



The Changemakers in Film Summit – Post-event reflections

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This blog is part of Changing The Story's #YoungChangemakers series. The Changemakers in Film Summit series was curated by [Jacqueline Adjei](#), an undergraduate Laidlaw scholar working with the CTS team.

This blog post details some of my reflections for each event however, it doesn't cover the full extent of each discussion. The full recordings of the events will be made available on the Changing the Story website [here](#).

The [Changemakers in Film Summit](#) was a three-part series curated by Jacqueline Adjei as part of the Changing the Story project. This was an online event from 7th July to 21st July and was advertised widely across the social media and CTS network.

Throughout the series we explored key themes such as Health and Wellbeing, [Gender](#), and Youth. As part of my project, I had the privilege of inviting and interviewing a group of panellists to each event. This included presentations from specialists such as [Dr. Alyson Brody](#), a Gender Specialist and Post-Doctoral Research Assistant at Changing the Story, [Prof. Ananda Breed](#), the Lead Researcher of [Mobile Arts for Peace](#), and [Martin Keat](#), CEO of the [Bishop Simeon Trust](#).

The theme of the first event was social advocacy through a youth defined lens. In this panel we had an open panel discussion from the [Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba](#) project and [Building Trust for Truth-Telling Among Former Child Soldiers](#). In this part of the series, Angel David Hurtado Orozco raised the issue of getting the author to talk about their projects, especially since they might have to speak about harsh topics such as kidnapping and rape. However, he noted the impact that the project has had on his overall message, especially the public's perception towards his message and his hope for it to continue in the future for the better good of his country:

“ I wanted to build trust to tell the stories that have never been heard, that have been excluded and hidden.”

A key takeaway from the specialists was the importance of having and maintaining arts-based programmes for young people. Although this has been made more difficult by COVID-19, organisations such as the MAP at Home project have been dedicated to maintaining the support given to young people even during these unprecedented times. There was also a presentation from the lead organiser of the MAP at Home project Professor Ananda Breed. Her presentation illustrated how much the project promotes the provision of online art programmes for psychosocial well-being, especially regarding building resilience (individual and systemic) against future outbreaks or crises.

Martin Keat from the Bishop Simeon Trust was also invited to speak in the second event in the series. In his presentation, he explains the work the Bishop Simeon Trust does to promote the health and well-being of the youth in South Africa. Martin also highlighted within the event, the significance of arts-based programmes, such as the Bishop Simeon Trust, in bridging the gap between the younger and older generations. In his explanation, he talks about how these programmes give young people a chance to talk about complex topics with their parents. Since the programmes are youth centred, children often have an open dialogue with their parents, especially during discussions about complex issues such as sexual violence and human trafficking. In the second event we also heard from Achabu Kire, a participant from the CTS project [Participatory Arts for Health Improvement](#) in North East India, who highlighted the lack of

professional care available to young people in Nagaland; although there are organisations, they often lack the necessary funding to provide young people with the care that they need.

Another takeaway from the series was the significance of using the arts when promoting the film directors' messages in each project. However, this doesn't mean that there weren't issues along the way. Everyone's journey is different, and the journey for women was sometimes more complex. In her presentation, Dr. Alyson Brody highlighted the importance of focusing on gender equality and social justice, as well as what is happening to address these gender inequalities. This could be seen from Tahn-Dee Matthews' testimony in the Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba project in South Africa. In the last event, Tahn-Dee talked about feeling that her gender often held her back. Not because she wasn't as capable as her male counterparts, but because she was often overlooked and unheard. This is an issue that women in the workplace often face. Tahn-Dee also explained within her film that this is an issue that doesn't necessarily deter her from the industry, but makes her want to get the message out there more for the betterment of other women in the industry. The Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba project also highlighted the importance of knowledge and access to information on fracking. As panelist Junaid explains,

“We want people to know that fracking isn't what they say it is. We want to open people's eyes to fracking. Fracking is going to pollute our water, kills the plants that are native to the Karoo. We want people to look at all the factors. ”

Overall, I feel very grateful to the CTS team and Laidlaw team for allowing me to take part in this project. I would like to thank everyone involved in each event for their participation.

TAGS: ARTS AND HUMANITIES COLOMBIA FILM GENDER GLOBAL HEALTH INDIA RESEARCH RWANDA SOUTH AFRICA YOUTH

