



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

**COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY
OF THREE YOUTH-LED ORGANISATIONS IN ACCRA, GHANA**

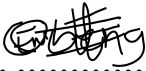
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FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN COMMUNICATION**

DECEMBER 2025

DECLARATION BY STUDENT – DISSERTATION

I hereby declare that this research is a result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR

This Dissertation has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication, UniMAC.

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ABSTRACT

Youth-led organizations (YLOs) have emerged as critical agents in Ghana's development landscape, serving as intermediaries that translate national policies into grassroots action. However, despite their growing prominence, there is limited empirical research on how these organizations utilize communication to achieve their objectives. This study, titled *Communication as a Tool for Development*, investigates the communication strategies, effectiveness, and operational challenges of three distinct YLOs in Accra: Youth Action Movement (YAM), Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), and Net Impact Ghana.

Grounded in the "Strategic Choice Model of Communication for Development," the study employs a qualitative comparative case study design. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with organizational leadership, communication officers, and beneficiaries, supplemented by document analysis and non-participant observation. The findings reveal that these organizations adopt a hybrid communication approach, strategically blending digital platforms such as social media and WhatsApp, with traditional, participatory methods like peer education and Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) drama. This "multi-channel" strategy is found to be highly effective in enhancing youth engagement, cultural relevance, and immediate knowledge acquisition regarding sexual and reproductive health and civic rights.

Despite these successes, the study identifies significant challenges, including resource constraints, infrastructure deficits, and a lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track long-term behavioral change. The research concludes that while communication is a potent tool for awareness creation and youth mobilization, its capacity to drive sustained development outcomes is often hindered by structural limitations. The study recommends that YLOs institutionalize their communication frameworks and that stakeholders provide targeted support for capacity building in impact measurement. Ultimately, this thesis contributes to C4D scholarship by providing evidence-based insights into the unique, adaptive communication practices of youth-led entities in an urban African context.

DEDICATION

This work is gratefully dedicated to Mr. Ishmael Kwasi Selassie, whose belief in my potential made this journey possible. Your decision to invest in my education, your unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement carried me through every step of this master's programme.

I am deeply thankful for your kindness, your confidence in me, and the countless ways you stood by me.

I also dedicate this work to my family, whose love and support have been a constant source of strength.

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List of Abbreviations

CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
C4D	Communication for Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DV	Domestic Violence
GBV	Gender-based Violence
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
Q & As	Questions and Answers
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Right
TV	Television
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
Prog	Program
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
YAM	Youth Action Movement
YAG	Youth Advocates Ghana
YLOs	Youth Led Organisations
X	Twitter

1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Development is a multidimensional process involving economic, social, cultural, and political transformation aimed at improving the quality of life for people and communities (Todaro & Smith, 2022). Globally, agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and international NGOs are key actors in driving development agendas by providing funding, policy guidance, and technical expertise (Servaes & Malikhaio, 2025). At the national level, governments translate these agendas into local policies and programmes, while civil society organizations (CSOs) act as intermediaries to bridge global frameworks with local realities (Wilkins et al., 2014).

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are independent, non-state and non-profit entities that work to promote social, political, cultural, or environmental causes. They include NGOs, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations that foster citizen participation and influence policy (Anheier, 2014). Within this broad category, youth-led organizations (YLOs) represent a unique subset. These are organizations initiated, governed, and managed by young people, typically under the age of 35, to address issues affecting youth and their communities (Nations, 2018). YLOs are characterized by innovation, agility, and strong proximity to grassroots realities, though they often operate with limited resources.

In Ghana, YLOs have become critical agents of change, addressing pressing development challenges such as unemployment, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender equality, climate action, and civic participation (Grauenkaer et al., 2018). By creating spaces for youth engagement and leadership, they connect national development priorities to community-based action. A key factor underpinning their effectiveness is communication, which serves both as a tool and a process for mobilizing stakeholders, fostering participation, and driving social transformation (C. Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998). Strategic

communication enables YLOs to amplify youth voices, engage communities, and influence policy in ways that achieve sustainable development outcomes (Waisbord, 2008). Globally, examples such as the African Youth SDGs Summit and youth campaigns led by Restless Development demonstrate how communication bridges grassroots needs and national policies (Restless Development, 2021). In Ghana, organizations like the Youth Action Movement (YAM) and Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG) demonstrate similar models through community outreach, peer education, and digital campaigns.

Despite these contributions, there is limited research on how YLOs in Ghana design and implement communication strategies and whether these approaches are effective in achieving their objectives. Most Communication for Development (C4D) research has focused on large NGOs and government-led initiatives (Asante & P., 2021; Mensah, 2020). Understanding YLO communication practices is critical for strengthening their role in national development.

This study seeks to fill that gap through a comparative case study of three youth-led organizations in Accra: Youth Action Movement (YAM), Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), and Net Impact Ghana. The study examines their communication strategies, evaluates their effectiveness in driving development outcomes, and identifies challenges in their design and implementation. By focusing on youth-led organizations as grassroots CSOs, the study highlights the role of strategic communication in amplifying youth voices and fostering inclusive development in Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Youth-led organizations in Ghana have increasingly become key players in driving development at the community level. These organizations often focus on critical issues such as education, youth employment, population, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, climate action, and youth empowerment. However, their ability to create meaningful impact is

closely tied to their effective use of communication strategies to transmit their messages, engage stakeholders, and influence policy, policymakers, and youth behavior.

Despite the growing presence of youth-led organizations, many YLOs lack structured, strategic communication frameworks. Some rely heavily on digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram but do so without coherent planning, which limits sustained engagement and impact (Boateng & G., 2022). Others focus on traditional methods such as advocacy events and community meetings that foster personal connection but often have limited reach and scalability (Grauenkaer et al., 2018).

Existing C4D research in Ghana primarily examines large NGOs and government-led initiatives ((Wilkins et al., 2014);(Servaes & Malikhao, 2025), leaving a gap in understanding the practices of youth-led organizations. Without evidence on the effectiveness of their communication strategies, YLOs risk adopting approaches that transmit information without creating behavioral or structural change. This study addresses this gap by exploring and comparing the communication strategies of three youth-led organizations in Accra, assessing their effectiveness, and identifying lessons for strengthening youth-led communication for development.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and examine the communication strategies used by three youth-led organizations in Accra.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in achieving community and development outcomes.
3. To explore the challenges these organizations, face in designing and implementing communication strategies.
4. To compare the communication approaches and relative impact of the three organizations.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What communication strategies are developed and used by the selected youth-led organizations in Accra?
2. How effective are these strategies in achieving development outcomes?
3. What challenges do these organizations face in implementing their communication strategies?
4. How do the communication approaches of the three organizations compare in terms of reach and impact?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on three youth-led organizations in the Greater Accra Region: Youth Action Movement (YAM), Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), and Net Impact Ghana. It examines their communication strategies, defined as the planned use of tools, channels, and messages to influence knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards development outcomes (Servaes, 2008). The research is limited to the design, implementation, and effectiveness of these strategies within the selected organizations. While examples from other YLOs may inform the analysis, the primary unit of analysis remains the organizational communication practices of the three case study organizations.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the Communication for Development (C4D) scholarship by focusing on youth-led organizations as grassroots CSOs, a relatively underexplored area in Ghanaian research. The findings will provide practical insights for YLOs seeking to strengthen their communication practices and inform policymakers and development partners supporting youth initiatives. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of strategic communication in enabling youth to shape Ghana's development agenda (Wilkins et al., 2014).

1.7 Organization of the Study

The research is organized into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, scope, and significance. Chapter Two reviews existing literature and presents the theoretical framework. Chapter Three outlines the research methodology, including design, sampling, and data analysis. Chapter Four presents' findings and discussions, while Chapter Five offers conclusions and recommendations.

2.0 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the theoretical and contextual framework for the study. It reviews the scholarly landscape at the intersection of communication, youth agency, and development. The central argument is that communication is not merely an instrumental tool for achieving development outcomes, but a constitutive element of development itself. This review traces the evolution of Communication for Development (C4D), examines core theoretical models, proposes a specific theoretical framework for this study, and situates these concepts within the socio-political context of youth civic engagement in Ghana. By mapping the existing literature, this chapter identifies a critical research gap concerning the on-the-ground communication practices of YLOs in an urban African setting, thereby justifying the purpose and significance of this thesis.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of Communication for Development (C4D)

The field of Communication for Development (C4D) has evolved significantly, reflecting broader shifts in development thinking. Its history can be understood through three major paradigms that have shaped its theory and practice (Servaes, 2008).

The initial "**Dominant Paradigm**," prevalent from the 1950s to the 1970s, was rooted in modernization theory. Development was seen as a linear process where "traditional" societies should emulate industrialized Western nations (Servaes & Malikhao, 2025). Communication was conceptualized as a top-down, one-way transfer of information from expert sources to passive audiences, with mass media expected to act as a "magic multiplier" for modernization efforts (McAnany, 2022). A key framework from this era is Everett Rogers' (1962) *Diffusion of Innovations* theory, which explains how new ideas and technologies spread through a social system.

By the 1970s, critiques of this model gave rise to the "**Dependency Paradigm**," which argued that underdevelopment was a product of the exploitative relationship between the dominant global "core" and the dependent "periphery" (Frank, 1969, as cited in Servaes, 2008). This perspective viewed the communication flows of the dominant paradigm as a form of cultural imperialism.

The limitations of these earlier models led to the now-prevailing "**Participatory Paradigm**." This approach redefines development as a people-centered process of empowerment and sustainable social change. Communication is transformed from a vertical monologue into a horizontal, two-way dialogue (Mefalopulos, 2010). This paradigm is heavily influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1970), whose concepts of critical consciousness and dialogue as tools for liberation are central to its ethos. In this view, communication is a process where communities actively participate in identifying their own problems and co-creating solutions (Gumucio-Dagron, 2008). In practice, a spectrum exists between purely dialogic approaches and more instrumental models, such as Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC), which strategically uses communication to promote specific, measurable changes.

2.3 Theoretical Framework for the Study

This thesis adopts a hybrid theoretical framework to analyze the communication practices of YLOs in Accra. The framework, termed the "**Strategic Choice Model of Communication for Development**," posits that YLOs do not operate at the extremes of any single communication paradigm. Instead, they make continuous, strategic choices along a spectrum of communication approaches, navigating the tension between the normative ideals of participatory development and the pragmatic, instrumental pressures of their operational environment.

This model integrates three core theoretical streams:

1. **Participatory Communication Theory:** Drawing from the Freirean tradition (Freire, 1970), this forms the normative foundation of the framework, representing the ideal of development communication as a horizontal, dialogic, and empowering process.
2. **Instrumental Communication Models:** This component acknowledges the practical realities faced by YLOs. Theories such as the Diffusion of Innovations and Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) represent a more linear, goal-oriented approach often necessary for functions like fundraising or reporting to donors.
3. **Youth Empowerment and Agency Theory:** This theory underpins the entire framework by defining the ultimate goal. It positions youth not as passive beneficiaries but as active agents of change whose potential is either enabled or constrained by their environment.

The central argument of this framework is that a YLO's communication strategy is a dynamic "**strategic mix**" determined by a constant negotiation between these theoretical poles. This mix is influenced by both internal drivers (e.g., organizational mission) and external pressures (e.g., donor requirements, community needs).

2.4 Youth-Led Organisations in the Ghanaian Context

The discourse on Africa's youth has shifted from viewing its "youth bulge" as a threat to recognizing it as a "demographic dividend", a critical resource for innovation and transformation. This reframing centers on **youth empowerment**, understood not as providing aid, but as a process of increasing young people's control over their own lives and enabling their meaningful participation in decision-making (Jennings et al., 2022).

In Ghana, youth constitute a significant majority of the population, facing systemic challenges such as high unemployment. While official data sometimes suggests apathy towards formal politics, many young Ghanaians engage civically in alternative ways, such as through community-level action and the use of technology for mobilization (Sam et al., 2019; Tsetsi, 2022). The government's official framework, the **Ghana National Youth Policy** (Ministry of

Youth and Sports, 2010), reflects the empowering discourse with its theme, "Towards an empowered youth, impacting positively on national development." However, a significant **policy-practice chasm** exists, with the lived experience for many youth being one of tokenistic consultation rather than genuine influence ((Mohammed & Baako, 2016;Hlungwani, 2020). YLOs emerge within this context as vital actors in civil society, but they operate in a precarious environment, facing challenges such as a lack of sustainable funding and a globally shrinking space for civil society. Their communication strategies are shaped by a hybrid media environment that blends the enduring power of **community radio** with the ubiquity of **social media**. Effective YLOs are therefore likely to employ hybrid strategies that integrate these channels to amplify their message and engage diverse audiences (Kperkperan, A. A. Rasmussen & Servaes, 2020).

2.5 Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature demonstrates a clear normative shift in C4D from top-down information transfer to participatory dialogue. It positions Ghanaian youth as critical but often marginalized development actors, for whom YLOs serve as vital platforms for collective action. A significant research gap emerges at the intersection of these fields. While C4D theory is well-developed and macro-level studies on youth engagement in Ghana exist, there is a lack of empirical, comparative research into the *lived reality* of communication practice within YLOs in an urban African context.

This thesis addresses this gap by asking: How do YLOs in Accra translate abstract concepts like "participation" and "empowerment" into concrete communication strategies? How do they navigate the tensions between dialogic ideals and pragmatic, instrumental demands? By conducting an in-depth, comparative case study, this research will provide crucial, on-the-ground insights, moving the analysis from theory to the complexities of practice.

3.0 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the methodological approach employed to investigate the central research question. It outlines the research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and procedures for data analysis. Furthermore, it addresses the strategies used to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the ethical considerations guiding the research, and the inherent limitations of the chosen methodology. The approach aligns with the "Strategic Choice Model of Communication for Development" established in Chapter Two, seeking to understand the nuances of *how* and *why* these organisations navigate their communication choices.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a **qualitative research design**, employing a **comparative case study approach**. A qualitative approach is essential for capturing the rich, contextual nature of communication practices, focusing on in-depth understanding rather than statistical generalization (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method allows for an exploration of the nuanced meanings and social processes that underpin how youth-led organizations (YLOs) utilize communication as a tool for development.

The **case study method** allows for a deep, holistic investigation of each YLO within its real-world setting (Yin, 2014). This approach treats each organization, Youth Action Movement (YAM), Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), and Net Impact Ghana, as a distinct "case." By examining the specific communication strategies, contexts, and outcomes of each organization, the study can reveal a comprehensive picture of their operations. The **comparative element** is crucial, as it involves a cross-case analysis to identify common patterns, highlight significant differences, and generate more robust, transferable insights than would be possible from a single case. This comparative lens allows for an analysis of how different organizational

structures and development focuses influence communication choices, thereby strengthening the study's conclusions.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

The three youth-led organizations that form the core of this study, Youth Action Movement (YAM), Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), and Net Impact Ghana, were purposefully selected as the research cases. This selection was not a random sampling from a larger pool but a deliberate choice based on their relevance to the research questions. The justification for their selection is guided by the following criteria:

1. **Youth-Led:** The organization's leadership must consist of youth, defined in line with the Ghana National Youth Policy as individuals between 15 and 35 years old (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2010). This ensures the study directly addresses the practices of organizations at the heart of youth development.
2. **Location:** The organization must have its primary operations within Accra. This focus allows for an in-depth, geographically specific investigation and provides a consistent context for comparison.
3. **Development Focus:** The organization's mission must be clearly oriented towards social, economic, or political development. This criterion ensures the cases are relevant to the study's core theme of "communication as a tool for development."
4. **Diversity of Approach:** To ensure a rich comparison, the selected organizations represent a variety of primary functions (e.g., policy advocacy, grassroots service delivery, digital media mobilization). This diversity is vital for identifying a wide range of communication strategies.

Below, a brief background is provided for each case to give a comprehensive sense of the organizations under investigation.

3.3.1 Case 1: Youth Action Movement (YAM)

YAM is a prominent youth-led organization in Ghana focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Established as the youth wing of the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), YAM is headquartered in Accra and operates across the country. Its structure includes a national youth council and various local chapters. YAM's work involves grassroots service delivery, peer education, and community engagement. Their projects often include school outreach programs and community forums, utilizing communication to raise awareness and promote healthy behaviors among young people.

3.3.2 Case 2: Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG)

YAG is a non-governmental organization founded and led by young people, with its main office in Accra. Its focus is on youth empowerment, policy advocacy, and community mobilization. YAG's work spans education, civic engagement, and leadership development. The organization uses digital media campaigns and social advocacy to engage young people in policy discussions and promote their participation in national development. Past projects include voter education campaigns and forums for dialogue between youth and policymakers.

3.3.4 Case 3: Net Impact Ghana

Net Impact Ghana is the national chapter of the African Youth and Adolescents Network, with its operational base in Accra. The network is dedicated to promoting the rights and well-being of young people through high-level policy advocacy and partnerships. Net Impact Ghana primarily uses communication for policy influence, research dissemination, and strategic networking with governmental bodies, international agencies, and civil society organizations. Its communication efforts are directed at shaping policy decisions and ensuring youth voices are heard in national and regional development agendas.

Within each of these selected YLOs, **purposive sampling** will be used as a **data collection method** to identify "information-rich" cases (Patton, 2002). This technique will be used to

select key informants for interviews, including leadership, communication staff, and beneficiaries, who are most relevant to the research questions.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

To ensure a comprehensive and triangulated understanding, data will be collected using three primary qualitative methods:

1. **Semi-Structured Interviews:** In-depth, semi-structured interviews will be the principal data collection method, providing a flexible yet consistent framework for exploring topics with key informants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The semi-structured format, guided by an interview guide but allowing for probing follow-up questions, is ideal for capturing the nuanced perspectives, personal experiences, and motivations of individuals within the YLOs. This method will allow the researcher to explore how communication is understood and practiced from the viewpoint of leaders, staff, and beneficiaries, providing context to the "why" and "how" of their communication choices. The interviews will be conducted face-to-face or via online platforms, with all participants providing informed consent.
2. **Document Analysis:** A systematic analysis of organizational documents will provide data on how the organizations formally present their mission and communication efforts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method involves a detailed examination and interpretation of a range of texts and artifacts. The specific types of documents targeted for this study include:
 - **Official websites:** To understand the organization's stated mission, values, and public image.
 - **Social media content (e.g., Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram):** To analyze their daily communication strategies, engagement with the public, and mobilization tactics.

- **Annual reports and project proposals:** To gain insight into their formal communication plans, project objectives, and reporting of outcomes. This analysis is crucial as it provides a non-reactive source of data that complements interview accounts by revealing the official, public face of the organization's communication.
3. **Non-Participant Observation:** Where possible, the researcher will attend and observe public-facing events to gain direct, contextual insights into their communication practices in action. As a non-participant observer, the researcher will not actively engage but will instead focus on documenting the communication dynamics, including verbal and non-verbal interactions, audience engagement, and the use of communication tools. The events and activities to be observed include public forums, community workshops, town hall meetings, and advocacy events. This method is essential for understanding the lived reality of communication for development, revealing the dynamic processes and subtle details that may not be captured through interviews or document analysis alone.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using a **thematic analysis approach**, which is a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach is highly flexible and well-suited for a comparative case study design because it allows for both an in-depth analysis of each individual case and a structured comparison across all three.

The analysis will proceed through the six-phase process proposed by Braun and Clarke:

1. **Familiarization with the data:** Transcribing interviews and reading through all data sources to become deeply familiar with the content.
2. **Generating initial codes:** Systematically coding interesting features of the data that are relevant to the research questions.

3. **Searching for themes:** Grouping codes into potential themes that represent a patterned response or meaning.
4. **Reviewing themes:** Refining and checking the themes against the coded data and the entire dataset to ensure they are coherent and meaningful.
5. **Defining and naming themes:** Developing clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. **Producing the report:** Selecting compelling examples to present a coherent narrative of the analysis.

This process will be guided by the "Strategic Choice Model," with a focus on identifying themes related to the tensions between participatory and instrumental communication and the factors influencing strategic choices. Thematic analysis will allow the study to identify not only the communication strategies used by each YLO but also the underlying rationales, challenges, and successes, providing a rich foundation for the cross-case comparison.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Rigor

In qualitative research, rigor is established through trustworthiness. This study will ensure trustworthiness by addressing four key criteria as outlined by Lincoln & Guba, (1985)

- **Credibility (Internal Validity):** Ensured through **triangulation** of data from multiple sources (interviews, documents, observations).
- **Transferability (External Validity):** Achieved through **thick description**, providing a rich, detailed account of the YLOs and their context, allowing readers to assess applicability to other situations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).
- **Dependability (Reliability):** Enhanced by maintaining a clear and detailed **audit trail** of the research process.
- **Confirmability (Objectivity):** Maintained through a practice of **reflexivity**, where the researcher keeps a journal to reflect on personal assumptions and potential biases.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This study will adhere to the highest ethical standards. Key measures include:

- **Informed Consent:** Written informed consent will be obtained from all participants after they receive a clear explanation of the study.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Pseudonyms will be used for participants and their organisations in the final thesis to protect their identities.
- **Data Security:** All data will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and destroyed five years after the study's completion.
- **Minimizing Harm:** The research is designed to pose minimal risk, and participants can decline to answer any question.

3.8 Limitations of the Methodology

Acknowledging limitations is crucial for a balanced interpretation of the findings. The primary limitations include:

- **Generalizability:** As a qualitative case study with a small, purposively selected sample, the findings are not statistically generalizable. The goal is deep, contextualized understanding.
- **Researcher Bias:** Despite reflexivity, the researcher's interpretations can influence the process, an inherent aspect of qualitative inquiry.
- **Access:** Access to sensitive internal documents or key leadership figures may be limited.
- **Self-Reported Data:** The study relies heavily on interviews, which are subject to participants' recall and self-representation. Document analysis and observation are used to mitigate this limitation.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Question 1: Findings: What communication strategies are developed and used by the selected youth-led organizations in Accra?

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from data collected from Youth Action Movement, Youth Advocates Ghana and Net Impact Ghana over a three-month period (June-August 2025). It synthesizes perspectives from both organizational leaders, communication officers and beneficiaries, highlighting how communication is delivered, received and acted upon, as well as the structural, operational and contextual factors that influence effectiveness. The interpretation is organized around key objectives, providing insight into both the internal practices of the organizations and their perceived impact on target communities.

4.2. Identification and Examination of Communication Strategies

4.2.1 Leadership

Table 1: Communication Strategies - Leadership

Overarching Theme	Sub-Theme	Code
Identifying and examining communication strategies	Strategic Use of Multiple Channels	Social media (Instagram, YouTube, X), WhatsApp, email, community radio, face-to-face outreach
	Participatory and Dialogic Communication	Emphasis on dialogue, participation, co-creation with communities

	Partnership and stakeholder Collaboration	Collaboration with partners, stakeholder, community leaders, government agencies
	Peer Education and Youth-Led Content Creation	Youth champions, peer educators leading content development
	Culturally Adaptive and Inclusive Communication	Use of local languages (Twi, Ewe, Ga, Dagbani), sign language interpretation, drama/SBCC for accessibility
	Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)	Drama, storytelling, life-touching narratives performed in communities

4.2.2 Communication Officers

Table 2: Communication Strategies - Communication Officers

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Operational Implementation of Communication Strategies	Use of Digital and Social Media Platforms	WhatsApp, Instagram, X, Facebook, LinkedIn,

		TikTok, YouTube for campaigns and engagement
	Community-Based and Traditional Media	Radio segments, community announcements, traditional media engagement, in-person outreach
	Youth Participation in Content Development	Youth involvement in creating IEC materials, flyers, educational content
	Use of Multimedia and Visual Tools	Videos, posters, radio jingles, infographics
	Feedback mechanisms and Two-way Communication	Receiving comments, WhatsApp responses, audience feedback
	Play-Based and Interactive Approaches	Role play, drama, participatory activities with schools and communities

4.2.3 Beneficiaries

Table 3: Communication Strategies - Beneficiaries

Overarching Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes

Identification and examining of communication strategies	Digital & Social Media Platforms	WhatsApp groups used for member updates; Instagram, X (Twitter), YouTube used for SRHR education, campaigns, animations, and podcasts.
	Face-to-Face & Community Outreach	Physical outreaches, peer-education sessions, setting up stands at events, community engagements.
	Peer-Led Communication	Youth volunteers create IEC materials (flyers, posts), host YouTube podcasts, and lead outreach messaging.
	Use of Local Languages & Culturally Relevant Content	Messages available in Twi, Ewe, Ga, Northern languages; use of age-appropriate visuals, relatable characters, and animations.

4.2.4 Interpretation of Results

The results from the youth-led organizations employ multi-channel, youth-centered and participatory communication strategies that blend digital and traditional approaches to reach diverse audiences.

Multi-Channel Communication Approach

All three organizations utilize a strategic mix of digital and traditional communication channels. Digital platforms, particularly WhatsApp, Instagram, X (Twitter) and YouTube serve as primary channels for daily engagement and rapid information dissemination. Leadership emphasized that these platforms are selected based on youth accessibility and usage patterns, with WhatsApp described as ‘the baseline for media communication’.

“Globally, we use email newsletters, our website, social media (LinkedIn, Instagram, X), webinars, and our annual conference. Our local chapter complements these with WhatsApp groups, community events, and partnerships with local organization”. **(Chapter President-Net Impact)**

“To some extent, OK, so we have Facebook, LinkedIn, X, I'll say, all, because most times when we do make our posts, when we engage our audiences, we do get feedback. And so I'll say we have interactive sessions on almost all of our social media platforms, sometimes even when we want to reach our youth champions in the northern parts of Ghana, we mostly rely on WhatsApp. Sometimes because Google meets and others, maybe the x their internet instability, so sometimes we do employ WhatsApp. Also engage them, maybe we will be having a meeting this and this, and aside that, I'll say most of our social media platforms are quite interactive, yes”. **(Communications officer-YAG)**

“Okay so they make use of the social media platforms especially because young people nowadays are most of the time on social media. They use social media to put out information and education like YouTube, Instagram, and all that”. **(Beneficiary, YAM)**

Traditional channels including community radio, face-to-face outreach and stakeholder dialogues complement digital efforts, particularly for reaching marginalized groups and rural communities with limited internet access.

“At the community level, communication also happens through face-to-face meetings, peer education sessions, and outreach activities. This combination allows us to reach both young people who are digitally active and those in areas with limited internet access”. **(Beneficiary, YAM)**

“Our communication strategy combines advocacy, social behaviour change, and digital engagement. While we have guiding frameworks and plans for each project, our approach remains flexible to respond to emerging community needs”. **(Programs Coordinator, YAG)**

“Also engage them, maybe we will be having a meeting this and this, and aside that, I'll say most of our social media platforms are quite interactive, yes”. **(Communication Officer, Net Impact)**

This approach reflects a pragmatic response to Ghana's digital divide, where organizations must balance the reach and immediacy of social media with the inclusivity and trust-building potential of in-person.

Culturally Adaptive and Inclusive Strategies

A distinctive feature of these organizations' communication is their emphasis on cultural adaptation and disability inclusion. Organizations actively use local languages (Twi, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, etc.) in educational videos, dramas and community outreach to ensure message resonate with diverse linguistic groups. One leader explained:

“The demography of community and different people with different background and disabilities, and so because our work is a social work, we have encountered these issues where you go for events and issues of communication, you have somebody with hearing impairments, and they are not able to hear whatever you are saying and so one strategy we have adopted, is the inclusivity where we ensure that the strategies or communication guide we come up with,

even if not satisfying every kind of person, but at least there's a way we are able to achieve maybe minimal or understanding of whatever we are trying to communicate. And so when you look at the SBCC activities, it is one of those strategies we are using to communicate to community members in terms of the dialects, we ensure that we break down, whichever language, we find ourselves in, let's say if it's in the northern, the popular language is Dagbani. So we come up with a story in the dagbani, which could also fit the context of those people in that particular area. We are doing the sbcc or we are doing the project. Then we also believe that it's also easy for even people who have hearing impairments to understand by just watching and so by playing out a drama, we are able to also satisfy these people. And so basically what I mean is that we are able to blend some of the strategies in almost all the projects. And so when you see a project that we are running, which does not have just one strategy but different communication strategies so that we are able to reach out to the key population, and also the target group and all in a way satisfying the information we want.

(President, YAM)

Notably, organizations incorporate sign language interpretation and visual communication tools like infographics to accommodate persons with disabilities demonstrating a commitment to inclusive communication.

“Yes, very, very relatable. So, during outreaches and not just outreaches but when we make the flyers and everything, we use images of youth we use images that portray whatever is going on and not just from there, I've seen animations from the organization on YouTube where when you watch, first place the character matches the age of terms of youth from that side. The donation, the one who is talking, the voice overs, the expressions and everything matches every aspect of the situation at hand, and that is one thing I can say. So, from the flyers to animation and when we go for training and on all these things, they are very much aligned, they are tailored training”. **(Beneficiary, YAM)**

Peer Education and Youth-Led Content Creation

All the organizations employ peer education models where young people are trained as peer educators, youth champions and content creators. This strategy leverages the credibility and relatability of youth-to-youth communication. Beneficiaries confirmed this approach:

“They use young people like us to talk to young people. They are communicating to young people and not at them” (Beneficiary, YAM)

“We empower youth champions and peer educators to lead content creation—developing videos, testimonials, and local advocacy messages. For example, in the Y4H project, students in school health clubs produced radio jingles and drama sketches on reproductive health, which we shared on YAG TV and local stations” (Prog. Coordinator, YAG)

Youth participation extends beyond delivery to content co-creation, with young people developing IEC materials, flyers and social media content that authentically reflect their lived experiences and communication styles.

Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)

Organizations strategically employ drama, story-telling and role-play, collectively termed as Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) to convey complex health and rights messages in accessible, emotionally engaging formats. These approaches are particularly effective in communities where literacy levels vary or where sensitive topics like sexual and reproductive health require culturally sensitive framing. Leaders described SBCC as:

“We also believe that one of the ways or one of the easiest ways to communicate issues to people to easily understand is what we call social behavioral change communication (SBCC), where we come up with dramas or stories that are life touching. And then we play it out in public, in a gathering where we are able to use this particular initiative to communicate to

them what we intend to communicate. So basically, that's how it's been working out for us".
(President, YAM).

Participatory and Dialogic Communication

Rather than a one-way information transmission, organizations emphasize two-way dialogue and community participation in communication design. This includes using feedback mechanisms (polls, Q&As, social media comments, helplines like Yenkasa) to gather community input and adapt strategies accordingly. Communication officers explained:

"Yeah, so feedback I'll say positive. I'll say positive feedback. Feedback also to us means there's a need to address something or there's a need to change". **(Coordinator, YAM)**

This demonstrates how organizations use communication not just to inform but to listen and respond.

The communication strategies employed by these organizations reflect a sophisticated understanding of the operating context. They navigate resource constraints, infrastructure challenges and diverse audience needs through adaptive, multi-channel approaches that prioritize accessibility, cultural relevance and youth agency. They also align with participatory communication paradigms while pragmatically incorporating elements of instrumental communication where needed to achieve specific development outcomes.

4.3 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Communication Strategies in achieving community and development outcomes

4.3.1 Beneficiaries.

Table 4: Effectiveness of Communication Strategies - Beneficiaries

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes

Effectiveness of Organizational Communication in Achieving Change	Awareness Creation and Knowledge Gain	Increased awareness, improved understanding of SRHR topics
	Personal Behavior Change and Empowerment	Changed perceptions, improved decision-making, personal growth, confidence
	Active Application and Sharing of Knowledge	Use of information in advocacy and education
	Accessibility and Ease of Understanding	Easy access to information, relatable content, availability through multiple channels
	Relevance and Relatability to Youth Needs	Youth-focused, context-specific topics (SRHR, mental health, gender)
	Responsiveness and Youth Inclusion in Communication	Organization talks "to" not "at" youth, welcomes feedback, involves youth voices
	Limited Follow-Up on Community-Level Impact	Uncertainty about long-term behavior change in wider

		community, need for impact assessment
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4.3.2 Communications Officer.

Table 5: Effectiveness of Communication Strategies - Communication Officers

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Assessing the Impact of Communication Strategies	Audience Engagement and Feedback	Likes, shares, attendance, and direct responses
	Change in Knowledge and Attitudes	Improved understanding, positive feedback from audiences
	Community Reach and Participation	Increased outreach coverage, active youth involvement
	Responsiveness to Feedback and Adaptation	Using community feedback to refine communication, introducing new services based on needs
	Policy and Institutional Influence	Drawing attention to policy gaps, engaging government agencies, leading advocacy initiatives

	Challenges in Long-Term Impact Measurement	Difficulty tracking beyond engagement metrics, limited systematic follow-up to assess behavior/policy outcomes
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4.3.3 Interpretation of Results

The findings from both beneficiaries and communication officers demonstrate that the organization's communication strategies are effective at individual and engagement levels but face challenges in measuring long-term community-level impact.

Awareness, Knowledge Gain and Personal Empowerment

Beneficiaries consistently reported that increased awareness and improved understanding of SRHR topics with information described as accessible, relatable and directly applicable to their lives. One beneficiary explained how learning about consent changed personal behavior.

“Ermm so most, an information I received from the organization and how useful it was and how I used it. Okay, so like I stated earlier, on YouTube, you'll see videos on SRHR stuff and one particular on us on consent. So consent, it was useful because I know what consent is but then it broke down what consent really entails so then errm consent it is not passive, it's a firm yes or a firm no and you don't take someone's actions as their answers you take what they say as they want and not their body language or anything. So it helped me or how useful it was , so now, when I don't want something, I say a firm no and I don't use my body language to say yes or no, im verbally saying yes or no and I stand by what I say and it also applies to other people, they tell me, I don't want this and they mean they don't want it and they do, I don't look at their body language to determine what they want. I don't assume, yeah”. **(Beneficiary, YAM)**

Others reported shifts in perceptions on sensitive topics like abortion and GBV demonstrating that communication goes beyond information transfer to influence attitudes and empower decision making.

Communication officers confirmed this through observable engagement metrics like shares, comments and helpline calls.

“Okay, so audience interaction means a lot to us. It means that one, people are getting your messages, it means that two people need that information and it also means that we are making an impact. So when we post something, if it's awareness creation and people come to give their ideas or even ask questions, it means that there's a need, there's a need so it means a lot to us and we are able to tell how many people have engaged and how many we've reached with that information. Once we know that, I don't think they are robots behind their phones yeah so the information gets to the people we need or the people we serve that's young people”.

(Coordinator- Communication Officer, YAM)

Active Application and Peer Influence

Beneficiaries actively apply and share their networks. Examples include posting about the GBV fund on social media and educating peers which demonstrates a multiplier effect where communication recipients become communicators themselves. The organizations' use of peer educators and youth-led content creation strengthens this ripple effect as beneficiaries reported improved communication skills and confidence from hosting podcasts and facilitating outreach.

“Okay, I've had lots of useful information from the organization, I believe. I don't know how to answer this specifically but basically, every information I've gotten from the organization is very useful. Okay, so we can talk about the GBV fund. Gender based violence, domestic funding, that's information I got to know from the organization and while campaigning against

it, and everything, it was very useful and in communication so I actually posted it. We do create flyers and all these things to run campaigns on media platforms so I posted it on my status and then someone was like...so in the picture as we know statically it's women who turn to encounter or report this issues most about gender based violence itself so he reached out and was like is it only women who go through? so I had the opportunity to explain things further to this person and to others as well and letting them understand that there are even funds for victims when they go through that funds to help them get back to the community, funds to stabilize them and all those things so that is one of the key information I had, just recently but I've gotten lots of important information". (Member, YAM)

Responsiveness and Service Innovation

Communication officers highlighted how feedback loops drive program adaptation. Examples include introducing the self-care method for SRHR service delivery after youth expressed preference for home-based services and adopting infographics to accommodate students with hearing impairments. These innovations demonstrate effectiveness not just in message transmission but in using communication to identify and respond to unmet needs. One success story involved tagging government stakeholders on social media, which led to the organization showing communication's power to influence policy.

"Errm, our messages are getting to the right people. So, another example I'll use to explain this is the domestic violence (DV) fund that sits at the domestic violence secretariat. So mostly, during sixteen days of Activism, we use infographics and other ermm communication methods to engage online. Social media and tag these relevant stakeholders. Now when we tagged the ministry of Gender attention was drawn to the fact that there needed to be the operationalization, the fact that there was a fund, the DV fund is there but is it operational? It wasn't really operational, people didn't even know about it and now as part of what we do, we are currently leading an initiative on the operationalization of the DV fund and engaging the

errm the Domestic violence secretariat at the ministry of Gender". **(Coordinator-Communication officer, YAM)**

"Errrm two-way dialogue I'll say is one of the ermm good things. I mean, it's great it means that there's communication and there's feedback, there's giving and there's taking. I send the information, you respond with your idea or you respond with feedback. I know that we are making headway. So for example, I mentioned that we wanted to know how young people access reproductive health services and so we put out a social media engagement activity that's "Gen Zs and SRHR" that was the topic and then we had series of questions so we make the firstborn "how do you want to receive SRHR services, say contraceptives?" and the feedback was, I want it to be delivered to me at home like bolt food. I want to be at the comfort of my home and I don't want to come to the facility because there's an auntie who also lives in my neighborhood and I believe that when she sees me, she'll tell my family and I don't want my family to know so these are some of the best things that happen in two-way communication and it has worked for us. We are able to design some interventions to guide that". **(Coordinator-Communication officer, YAM).**

Limitations in Long-Term Impact Assessment

Despite these successes, both groups acknowledged difficulties in measuring sustained behavior change at community level. Beneficiaries noted:

"Sincerely, I can't Answer this, I can't lie about it and say this yes. The reason being that I have not been able to, I don't know if it happens but I am not sure and I have not been able to go back to make an impact assessment and say that okay when we came here sometime ago things have changed. So let's say we've gone for an outreach on teenage pregnancy and we educated people on blah blah blah, spoken to daughters, spoke to mothers everything, I've not been able to go back to see if there's a change in the community. Or say, a topic on promoting safe sex, we've shared condoms, we've educated people as well. I have not been able to go back and say

our outreaches have reduced. But when we go for the outreaches, they are open to it, they do understand, they agree, and some take a lot and they'd use and those who don't want do not take it. But what I can say to us, the Yenkasa, is something we push out and we get some calls but I can't say for impact at large to say I have accessed that to know the impact". (Member, YAM)

Communication officers similarly struggle to track outcomes beyond engagement metrics, facing challenges with systematic follow-up and linking communication efforts directly to long term behavior or policy changes in communities where they work.

The strategies demonstrate effectiveness and responsiveness through feedback-driven adaptations and have influenced policy processes, but gaps remain a significant challenge requiring stronger monitoring systems to capture sustained development outcomes.

4.4 Exploring the challenges these organizations face in designing and implementing communication strategies

4.4.1 Leadership

Table 6: challenges these organizations face in designing and implementing communication strategies - Leadership

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Institutional and Structural Challenges in Communication Strategy Design	Limited Resources and Funding	Inadequate funds, difficulty sustaining media activities
	Difficulty Linking Communication to Long-Term Outcomes	Varying capacity across staff/volunteers, dependence on volunteers

	Human Resource and Capacity Constraints	Few trained communication staff, volunteer dependence
	Poor Internet Connectivity and Infrastructure	Inconsistent internet, especially in rural and deprived communities
	Complexity of Translating Policy Language	Difficulty making policy messages youth-friendly and accessible
	Need for Multiple Communication Strategies	Challenge of incorporating diverse approaches to reach all audiences inclusively
	Competing Priorities Among Partners	Balancing communication priorities with partners and stakeholders

4.4.2 Communication Officers.

Table 7: challenges these organizations face in designing and implementing communication strategies - Communication Officers

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Operational Barriers in Implementing Communication Strategies	Budget Constraints for Campaigns and Activities	Limited budgets for promotions, campaigns, and outreach activities

	Technical and Digital Limitations	Lack of equipment, unstable internet
	Platform-Specific Challenges	Character limits on X, hate comments on TikTok/Facebook, challenges trending
	Difficulty Measuring Long-Term Impact	Limited follow-up, gap between planning and field realities, challenges tracking behavior change
	Coordination and Information Flow Challenges	Communication gaps between leadership and field staff, young people's non-compliance with protocols
	Time Constraints and Workload Pressures	Overwhelming deadlines, multiple tasks, limited time for content creation
	Delays in Content from Field Activities	Untimely receipt of photos/posts from community engagements

	Meeting Donor Requirements	Challenges satisfying specific donor demands and reporting expectations
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4.4.3 Interpretation of Results

Both leaders and communication officers highlighted persistent structural barriers especially, limited funding and unstable internet access which affects communication delivery. Leadership interviews noted that some channels particularly, SBCC and local media are expensive and difficult to sustain.

“Yeah, so one of the things I already mentioned in my previous answer has to do with funding. Some of the communication channels demand so much funding to be able to use them. And so funding is a challenge. We also have to incorporate more than one communication strategy. Let's say a group of people that we want to communicate to, and that has really been a challenge”. **(President, YAM).**

Communication officers similarly described internet instability and resource gaps as major obstacles.

“Sometimes inconsistent internet is one, especially when we have to engage our youth champions, when we are to engage our audiences. And sometimes there are inconsistency with our network, especially those in the deprived communities, you know, sometimes we deal with those in the deprived communities in most of our projects, so it becomes challenging to get them for meetings like virtual meetings and stuff, and sometimes too there's budget constraints for our campaigns, you know, for those who we have to engage and stuff, and in cases where we engage those in the fields, we do have traditional media engagement, we do engage and getting the posts, getting the pictures and stuff. They are not timely for our posts. Sometimes these are the challenges I think, and also sometimes meeting the requirements of certain

donors, some donors are very I don't know how I will say it, but sometimes meeting their requirements is some way". (Comm. Officer, Net Impact).

"Erm, when young people are not responsive, sometimes they don't comply with information sharing. So you say, send an information via email and they want to send it via WhatsApp at their discretion and when there's so much work to do you are not done with one task and then another task is given, it gets overwhelming and all needs attention you have deadlines to meet up. Yes, sometimes with Internet connections, you come to the office and there's zero connectivity for you to work. Yes, so basically, these are the biggest challenges". (Coordinator-Communication Officer, YAM).

Operational and Coordination Challenges

Daily implementation challenges also emerged strongly across both groups. Communication officers expressed difficulties meeting workload demands and managing platform limitation such as:

"x, but not in the sense that we cannot post, you know, x sometimes has some limitations. You know, we haven't subscribed to premium yet, and so most times we find ourselves summarizing a lot of things like what you want out there, you know, you have to summarize summarize, summarize, summarize a lot, it's quite challenging, because sometimes you want certain characters out there. However, you are limited regardless". (Comm. Officer, Net Impact)

Leaders also described coordination pressures when working with diverse stakeholders:

"We also have to incorporate more than one communication strategy. Let's say a group of people that we want to communicate to, and that has really been a challenge". (President, YAM)

These operational constraints often create a gap between what is planned and what can actually be executed.

Need for More Inclusive and Adaptive Approaches

Both groups emphasized the need for communication strategies that adapt to language, disability and community context. Leaders describe tailoring communication to diverse audiences for example, using drama and sign language,

“So we have an activity called the national dialogue on gbv, which we bring together participants across our branches and also in schools as well. So in this event, we bring alongside people who are living with disability and so in implementing this particular activity, one of the things I did was to include the sign language who were part of the entire event planning to the end who help us communicate verbally. We were doing to the people living with disability, people who were disabled in terms of what we were talking about. So we were able to use the sign language as part of communication to communicate and also as part of the event was a drama, a story that was entirely about the theme of the conference dialogue and so in this particular dialogue, when we had the general discussion where there was a panel, we discussed all that who were probably more understood by people who could hear and probably see what was happening. Then we also adopted the drama, which probably was able to satisfy people who could hear and see and also people who could not hear but could see and the sign language was able to satisfy the group of people who could not understand what the dialogue was, the panel discussions and all the speakers speaking. So we were able to use sign language to help them also understand or get the communication we were trying to put up and this happened this year”. (President, YAM).

Communication officers also highlighted the need to adjust content quickly to emerging issues such as during national events or crisis, explaining that;

“So, regarding the topics, they are mostly project focused and our topic also cuts across, sometimes national observation or international observation. And we also do have the flexibility. Sometimes something can come up. For instance, the helicopter crash, so there are

instances where those kinds of things do happen. So, we have that flexibility to adjust when and where, but mostly our topics or messages do come from the particular project we are running”. (Comm. Officer, Net Impact)

4.5 Comparing the communication approaches and relative impact of the three organizations

4.5.1 Beneficiaries

Table 8: Comparing the communication approaches - Beneficiaries

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Perceived Differences in Communication Approaches	Peer-led vs. Intergenerational Approach	Youth-focused communication, adult participation for credibility
	Ease of Understanding and Multi-lingual Accessibility	Simplicity of messages, use of local language, (Twi, Ewe, Ga), age-appropriate content
	Diversity of Communication Channels	Social media (Instagram, X, YouTube), WhatsApp, face-to-face outreach, peer education
	Awareness and Engagement, but Limited Follow-Up on Long-Term Impact	Observable awareness gains, but uncertainty about sustained behaviour change in communities

	Topical Coverage: Strengths and Gaps	Current strengths: SRHR, gender equality, leadership, GBV; Identified gaps: mental health, career development, digital safety, climate-SRHR linkages
	Participatory Approach with Room for Improvement	Youth voices included, but desire for more consistent two-way communication

4.5.2 Leadership

Table 9: Comparing the communication approaches - Leadership

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Strategic Comparison of Organizational Communication Approaches	Communication as Governance vs. Awareness Tool	YAG/Net Impact integrate communication into governance and accountability; others focus mainly on visibility
	Variation in Resource Capacity and Access	Differences in funding, technology access, partnerships, and global-local coordination

	Target Audience and Geographic Reach	Urban vs. rural audiences, digital-first vs. hybrid (online-offline) strategies
	Emphasis on Localization and Cultural Context	Context-specific messaging, local language use, culturally resonant narratives
	Learning and Cross-organizational Exchange	Recognition that YLOs are increasingly adopting similar strategies (SBCC, social media)
	Tracking of Impact	Usage of quantitative and qualitative designs

4.5.3. Interpretation of Results

Perceived Differences in Communication Approaches

Beneficiaries and leaders highlighted noticeable differences in how the three organizations communicate. Beneficiaries emphasized a peer-led approach where youth-to-youth communication is central while occasional adult participation adds credibility, explaining the importance of having both.

“Okay, so it usually happens online on media spaces, for us members we do get most of our information on WhatsApp where we have a group for any information we are supposed to know so errm WhatsApp is kind of the baseline for media communication between members and then

for young people as a whole, basically so all media, Instagram, Twitter, ermm WhatsApp itself on our statuses and then we also go for outreaches as well and YouTube as well, basically social media as a whole but we also go for outreaches physically and partner with organizations during event and we set up our stand there”. (Member, YAM).

Leaders similarly noted that some organizations as YAG/Net Impact integrate communication into governance and accountability whereas others focus primarily on visibility, indicating a strategic divergence in communication objectives.

“While many YLOs focus on visibility and mobilization, YAG’s approach integrates communication as part of governance and accountability. Our communication goes beyond awareness—it influences policies and strengthens community systems”. (Programs Coordinator, YAG)

Ease of Understanding and Accessibility

Across both groups, simplicity and multi-lingual delivery emerged as a key facilitator. Beneficiaries reported that messaging was generally clear, culturally appropriate and available in local languages (Twi, Ewe, Ga, etc.), making content relatable and easy to understand.

“Yes, so in terms of language, with the social media I talked about previously, specifically, YouTube, the videos they post there for education are made in different languages. You get the twi, you get the ewe, you get the ga, you get some of the northern languages in addition to the English language so language wise, it’s easy to understand. If you don’t understand English, you can speak twi, then you have what is tailored for you. And images, yes, they try their best to fit not to be too explicit but I mean, the images they put there are acceptable, like age appropriate and all that”. (Member, YAM).

Leaders echoed this, highlighting the emphasis on context-specific messaging and localization to ensure resonance with target audiences.

“So we have an activity called the national dialogue on GBV, which we bring together participants across our branches and also in schools as well. So in this event, we bring alongside people who are living with disability and so in implementing this particular activity, one of the things I did was to include the sign language who were part of the entire event planning to the end who help us communicate verbally. We were doing to the people living with disability, people who were disabled in terms of what we were talking about. So we were able to use the sign language as part of communication to communicate and also as part of the event was a drama, a story that was entirely about the theme of the conference dialogue and so in this particular dialogue, when we had the general discussion where there was a panel, we discussed all that who were probably more understood by people who could hear and probably see what was happening. Then we also adopted the drama, which probably was able to satisfy people who could hear and see and also people who could not hear but could see and the sign language was able to satisfy the group of people who could not understand what the dialogue was, the panel discussions and all the speakers speaking. So we were able to use sign language to help them also understand or get the communication we were trying to put up and this happened this year” (President, YAM).

Diversity of Communication Channels

Both beneficiaries and leaders identified a mix of digital and offline channels. Social media platforms (Instagram, X, YouTube), WhatsApp, peer education and face-to-face outreach were all commonly used to engage young people. Leaders noted that urban audiences often benefit from digital-first strategies, while rural populations require hybrid approaches that combine online and offline outreach.

“We use a mix of channels including social media (Facebook, X, Instagram), community radio, stakeholder dialogues, workshops, and policy briefs. Face-to-face interactions and community forums remain essential for trust-building, especially in rural settings”. **(Programs Coordinator, YAG).**

“The weakness is sometimes limited offline access for rural audiences, but the strength lies in inclusivity and co-creation”. **(President, Net Impact).**

Awareness, Engagement and Participatory Approaches

Beneficiaries acknowledged observable gains in awareness, SRHR knowledge and empowerment through organizational activities but expressed uncertainty about long-term behavior within communities.

“Yes, I’ve noticed some really positive changes in the community. People seem more informed and engaged with local issues, and there’s a stronger sense of collaboration between different groups. I think the organization’s outreach and communication have helped bring people together”. **(Beneficiary, YAM).**

Leaders observed that youth participation is increasingly integrated, though there remains a need for consistent two-way communication and stronger feedback loops to fully capture young peoples’ input in decision making.

“We provide training or even community led for each community. We have a focal person that we work with, who is being trained as either a champion or community mobiliser, and this group of people are their mouths piece of the organization and the immediate contact for the organization and so the practical thing that we do is to ensure that we engage them through the training for them to be able to deliver the reproductive health education at the community level, even when my organization is not around, so that's what we do. Then, also, what else we

do as part of developing our strategies, this group of people and some community members are involved to be able to contribute to the organization's vision. So, every 5 years, we have this strategic development. And so, before we complete the strategic development, the engagement is done with all the groups of people mentioned community members, stakeholders and other staff to ensure they are included in this strategy being developed". (President, YAM).

Topical Coverage: Strengths and Gaps

Both groups recognized strengths in addressing sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, leadership development and GBV awareness. However, gaps remain in emerging areas such as mental health and economic empowerment suggesting room for strategic expansion of content and topics.

"So we have an activity called the national dialogue on GBV, which we bring together participants across our branches and also in schools as well. So in this event, we bring alongside people who are living with disability and so in implementing this particular activity, one of the things I did was to include the sign language who were part of the entire event planning to the end who help us communicate verbally. We were doing to the people living with disability, people who were disabled in terms of what we were talking about. So we were able to use the sign language as part of communication to communicate and also as part of the event was a drama, a story that was entirely about the theme of the conference dialogue and so in this particular dialogue, when we had the general discussion where there was a panel, we discussed all that who were probably more understood by people who could hear and probably see what was happening. Then we also adopted the drama, which probably was able to satisfy people who could hear and see and also people who could not hear but could see and the sign language was able to satisfy the group of people who could not understand what the dialogue was, the panel discussions and all the speakers speaking. So we were able to use sign

language to help them also understand or get the communication we were trying to put up and this happened this year”. (President, YAM).

“Overall, the organization covers most of the key issues affecting young people, especially around SRHR, leadership, and empowerment. However, I believe there’s room to expand communication in a few emerging areas. For instance, more focus could be placed on mental health, career development, and digital safety, since these are becoming increasingly relevant to young people today. It would also be helpful to have more discussions around climate change and its link to SRHR, as well as economic empowerment, because these factors strongly influence young people’s health and well-being”. (Beneficiary, YAM).

Learning, Cross-organizational Exchange and Adaptation

Leaders highlighted that organizations are increasingly adopting similar strategies, including SBCC campaigns and social media engagement, reflecting opportunities for cross-learning and standardization of best practices.

“It’s not that different, however, in terms of the implementation, it is quite recently that I realise that other YLOs are also incorporating like I mentioned, sbcc activities are very expensive. And so if the YLO doesn’t have funding, they end up not doing, but some of them have similar strategies”. (President, YAM).

Beneficiaries also noted flexibility in communication, particularly when addressing urgent context-specific issues, emphasizing the need for adoptive approaches.

“Yes, so one of the recent project was on reproductive health education for the marginalized group and most of the time, we overlook the marginalized groups which includes people like PWDs, people living with disabilities and so this project was to include them in the education of SRHR, reproductive health education si they trained some of them who are in school to be

peer educators so they in turn go back to school or even out of school to teach their colleagues what family planning is, what sexual and reproductive health education is all about, ways in which they should protect themselves, we don't assume that since they are people living with disability, they don't engage in these things and so one of the things that they do or the organization did, I think it was in collaboration with CAMFED but it's still something we did by specifically giving training to PWDs. Yeah, the deaf students, to also be equipped with the education and the knowledge to make informed decisions, yeah". (Member, YAM).

Tracking of Program Success and Impact

Participants mentioned that they use several means of tracking the performance of projects and programs to ensure its sustainability and its effectiveness.

"We use both quantitative and qualitative measures; engagement metrics, chapter growth, and stories of members who launched impact ventures after participating in our programs". (President, Net Impact).

The findings indicate that the organizations employ diverse, youth-focused and contextually tailored communication strategies using a combination of digital and offline channels to enhance engagement and knowledge transfer. While beneficiaries report improved awareness, access to information, and personal growth, leaders note persistent challenges, including resource limitations, operational constraints and difficulties in measuring impact. Overall communication is effective in raising awareness and fostering participation yet there is a need for more adaptive, inclusive and evaluative approaches to ensure sustained behavioral change and broader community impact.

4.6 Discussion

4.6.1 Introduction

This study explored communication strategies, effectiveness, challenges and the impact of three youth-led organizations in Accra. Findings show the use of digital platforms, peer-led outreach and culturally tailored messaging to engage young people on SRHR, GBV and leadership. These strategies effectively raise awareness, provide relevant information and engage beneficiaries, particularly on issues like sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and leadership. The results align with previous studies showing that youth-focused, multi-channel and culturally sensitive communication enhances engagement and learning outcomes. However, challenges such as limited funding, resource gaps and monitoring difficulties reflect broader constraints faced by youth-led organizations in similar contexts.

4.6.2 Identifying and examining the communication strategies used by the three youth-led organizations in Accra

The study found that the three youth-led organizations employed multi-channel communication strategies to engage their target audience. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, X (Twitter) and YouTube were used extensively, complemented by face-to-face, peer education and participatory workshops. These approaches demonstrate deliberate effort to meet young people where they are in line with previous research suggesting that youth-focused communication is most effective when it leverages platforms familiar to the audience and also those with limited internet access and this is consistent with findings by UNICEF on SBCC for adolescents which highlight the need for blended communication strategies. A key feature of these strategies is peer-led engagement (Kwekie & Kwaku, 2024; Grant, 2017). Young people are actively involved in creating and delivering messages, ensuring the content is relatable and culturally relevant. At the same time, intergenerational involvement such as inclusion, adult mentors or community leaders adds credibility and fosters acceptance within communities. This approach aligns with global research on youth engagement in communication, which

emphasizes the effectiveness of peer-led messaging combined with adult support in enhancing message credibility and acceptance (King et al., 2022)

Content is tailored for accessibility and relevance, including the use of local languages such as Twi, Ewe and Ga, age-appropriate imagery, animations and culturally resonant narratives. Such attention to contextualization not only facilitates comprehension but also ensures messages resonate with target audiences. Previous studies in Ghana and other LMIC contexts have highlighted that culturally adopted messaging and local language use significantly improve uptake of health and development information among adolescents and the parents or caregivers in Ghana and other LMIC settings (Agyei et al., 2025). The study also found that the organizations demonstrate participatory design in communication. The youth are involved in designing campaign materials such as flyers, posters and social media content. They also participate in outreach sessions and workshops, providing feedback and guiding message delivery. This participatory approach not only strengthens message relevance but also promotes youth empowerment, aligning with the principles of youth-led social change frameworks (Checkoway, 2012; Leung et al., 2025).

4.6.3 Effectiveness of Communication Strategies

Beneficiaries reported that organizations' communication strategies are highly effective in raising awareness and promoting knowledge acquisition. Topics such as sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, leadership and human rights were frequently cited as useful and relevant. The use of youth voices in content delivery, combined with culturally appropriate storytelling and visuals, enhanced comprehension and engagement. This is in line with a study by Chipako et al., (2024) which found that community-based, digital and peer-led interventions positively influence SRH outcomes by improving knowledge, confidence and uptake of related services. Peer-led communication and participatory outreach allowed young people to act as multipliers, sharing information with peers and community members. This

mirrors findings from other studies where peer education significantly improves knowledge, attitudes and engagement among adolescents in health and development initiatives (Nkurunziza & Tuyisenge, 2025). However, despite the effectiveness in generating awareness and engagement, there are limitations in achieving sustained behavior change. Beneficiaries and leaders expressed uncertainty about whether knowledge translated into long-term actions within communities. This is consistent with literature which shows that while SBCC interventions often achieve short-term knowledge and attitude gains, the translation into long-term behavioral change requires repeated messaging, supportive environments and consistent monitoring (Id et al., 2023). Another critical aspect of effectiveness relates to communication relevance and inclusivity. Organizations ensure that messaging addresses the practical realities of young people, such as access to SRHR services, consent education and leadership opportunities. Accessibility measures, such as sign language for hearing-impaired individuals and simplified visuals, also enhance inclusivity. These practices align with global recommendations for inclusive youth communication (Sangare et al., 2020; Grant, 2017). The study also highlighted that the use of multiple channels enhances reach and flexibility. Digital platforms allow rapid dissemination of information, whereas interpersonal approaches ensure engagement and contextual understanding. This combination is supported by literature emphasizing that hybrid strategies combining online and offline and interpersonal methods tend to be more effective in diverse urban and peri-urban youth populations (Development, n.d.; Grant, 2017)ss

4.6.4 Challenges in Designing and Implementing Communication Strategies

Youth-led organizations face multiple structural and operational challenges that affect the planning and execution of communication strategies. A prominent issue is resource constraints including limited funding, unstable internet access and inadequate technological infrastructure. Such limitations often restrict the use of certain communication channels, particularly social and behavior change communication (SBCC) campaigns which require significant investment

to produce high-quality, accessible materials. This aligns with findings from Silva et al., (2022) which highlight that under-resourced organizations often struggle to sustain comprehensive SBCC interventions. Operational and coordination challenges further complicate implementation. Organizations must manage heavy workloads, coordinate with diverse stakeholders and adapt content for multiple platforms. For instance, social media messaging often requires summarization to fit platform constraints, while outreach campaigns demand careful scheduling and alignment with partner organizations. Similar challenges have been noted in studies on youth-led communication in LMICs, where managing multiple channels while maintaining message consistency and quality is resource-intensive (Duffett & Thomas, 2024; Wani et al., 2024).

Another major constraint is difficulty in measuring communication impact. While analytics such as impressions, shares and video views provide some insights, they do not necessarily reflect behavioral change or long-term outcomes. Monitoring the effects outreach of community-based activities, such as face-to-face outreach or peer education is particularly challenging due to the informal nature of these interactions. This mirrors global evidence indicating that SBCC programs often face gaps between knowledge dissemination and observable community change (Awantang et al., 2022). Finally, ensuring inclusivity and adaptability poses challenges. Organizations aim to tailor messages to different languages, abilities and local contexts. However, rapid adaptation to emerging issues such as new crises, national events or shifting community priority requires flexible planning and responsive teams which can be difficult under constrained. The literature underscores that adaptive communication strategies which are context-specific and responsive, enhance effectiveness but demand organizational agility and adequate resources (Malikhao, 2020).

4.6.5 Comparing Communication Approaches and Relative Impact

The comparative analysis revealed both commonalities and differences in communication approaches across the three youth-led organizations. All organizations leverage multi-channel strategies including social media, WhatsApp groups, peer-led outreach and face-to-face engagements. They share a focus on youth participation, ensuring that messages are relevant, relatable and culturally appropriate. However, organizations differ in strategic intent, scale and resource capacity. Some organizations integrate communications as a governance and accountability tool, using campaigns not only for awareness but also to influence policy, advocate for youth rights and drive community engagement in decision-making. Others focus primarily on visibility and education, prioritizing awareness-raising without extensive emphasis on strategic advocacy. These variations highlight the relationship approach, a trend also reported in HC3 Urban Youth Synthesis (Awantang et al., 2022).

Target audience and geographic reach also differ. Organizations with stronger digital presence are better positioned to engage urban, digitally connected youth, whereas those relying on hybrid strategies combining online content with community outreach, reach rural and semi-urban populations more effectively. This reinforces the importance of context-specific strategies as urban-first approaches risk leaving rural youth underserved (Jongebloed et al., 2024). The breadth and relevance of topics covered vary. Strengths include SRHR education, gender equality, leadership development and GBV awareness. However, gaps exist in emerging areas such as mental health, digital safety, climate change impacts on youth health and career development. Organizations that include youth in planning and content development tend to have higher perceived relevance and engagement with beneficiaries actively sharing information and participating in campaigns. This demonstrates the power of participatory approaches in ensuring both message credibility and reach (Chandra-mouli & Lane, 2015; Sangare et al., 2020).

Despite strong engagement, follow-up and measurement of long-term impact remain limited of which they use qualitative and quantitative mechanism to measure the impact. Beneficiaries report awareness and increased knowledge but organizations often lack mechanisms to track sustained behavior change or community-level outcomes. This highlights the need for structured monitoring and evaluation, including feedback loops that show youth how their inputs influence decision-making and programming, a factor linked to enhanced accountability and program effectiveness in youth-led initiatives globally (Snyder et al., 2010). Participatory approaches, while effective, also have room for improvement. Youth voices are often included, but organizations could strengthen consistent two-way communication to ensure that inputs inform strategy and program adjustments. Additionally, including intergenerational collaboration during community outreach can enhance credibility, particularly in communities where youth are not traditionally taken seriously, aligning with findings from global youth engagements this is also in line with Marie et al., (2020) and King et al., (2022)'s study.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes key findings of the study, draws conclusions and provides recommendations. The study explored the experiences, behaviors and perceptions of the target population, highlighting gaps in awareness, accessibility and service utilization. Findings revealed that varying levels of engagement and responsiveness emphasizing the need for tailored, context-specific strategies.

5.2 Conclusion

The study shows that research communication, when it is well planned, participatory and uses multiple channels can significantly support development outcomes. It was found in the study that effective strategies such as storytelling, the use of local languages, social media, radio and community engagement helped to raise awareness, influence attitudes and in some instances, stimulate behavior change and policy dialogue. However, the findings also revealed important gaps including limited resources, inconsistent feedback mechanisms and weak monitoring and evaluation systems which hinder the full impact of communication efforts. Overall, the results suggest that development initiatives are more likely to succeed when communication is treated as a strategic, evidence-based and continuous process rather than a one-off activity and when communities are actively involved in both the design and delivery of messages.

5.3 Recommendation

Organizations should make research communication a core part of project design rather than an afterthought. They need to use several appropriate channels such as local language radio, social media, community meetings and storytelling to keep people engaged and reinforce key messages. Simple systems for two-way communication should be set up so that communities

can share their views and messages can be adjusted based on feedback. In addition, communication activities should be monitored and reviewed regularly to see what is working and what is not. Finally, more resources and training in development communication should be provided for staff and partners so that communication efforts are sustained and able to support behavior change and influence policy.

5.4 Summary

The study revealed important insights into the experiences, behaviors and challenges faced by the target population. It highlighted gaps in awareness, accessibility and utilization of services as well as areas where interventions and communication strategies could be improved. Participants' engagement and responsiveness varied indicating the need for approaches that are tailored to both individual and community contexts. Overall, the findings underscored the importance of context-specific strategies, coordinated efforts and sustainable interventions to achieve meaningful impact.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed first, awareness and education should be strengthened through targeted campaigns that address knowledge gaps and misconceptions using multiple communication channels including digital platforms, community forums and interpersonal communication. Secondly, accessibility and service delivery should be improved by addressing logistical, financial and infrastructural barriers, ensuring services are user-friendly, equitable and culturally sensitive. Thirdly, community engagement should be enhanced through participatory approaches that involve community members in planning and decision-making, leveraging local networks to increase trust and uptake. Monitoring and feedback mechanisms should be strengthened to track outcomes and ensure interventions remain responsive and effective over time. Capacity building for service providers, community leaders and stakeholders is essential to improve skills, knowledge and service delivery with emphasis on evidence-based approaches and effective communication

strategies. Finally, policy and advocacy efforts should be intensified to address systematic gaps, promote collaboration between government, NGOs and community structures and ensure sustainability and scalability of interventions.

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Annexes

1. Interview Guides for the Study

A. Interview Guide for YLO Leadership (Founders / Executive Directors)

Objective: To understand the high-level vision, strategic planning, and rationale behind the organization's communication for development approach.

Introduction:

This research aims to understand how youth-led organisations like yours use communication to achieve development goals, and your perspective as a leader is invaluable.

This interview should take about 30-40 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to skip any question or end the interview at any time.

To ensure confidentiality, your name and the name of your organization will be replaced with pseudonyms in the final thesis.

For accuracy, I would like to record our conversation. Is that okay with you?

Section 1: Organizational Vision and Theory of Change

1. To begin, could you tell me the story behind your organization? What specific development problem did you set out to solve?
2. Could you describe how your organization's mission and goals are connected to its communication activities?
3. How does your organization's core philosophy on social change influence the way you communicate with your target audience?
 - Probe: How is communication embedded in that theory of change? Is it a supporting tool, or is it central to the process?

Section 2: Communication Strategy and Planning (RQ1 & RQ3)

4. Could you describe your organization's overall communication strategy?
 - *Probe:* Is this approach based on a formal, written strategy, or is it more of an informal, evolving process?
5. Who is involved in shaping this strategy? How do you ensure it aligns with both your mission and the needs of the community?
6. A key challenge for many organisations is balancing the communication needs of different audiences. How do you navigate the expectations of donors, who might want to see specific metrics, versus the needs of the community, which might require more open-ended dialogue?
 - *Probe:* Can you give an example of a time when these different needs were in tension and how you, as a leader, managed it?

Section 3: Implementation and Channels (RQ1)

7. What are the primary communication channels your organization uses to reach its different audiences? (e.g., social media, community radio, face-to-face meetings, policy briefs).
8. What is the strategic reason for your organization choosing this mix of channels? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each in the context of your work?
9. How does your organization empower its community members or beneficiaries to participate in creating and sharing communication content? Can you provide a specific example?

Section 4: Effectiveness, Impact, and Comparison (RQ2 & RQ4)

10. How does your organization define and measure the "success" of its communication efforts? What does impact look like?
 - Probe: Do you focus more on quantitative metrics (e.g., reach, likes) or qualitative evidence (e.g., stories of change, community feedback)?
11. Could you share an example of a communication initiative from your organization that you feel was particularly impactful? What were the key ingredients that made it work?
12. Conversely, can you recall a communication approach your organization tried that did not work as planned? What were the key lessons learned from that experience?
13. From your vantage point, how does your organization's communication approach compare to other YLOs in Accra? What makes your strategy unique?

Section 5: Challenges and Future Outlook (RQ3)

14. What are the most significant challenges that constrain your organization's ability to communicate as effectively as you would like?
15. If you could improve one aspect of your organization's communication, what would it be?

Closing:

That concludes my main questions. I'm very grateful for your time and insights. Do you have any final thoughts or a key takeaway about your communication work that you'd like to share?

B. Interview Guide: For Communication Staff / Volunteers

Objective: To understand the day-to-day implementation of communication strategies, the practical use of tools, and direct engagement with audiences.

Introduction

Thank you for making time for this interview. My name is Emelia Obeng, and I am a Master's student in Development Communication.

This research aims to understand how youth-led organisations like yours use communication to achieve development goals, and your perspective as a leader is invaluable.

This interview should take about 30-40 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to skip any question or end the interview at any time.

To ensure confidentiality, your name and the name of your organisations will be replaced with pseudonyms in the final thesis.

For accuracy, I would like to record our conversation. Is that okay with you?

Section 1: Role and Daily Workflow

1. Could you please describe your role in the organization and your main communication responsibilities?
2. Can you walk me through the process of creating a piece of communication content, for example, a social media campaign or a radio segment, from the initial idea to its release?
 - *Probe:* Who gives final approval? How much creative freedom do you have in your role?

Section 2: Content and Channel Management (RQ1)

3. How do you and your team decide what topics to focus on and what messages to share on a daily or weekly basis?
 - *Probe:* How much of your content is planned in advance by leadership, versus being responsive to current events or community conversations?
4. Which communication platforms (e.g., Instagram, WhatsApp, community meetings) do you personally find are most effective for genuinely engaging with young people? Why?
5. Which platforms are the most challenging for you to manage, and what makes them difficult?

Section 3: Audience Engagement and Participation (RQ1 & RQ2)

6. What does "audience engagement" mean to you in your role? Could you describe what a good interaction with a community member looks like?
7. How do you encourage two-way dialogue rather than just one-way information sharing? Can you give me an example of how you've facilitated a conversation online or offline?

8. What kind of feedback do you receive from your audience? Can you share an example of a time when community feedback led to a change in the organization's communication approach or content?

Section 4: Measuring Success and Practical Challenges (RQ2 & RQ3)

9. How do you track the performance of your communication activities? What tools or metrics do you use?
10. In your opinion, what is the biggest success story of the communication work you've been involved in here? What made it successful from your perspective?
11. What are the biggest day-to-day challenges you face in your work?
- Probe for: lack of time, limited budget for tools, difficulty getting content from the field, etc.
12. Is there a gap between the organization's official communication strategy as set by leadership and what you are practically able to do? If so, what causes this gap?

Closing:

Is there anything else you think is important for me to know about the practical side of communication here? Thank you for sharing your experiences.

C. Interview Guide for Beneficiaries / Community Members

Objective: To understand the reach, relevance, and perceived impact of the YLO's communication from the perspective of the target audience.

Introduction:

Thank you for making time for this interview. My name is Emelia Obeng, and I am a Master's student in Development Communication.

This research aims to understand how youth-led organisations like yours use communication to achieve development goals, and your perspective as a leader is invaluable.

This interview should take about 30-40 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to skip any question or end the interview at any time.

To ensure confidentiality, your name and the name of your organization will be replaced with pseudonyms in the final thesis.

For accuracy, I would like to record our conversation. Is that okay with you?

Section 1: Awareness and Access

1. How did you first find out about the organization?

2. How does the organization usually communicate or share information with you and other young people?
3. Is it easy for you to access their information? Why or why not?

Section 2: Relevance and Usefulness of Communication (RQ2)

4. Can you give an example of information you received from the organization that you found useful? How did you use it?
5. Do the topics the organization talks about feel relevant to the issues that young people face in this community?

● *Probe:* Are there any important topics that you feel they are missing?

6. Is the way the organization communicates, the language, the style, the images, easy to understand and relate to?

Section 3: Participation and Voice (RQ2 & RQ4)

7. When the organization communicates, does it feel like they are talking to you or talking *at* you?
8. Do you feel like you have a way to share your own ideas and opinions with the organization?

● *Probe:* If yes, how do you do that? If no, why not?

9. Have you ever seen an idea from a young person in the community get used in one of the organization's projects or campaigns? Can you tell me about it?
10. Do you feel that the organization genuinely listens to the youth they work with? What makes you say that?

Section 4: Perceived Impact and Comparison (RQ2 & RQ4)

11. Has being connected with the organization changed anything for you personally?
12. Have you noticed any positive changes in your wider community that you think are a result of the organization's work and communication?
13. If you could give the organization's leadership one piece of advice on how to communicate better with young people, what would it be?

Closing:

Thank you so much for your time and for sharing your thoughts with me. Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience with the organization's communication?

List of Interviewees

No.	Name & Function of the Interviewee	Organization	Date of the Interview	Contact of the Interviewee
1	Aliu Iddrisu - Leadership	Youth Action Movement	30.09.2025	Tel: 0556105852 Email: iddrisualiu31@gmail.com
2	Jemimah Akiteyeh Akayetei - Communication Officer	Youth Action Movement	30.09.2025	Tel: 0544164560 Email: sweetyjemimah20@gmail.com
3	Knii Ofei Dodoo Daniel – Member & Beneficiary	Youth Action Movement	30.09.25	Tel: 0537660530 Email: kniofficial01@gmail.com
4	Sandra Yayra – Member & Beneficiary	Youth Action Movement	30.09.25	Tel: 0556136384 Email: yayrasandra0@gmail.com
5	Marilyn Owusu – Member & Beneficiary	Youth Action Movement	09.10.25 & 10.10.25	Tel: 0539021999/0503932763 Email: owusumarilyn473@gmail.com
6	Nyadedzor Mabel - Communication Officer	Youth Advocates Ghana	07.10.25	Tel: 0548216891 Email: media@youthsdgssummit.org
7	Giftly Boahemaa Appea - Leadership	Youth Advocates Ghana	09.10.25	Tel: 0546823821 Email: programmes@youthsdgssummit.org
8	Grace Akosua Dankwa - Leadership	Net Impact	23.10.2025	Tel: 0549846958 Email: gadankwa@gmail.com
9	Henry Kwabena Dankwa - Communication Officer	Net Impact	23.10.2025	Tel: 0264550004 Email: henrydankwa8@gmail.com