Rage, Resilience, and Resistance

Sexual & reproductive health & rights for all.

ANNUAL REPORT Fiscal year 2020: July 2019-June 2020
Letter from the President and Board Chair

This year has been marked by turmoil, change and uncertainty. At CHANGE, we have been full of rage, resistance and resilience. Our rage gave us the strength and determination to stand up to an administration that is hostile towards gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

CHANGE resisted by suing the U.S. government in an effort to shut down the Commission on Unalienable Rights, ending human rights violations in U.S. global AIDS programming, and consistently speaking out against injustices and harms towards women and others who are discriminated against.

While the Trump administration and others weaponized a pandemic as a means to attack both SRHR and human rights more broadly, CHANGE’s team proved resilient as we adapted to safely and virtually continue our advocacy efforts to advance SRHR for all.

In the wake of a global movement against anti-Black police violence and white supremacy, CHANGE has taken steps to promote racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in our operations and programs, including through the creation of new paradigms and models for U.S.-Global South collaborations aimed at decolonizing partnerships.

CHANGE is entering 2021 stronger than before and with a sharper focus on our mission. We are hopeful and encouraged as we prepare to work with a new administration in the White House, but in no way are we slowing down or letting up. Regardless of who occupies the Oval Office, we will always hold the U.S. government accountable to its commitment to SRHR.

We are grateful for your support and are energized knowing that together we can make a lasting impact in our pursuit of SRHR for all.

In solidarity,

Serra Sippel
President, CHANGE

Deborah Arrindell
Board Chair, CHANGE
CHANGE Flagship Wins Silver Davey Award: The SRHR Index

CHANGE’s groundbreaking SRHR Index that critically assesses U.S. global health policy – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Index: Grading U.S. Global Health Assistance – was awarded the Silver Davey Award. The Davey Awards are an international competition that honors the achievements of the “Creative Davids” who derive their strength from big ideas. CHANGE’s SRHR Index was developed in partnership with the Global Women’s Institute at George Washington University with technical design and support from Forum One.

In November 2019, CHANGE released the SRHR Index 2018 grades marking the second consecutive year with declining scores for U.S. government actors. CHANGE staff met with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Department of Defense, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator at the State Department in advance of the public release of the grades to explain the rationale for their grades and discuss ways to improve their grades.

"Let’s look ahead and move forward with collective action. We’ll highlight how CHANGE’s SRHR Index can help recommend evidence-based actions to the U.S. government to strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights for all."

— The Woodhull Foundation

“"The methodology of the SRHR Index is rigorously designed to be sensitive to and reflective of both negative actions contributing to restrictions on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the U.S. global health assistance and positive actions contributing to their expansion.”

— Common Dreams
We’re Suing the Trump Administration

CHANGE joined Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Global Justice Center, and Council on Global Equality, represented by Democracy Forward, to file suit against Secretary Pompeo in his official capacity to shut down his Commission on Unalienable Rights, a panel that was widely criticized when it was set up in 2019 because of its clear anti-human rights agenda. The suit highlights some of the core flaws in the design and conduct of the Commission, including its intentional bias against LGBTQ and sexual and reproductive rights, unbalanced membership, withholding of records, and closed meetings, and seeks to shut down the Commission and enjoin its report.

In a joint press release, the organizations stated that the Commission, “stacked with members who have staked out positions hostile to LGBTQ and reproductive rights,” is “holding closed door meetings to conduct significant Commission business outside of the public’s view and scrutiny, including efforts to redefine human rights terminology and commitments” and is “failing to provide adequate notice of meetings and to release key documents to the public.”

Read the CNN article about the lawsuit here.
Equity and Power in Partnerships

In October and November 2019, CHANGE hosted advocates Ashley Ngwenya, from Zimbabwe, Rahel Sheiza, from Tanzania, and Harry Madukani, from Malawi, in Washington, D.C. for a reverse co-del to highlight the work of our partners in the Coalition to build Momentum, Power, Activism, Strategy, and Solidarity in Africa (COMPASS). The reverse co-del was a powerful week of advocacy for HIV and SRHR integration and increased funding for HIV treatment and prevention programs in Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

In 2019 CHANGE created a first-of-its-kind Training of Trainers (ToT) curriculum on the Global Gag Rule (GGR) that resulted in capacity building of four cohorts of in-country experts in Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda. The in-country experts are providing technical assistance on the GGR to local advocates, service providers and policy makers. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we adapted our in-person ToT curriculum to an online training, and conducted our first online training for lawyers and advocates in South Africa in April 2020 with great success.

Tabitha Saoya Griffith, from KELIN in Kenya, highlighted the important role of U.S. advocacy partners like CHANGE:

“Please fund advocacy in Washington D.C..... the fire is coming from Washington, and we have to address it there. Otherwise we are putting out a thousand fires around the world, instead of addressing it at its source. CHANGE is trying to put out the fire there and helping us with ours.”
The Impact of CHANGE Partnerships: Successfully Ending Human Rights Violations in PEPFAR Program

Human rights violations in the roll-out of “index testing” by the President’s Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) became a significant body of CHANGE’s work in December 2019, and resulted in our successful and continued mitigation of harm done by the scaling up of index testing. CHANGE became aware of these human rights concerns thanks to the strong partnership we’ve developed with our COMPASS partners in Tanzania, who shared their report with documentation of rights violations of key populations (such as sex workers and LGBTQ persons) in the-scale up of index testing. Index testing is a method of testing whereby the partners and biological children of an individual who has tested positive for HIV are recruited for HIV testing. This practice raises human rights concerns around 1) intimate partner and gender-based violence, 2) target setting that de-emphasizes patient autonomy and informed consent, and 3) increased concern for the safety of adolescent girls and young women and key populations.

CHANGE partnered with the Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR), AVAC, and MPact Global Action for Gay Men’s Health and Rights, and together met with the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator to demand the suspension of all PEPFAR index testing targets until screening tools and counterbalancing metrics consistent with human rights norms were developed.
**The Impact of CHANGE Research**

In February 2020, CHANGE released the investigative report, *A Powerful Force: U.S. Global Health Assistance and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Malawi*. The Malawi case study captures first-hand accounts of the historic and current impact of U.S. global health assistance policies, programs, and funding decisions on SRHR in Malawi. It also highlights the successes and challenges associated with implementing U.S. global health assistance programs in Malawi and documents the local political and cultural factors that shape program implementation.

CHANGE partnered with two in-country photographers for the Malawi case study as part of a photography project meant to disrupt harmful paradigms of representation and document the ways in which individuals in Malawi wanted to be portrayed to the U.S. government. The photos were included in the report as well as in a photo exhibit at the launch event, which was held at the Kaiser Family Foundation’s offices.

In the Malawi report, Brian Ligomeka, the Director of the Centre for Solutions Journalism (CSJ), explained the impact of the loss of U.S. global health funding due to Trump’s expansion of the Global Gag Rule (GGR):

“The bottom line is that people are dying. People are suffering quite a lot. People are dying silently because they cannot access the services that were once offered by private family planning clinics that were vital sources for health care.”

CHANGE’s research in Malawi played an instrumental role in stopping a discriminatory user fee requirement in Malawi for women in Antenatal Care (ANC) programs at clinics funded through PEPFAR. CHANGE exposed the rights violation, and worked with civil society in Malawi and the U.S. government to put an end to the user fees across PEPFAR programming in Malawi.
Making Connections through Strategic Communications

CHANGE unveiled our new website and brand, demonstrating our commitment to addressing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all people, especially those who face stigma and discrimination. CHANGE’s new website serves as a hub for resources and information on SRHR and U.S. policies, including access to our flagship SRHR Index.

CHANGE supported actor and director Jess Jacobs and her filmmakers’ team to produce a short musical about the Global Gag Rule (GGR). The film was launched in TeenVogue and can be found here. Director of Policy Research Bergen Cooper was a panelist at a New York launch event for the musical, and Zoe Bulls, Advocacy and Partnerships Associate was featured in the launch in Houston, Texas.

CHANGE’s staff are experts in research, policy, and advocacy and have been sought after for comment and analysis in news outlets over the past year, including the Washington Post, CNN, BuzzFeed, The Nation, American Prospect, Devex, Ms. Magazine, Pass Blue, and others. Lienna Feleke-Eshete, CHANGE’s Senior Associate of Public Policy and Movement Building, co-authored an op-ed titled “Black Moms Are in More Danger Than Ever This Mother’s Day,” which was published in Newsweek. The article outlines the unique challenges faced by Black mothers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Feleke-Eshete and Crear-Perry write:
“Structural barriers, such as underfunding of hospitals that serve black communities, income inequality, lack of healthcare access and interpersonal racism, are a few of multiple factors that contribute to this disparity. Despite this damning data, the United States has not taken adequate measures to protect the lives of black mothers and the wellbeing of their families.”
25th anniversary celebration

CHANGE celebrated its 25th anniversary on October 15, 2019 with more than 200 supporters, colleagues and friends gathered at the Studio Theatre in Washington, D.C. CHANGE honored Agents of CHANGE awardees for their work to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. The Courageous Changemaker Award was awarded to Lillian Mworeko of International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa. The Champion Changemaker Award recipient was Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and Strategic Changemaker awardees were our pro bono attorneys at Arent Fox.

The evening opened with spoken word from young changemaker and poet Jermoni R. Benson, a student at Kipp DC College Preparatory, with her powerful message to girls: “empower, devour, and take control.” Jermoni was followed by our keynote speaker Patrick Gaspard, President of the Open Society Foundations, who motivated us to “keep our hands on the plow” and called on us to remember to reflect, imagine, organize and act.

“If I am the future, we should start with female.
we should teach girls to be somebodies instead of somebody’s
we should teach girls to empower, devour and take control because you are MORE than property and propaganda
you are more than just dishing tea in a proper manner
you are a strong, you are wild and free
free to be anything you dream so if I am the future and the future is me it will be female and it will start with a simple fee of masculinity”

Jermoni R. Benson
Looking Ahead:
Dismantling Racism and Neocolonialism in U.S. Foreign Policy

While CHANGE has taken steps to establish a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and advance racial equity, efforts have not been part of an intentional, cohesive organizational strategy to establish a culture of DEI and racial equity in our operations and programs. We have not done enough. That’s why in 2019, CHANGE staff decided to take deliberate and intentional steps to establish a culture of DEI and racial equity and become an anti-racist organization. In 2020, CHANGE worked as a team with consultants to co-create a vision and plan to become a workplace that is committed to embodying values of justice, equity, anti-colonialism and anti-racism, joy and accountability in our operations and programs. This vision and plan will be the backbone for a new organizational strategic vision that will be developed in 2021.

A new administration brings hope and optimism to the world, but there is much to be done to undo the harm caused to women and girls around the world by the Trump administration. We will work tirelessly to right the wrongs of the Trump administration while advocating for the Biden administration to take bold action for SRHR for all including the adoption of a US Feminist Foreign Policy.

CHANGE understands that we must show up in the world differently to dismantle the racism and neocolonialism in our US policies that impact the SRHR for all people and we as an organization are determined to do just that.
Financial Information

Statement of Financial Position
June 30, 2020

Assets
Current Assets
Cash and cash equivalents  613,525
Investments  1,956,223
Receivables  197,642
Prepaid expenses  27,512
Total  2,794,902

Fixed Assets
Furniture and Equipment  82,147
Leasehold improvements  15,120
Less: Accumulated Depreciation  83,887
Total  13,380

Other Assets
Deposit  13,537
Total Assets  2,821,819

Liabilities
Current Liabilities
Accounts payable and accrued expenses  91,096
Refundable advance  171,140
Total Current Liabilities  262,236

Non Current Liabilities
Lease Allowance (net of current)  1,891
Deferred lease obligation  5,786
Total Non Current Liabilities  7,677
Total Liabilities  269,913

Net Assets
Unrestricted - Non-designated  737,695
Unrestricted - Board Designated  786,734
Temporarily Restricted  1,027,477
Total  2,551,906

Total Liabilities and Net Assets  2,821,819

Statement of Activities
Year ending June 30, 2020

Revenue
Grants and Contributions  388,624
Net investment income  1,810,768
Total  2,199,392

Satisfaction of program restrictions  2,427,441
Total Revenue  4,626,833

Expenses
Program Services  2,003,251
General and Administrative  192,115
Fundraising  208,944
Total Expenses  2,404,310

Change in Net Assets
419,270
(616,673)
(197,403)
Total  419,270

Beginning Net Assets  1,105,159
Ending Net Assets  1,524,429

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FY19 Expenses
Program Services  2,003,251 83%
General and Administrative  192,115 9%
Fundraising  208,944 8%
Institutional Donors

Anonymous (2)
Arent Fox (pro bono)
AVAC
Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation
Female Health Company

MAC AIDS Fund

Moriah Fund

Open Society Foundations

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Sunflower Foundation

Wallace Global Fund

World Bank Group Community Connections Campaign

Board of Directors
as of June 30, 2020

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Vice President of Health Policy, American Sexual Health Association

Gioelle Carino
CEO & Regional Director, International Planned Parenthood Federation/ Western Hemisphere Region

Sangeeta Choudhry
Program Director for Asia and the Pacific, Global Fund for Women

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Paul O’Brien
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Monica Scott
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Senior Manager of Member Engagement & Partnerships, United Philanthropy Forum

Beth Tritter
Executive Director, Primary Care Performance Initiative

Serra Sippel, ex officio
President, CHANGE

Staff
as of June 30, 2020

Serra Sippel
President

Aline Batarseh
Director of Development

Zoe Bulls
Advocacy and Partnerships Associate

Bergen Cooper
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Samantha (Sammy) Luffy
Senior Policy Research Associate

Hortense Hunter-Moore
Office Manager

Brian Smith
Vice President of Operations

Beime Roose-Snyder
Director of Public Policy

Katie Unthank
Communications Manager
About CHANGE

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) is a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization that promotes sexual and reproductive health and rights as a means to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, by shaping public discourse, elevating women’s voices, and influencing U.S. and global policies. We are guided by our vision of a world that respects, protects, and honors sexual and reproductive rights for all. Our four-pronged impact model—advocacy, research, partnerships, and communications—is grounded in and driven by a human rights framework at the intersection of multiple sectors including women’s rights, human rights, family planning, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, and gender-based violence.