, like being denied an education, forced into early marriage, or made victims of gender-based violence. These injustices prevent girls and women from reaching their full potential. In order to champion change and create more equality for all, *Her Story* will empower women to be able to break down the barriers that many young women face every day.

**Support and mentoring** (Specific objective 1): YW is a cool and innovative local organization led by, and working for, young people, through creative methods. In order to further strengthen YW’s thematic expertise, their artivism and organisational capacities and their network and thereby the reach of their work, this project will help them to build on top of their already exciting and creative knowledge. This will make them better advocates for young people in their communities.

**Finding ways to be heard** (Specific objective 2): Art is a universal language that has the ability to impact and influence all people in many different ways. Art and culture-language can be spoken and listened to by all: old or young, educated or not, no matter what tribe you belong to, what gender you are or what social status you have. Art can serve as an icebreaker and communication to address social injustices that women face. This project will serve as a tool to empower women through strengthening their capacities, their talent and amplifying their voices. *Her Story* aims for women to feel as what they are: leaders, strong, equal, intelligent and talented.

**Being heard** (Specific objective 3): Young Zimbabwean women need a forum and channels where they can give voice to both challenges they face, but also to show what an enormous strength they are to their communities. Women need to be included in community development and the issues they face – simply because they are young women – need to be address with their participation. *Her Story* allows for women to be seen and heard, through creativity and art.

**1.3. Describe the context of the intervention:**

**Urban slums in Bulawayo:** According to the World Bank, it is estimated that more than 1 out of 3 Zimbabweans live in urban slum areas [[1]](#footnote-1). In Zimbabwe, slum communities have emerged rapidly in the urban areas due to, among other factors, high levels of rural to urban migration. The slum communities are characterized by high unemployment rates, violence, high crime rates, lack of access to clean water, and insecurity of land tenure. The project takes place in six communities in Bulawayo; Nketa, Pumula, Nkulumane, Mpopoma, Mzilikazi and Khumalo, which are all urban slum areas. Bulawayo is a very creative city, but the youth living here also face many challenges. Some of the key safety issues include drug abuse due to unemployment; high mugging and robbery rates, and a high number of rape cases and sexual harassment of girls in public places, with few people intervening when abuse takes place.

**Women in the art industry in Bulawayo:** The arts and culture industry in Bulawayo is creative and diverse and encompasses a variety of art forms including theatre, dance, music, poetry, literature, visual arts and film. The industry is both a source of employment and entertainment. Generally, Bulawayo is seen as the cultural and artistic hub of Zimbabwe, however, we have noticed there is very low participation of women in artist related activities in the city. Some of the social injustices that women face in the art industry in Bulawayo are exploitation; sexual harassment; general labelling of women in arts as immoral, lazy and unintelligent; gender based violence (multiple studies, including a report from ‘Stopping Abuse and Female Exploitation Zimbabwe Technical Assistance Facility[[2]](#footnote-2)’ shows that the Covid-19 lockdown has increased GBV cases all over Zimbabwe); low participation of women; lack of recognition and inequity as a significant number of women in art are paid less than their male counterparts but for the same job. This highlights the vulnerability of especially young women in art, who rely on others to make a living and therefore are at risk of exploitation and harassment.

**Engagement of women in the project**: When designing and implementing the project, we need to be aware of the fact that there might be some reluctance from the young women to engage in the project in the beginning, as fear and shame will play a big factor. Dreamtown and YW are already aware of this challenge, and YW have already reached out to some young women in their network that will help build bridges between the young women and the project. Moreover, generally it is challenging to mobilize women, especially in art, but as YW is well connected and already have a network of young women that can build trust and relations, then we are confident that this can be done. We will do a thorough advertisement both virtual and physical, of the project, especially in the six districts that we will mobilize the participants from.

**1.4. Contribution to collaboration, public engagement and civil organising and how this in time will contribute to social justice**

The main focus of this project is social justice through collaboration and civil organizing. The idea and structure of *Her story* have been developed locally by YW and the young women in their network. Additionally, the project is going to be locally anchored, implemented and monitored, with support from Dreamtown. Therefore, the project is dependent on civil organising, local engagement and a strong collaboration between Dreamtown, YW and the local youth. This small-scale intervention stands on its own and engages a new target group for YW, which means that we need to mobilize, build capacities and create awareness. The project does not therefore aim at directly creating changes on high authority level, but it definitely aims at creating awareness and building capacities to contribute to social justice for young women. For YW, the format of the project is, on its own, an exercise in organising young women and mobilising young people, as well as community stakeholders, around social justice issues.

**1.5. Climate- and environmental conditions and sustainability**

In order to limit the negative impact on the environment, there will be a focus on the use of transportation. The project will be implemented locally by YW and the local youth, and the initial workshop will be facilitated online or as a part of an already existing monitoring trip to Zimbabwe, so that no extra flight is necessary. Additionally, local transport will be planned strategically, so that the environmental impact will be limited. Moreover, we will focus on sustainability of both the project and YW, and therefore required equipment that are necessary in order to implement the activities – especially for the music bootcamp and film school – will be locally purchased. Some of the equipment and the studio space will be rented.

2. The partnership/collaborators (our starting point)

**2.1. Previous cooperation and use of experiences between the partners**

Dreamtown and YW have been working together since 2020, implementing the CISU funded project Key to the City together with another local Zimbabwean organization called House of Arts Association. Since the start of our collaboration, YW has grown both in size, capacity and experience. YW have an extensive existing network in Bulawayo, both among youth, community stakeholders, authorities, and media actors, and are run by very creative and cool young people. It is clear to see that YW are eager to learn, and have massive potential to be a leading youth organisation in Bulawayo in the future. Through Key to the City, they have engaged and mobilised a range of actors, including youth motivated to become artist; important stakeholders in the art industry including theatres, museums, studios, radio stations and TV stations; and government authorities at city as well as national level. Through this collaboration, we have seen how YW have supported young people in creating better community development. Furthermore, YW has enhanced its capacity to manage funds and coordinate project activities. These solid results from Key to the City shows that YW is ready to manage a project as the lead local partner. This practical experience is expected to build their capacity even further. Dreamtown are keen to strengthen and further develop the partnership between the two organization, as we see our work with YW as a long-term collaboration.

**2.2. Experiences, capacities, resources, roles and responsibilities of partners**

**Dreamtown** - ***Experiences, capacities, and resources:*** Dreamtown is a Danish NGO that works for the wellbeing of young people in cities, by focusing on the development of safe, inclusive, green and creative public spaces in vulnerable communities and strengthening young people’s capacity as active citizens. As a team, Dreamtown has more than 10 years of experience with managing development projects. ***Roles and responsibilities***: A key role for Dreamtown is to strengthen the capacity of YW within the development of organisational capacities, financial capacities, project management capacities and thematic capacities within mentoring, social justice and artivism and give on-going and ad hoc project management support.

**Yellow World** - ***Experiences, capacities and resources:*** Yellow World (YW) is a network of young artists from Bulawayo. Since 2018, YW has been working on an informal basis, but is now registered as a formal association with the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe. YW has 300 members in their network who actively participate in their activities, most of whom are artists. Although YW has been operating on an informal basis, the organisation has been actively involved in a range of activities combining arts and development. Of specific relevance to this intervention the organisation has participated in the ‘We are girls not brides’ campaign focused on ending child marriage; participated in the ministry of Youth’s annual youth festivals; undertaken advocacy performances at schools; and participated in development programmes with INGOs. ***Roles and responsibilities:*** YW will be lead on the overall coordination and implementation of the project activities in Bulawayo. This includes the planning of the activities, mobilization of young women, the training of the young women and the planning and execution of the festival. Dreamtown will support YW along the way.

**Other actors:**

YW will establish collaborations and partnerships with organisations within the art and culture industry in and around Bulawayo, such as studios and media companies for the music bootcamp, film school, and the social media campaign. For several of these, good working relations already exists, and dialogue is ongoing. Additionally, YW will partner up with local businesses for the festival, who will support with promotion, refreshments, and rolling out the practical setup of the event. YW already have connections and partnerships through existing projects with some of these organisations. The project will be an opportunity to strengthen these relations, and at the same time expand on YW’s network and reach.

3. Target groups, objectives, and expected results (our intervention)

*Her Story* will take place as a three-phased project. *Firstly*, YW staff and volunteers will plan and prepare the music bootcamp, film school, social media campaign and the festival, parallel with strengthening their capacity within project management, artivism, mentorship and social justice. *Second phase* will be mobilizing young women and training and supporting them in voicing social justice issues through music and film. *Third phase* will consist of two streams that run parallel: a social media campaign and a festival. The social media campaign will consist of podcast, films and music produced by the young women, and they will be shared online. The festival will be a physical film, music and dialog event, where YW, in collaboration with partners and the young women, will invite local communities and local authorities for a day with art, culture and focus on social justice for young women, framed by the produced songs and films. Additionally, will the local authorities be invited for dialogue cafes, where social justice topics will be discussed.

**3.1. Target group and their participation**

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| Primary | Description | Number |
| YW staff, volunteers, and members | Staff, volunteers, and members that are engaged in the project, are trained and have gained strengthen capacities | 50 |
| Young women | That are directly engaged in the project activities, through the music bootcamp and film school  | 60 |
| Total primary |  | 110 |
| Secondary | Description | Number |
| People living in the communities (100 from each community) | People living in the community that are not directly linked to the project, but will benefit from the long-term impact | 600 |
| Community stakeholders (3 from each community) | Community leaders that will participate in conversation cafes at the music and film festival | 18 |
| People engaged through the social media campaign | People reached through the social media campaign gain awareness and understanding of social justice issues faced by young women | 500 |
| Participants in the festival | People reached through the festival gain awareness and understanding of social justice issues faced by young women | 300 |
| Total secondary |  | 1.418 |

**Participation of target group in the intervention**

Young women from YW’s network who will participate in the project have already been engaged in the design of the project activities through workshops facilitated by the YW team. The aim is to mobilize 60 young women who will participate in the music bootcamp and film school, and also drive forward and take the lead of the social media campaign and the festival, supported by YW staff and volunteers. Community authorities and leaders will be invited to dialogue cafes as a part of the festival. The project will have a wide reach, as a big part is awareness raising through both a social media campaign and a physical festival, which will influence a big number of people, who are not directly engaged in the project.

**3.2. Implementation: What activities will be carried out? With whom? And when?**

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| Activity | Participants | Time |
| **Phase one: Preparation and capacity building** |
| **1.1.1** Inception Workshop: Planning and designing of project | Dreamtown & YW | Jan., 1 month |
| **1.1.2** Capacity building workshop on mentoring, social justice, artivism and digital literacy, led by local specialist  | Dreamtown, YW & local specialist | Jan., 1 month |
| **Phase two: Music bootcamp and film School** |
| **2.1.1** Equipping YW with the necessary equipment to support the music bootcamp | YW | Feb., 1 month |
| **2.1.2**. Mobilization of women | YW and young women in the network | Feb., 1 month |
| **2.1.3.** Planning of music bootcamp | YW, young women in the network & Dreamtown | Feb., 1 month |
| **2.1.4.** Music bootcamp: 8 days (one day every week), with 6 days of theory and practical learning for specific modules and 2 days of only practical learning  | YW, media partners & 30 young women | Mar. & Apr., 2 months |
| **2.1.5.** Production of individual and group songs | YW & 30 young women | Mar. & Apr., 2 months |
| **2.2.1**. Equipping YW with the necessary equipment to support the film school | YW | May, 1 month |
| **2.2.2.** Mobilization of women | YW and young women in the network | May, 1 month |
| **2.2.3.** Planning of film school  | YW, young women in the network & Dreamtown | May, 1 month |
| **2.2.4.** Film school: 8 days (one day every week), with 6 days of theory and practical learning for specific modules and 2 days of only practical learning | YW, media partners & 30 young women | June & July, 2 months |
| **2.2.5.** Production of individual and group films | YW & 30 young women | June & July, 2 months |
| **Phase three: Festival and campaign** |
| **3.1.1.** Production of podcast on social justice issues raised by the young women | YW and 60 young women | Aug., 1 month |
| **3.1.2** Sharing of products from music bootcamp and film school on social media | YW and 60 young women | Aug., Sep. & Oct., 3 months |
| **3.1.3** Production of cell-phone videos in communities showing the reactions/effects of the songs and films  | 60 young women and YW | Aug., Sep. & Oct., 3 months |
| **3.2.1** Planning of festival  | YW, media partners, Dreamtown and 60 young women | Aug., Sept. & Oct., 3 months |
| **3.2.2** Planning of conversation cafes with local authorities on social justice issues | YW, Dreamtown, 60 young women and local authorities | Aug., Sept. & Oct., 3 months |
| **3.2.3**. Music and film festival | YW, Dreamtown, 60 young women, media partners, local authorities | Nov., 1 day |
| **3.3.1.** Follow up on social media campaign and festival, including evaluation and further development of *Her Story* | YW, Dreamtown and 60 young women | Nov. & Dec., 2 months |

1. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.SLUM.UR.ZS?locations=ZW> and according to the UN [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Stopping Abuse and Female Exploitation](https://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/2136/safe-zimbabwe-evidence-synthesis-on-covid19-10122020-for-publication-v2.pdf) (SAFE) Zimbabwe Technical Assistance Facility, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)