Ending Othering

CO-CREATING IMPACT

ANNUAL SYNTHESIS REPORT
2020
ACRONYMS

AGYW  Adolescent Girls and Young Women
CDC  Centres for Disease Control
CoA  Community of Action
CoIP  Communities of Interest and Practice
COVID-19  The common name for the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and the public health crisis surrounding it (2020-21)
IF  Impact Framework
KPIF  Key Populations Investment Fund
LGBTQI+  Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex +
LILo  Looking In, Looking Out
LRDC  Law Reform and Development Commission
MEAL  Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning
PEPFAR  President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (United States)
PLHIV  People Living With HIV
PV  Positive Vibes
SDGs  Sustainable Development Goals
SOGIESC  Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics
SRHR  Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STL  Setting the Levels
SW  Sex Workers
ToC  Theory of Change
USAID  United States Agency for International Development

A note on photographs
All photographs are used with the permission of those portrayed. These images offer a visual reference to some aspects of PV’s work, but are not intended to illustrate specific projects or outcomes - for this reason they have not been captioned. The final page includes images of PV’s staff and associates.

A note on quotations
Most quotations are unattributed for reasons of confidentiality and participant safety. They were drawn from programme reports, stories of change, knowledge products or other publications, and evaluations.
ABOUT POSITIVE VIBES

Positive Vibes Trust (PV) is a Namibian-registered trust that has been operating nationally since 2008, and across the Southern and East African regions (and in some cases, beyond) since 2012. We are a rights-based development organisation, working in the area of human rights and health, towards the end of ‘othering’. We stand alongside people who are othered – marginalised, oppressed, and vulnerable – and support them to build on their strengths to effect change as individuals, as organisations, as communities, and as social movements.

The PV vision is the end of ‘othering’: health, equity and justice for all, regardless of identity, profession, age, gender or status.

This includes:

- Equity and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people (LGBTQI+) people, sex workers, people living with HIV, and other marginalised and oppressed populations.
- The attitudes, social norms and practices and policies (written or implicit) of communities, governments and other powerful actors are transformed to allow the full expression of these groups’ humanity and potential.
- The end of HIV and AIDS as a critical health and social problem, and a source of stigma and discrimination.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights has been a core focus for the past several years since it lies at the confluence of many of the issues facing the ‘othered’ people and rights-holders with whom we work, but this is not our exclusive focus. We seek out strategic points at which to support movement and change within local, national and regional systems, in the interests of enabling more people to realise their human rights, and their potential as human beings and citizens.

Our practice is informed by a coherent and values-based approach, which is transferred to partners, and shaped with and by them through long-term accompaniment. Together, we innovate and develop new ways of building community and connection within and across stakeholder groups, adapting our response to the shifting landscape, influencing powerful stakeholders, and working towards our shared vision – a world in which the value of all human beings is no longer in question, where greater equality is realised, and access to justice is no longer a matter of privilege.
Undoubtedly 2020 challenged us in unimaginable ways. For Positive Vibes this was not different, and I would like to recognize not only mental health coping challenges the pandemic flung our way but also the immense and significant personal loss so many of us have suffered at its expense. Despite an upside-down world, we managed to turn our challenges into opportunity and very quickly launched our business continuity plan for all operations and programmes. Together staff and the board of trustees navigated 2020 one considered step at a time towards a future we could not yet see with our chins up. I look back at 2020, my amazing colleagues at PV and our committed partners with gratitude and pride. We are delighted to share this reflection of our achievement and impact in 2020 with you.

Flavian Rhode  
Executive Director

Over the course of 2020, our respective brands for leadership, cutting-edge innovation, responsiveness and learning were tested against how effectively we could tune into the prevailing environment, perceive and interpret it, and adapt, whilst preserving our core values and principles. In almost the blink of an eye, and with barely any warning, our lives were dramatically disrupted. We’ve had to change our ways of working, reorganise our programmes and activities, and learn to live with even greater uncertainty about the future than was normal before. During these trying times we, at PV, thought deeply about how best to pivot our work to become more responsive to the unfolding reality. Not only have we deepened the efficiency and effectiveness of our existing work, but co-created innovative programmes with new partners focusing on Rightsholders and countries with whom and where we had previously not worked. It’s important we remind ourselves about the fragility of life, and about why we maintain the urgency and intensity of our work, as adverse conditions almost always punish the already vulnerable and marginalised the harshest and in ways that exacerbate inequality and exclusion. I am proud to be a part of the PV family, and especially so that we have been able to chart an even more meaningful trajectory, as we collectively work towards the end of othering and genuine inclusion.

Lee Mondry  
Deputy Director
This year the vulnerabilities of our most marginalised and vulnerable were amplified and compounded, our LGBTQ+, Sex Worker community members were displaced, lost employment, loss income, struggled with mental health, where exposed to sexual and gender based violence and experienced harsh human rights violations. As we learn and adapt to new realities and methodologies to meet people where they are at with their needs, I can’t help to feel grateful and privileged to be part of the PV team and what we have done in 2020. This was an extra ordinary year to amplify our voice, push the boundaries harder and gain more friends and allies in the movable middle to take our collective powerful voice and agency in spaces where we were not always welcome. We could not have done it without the flexibility to learnings, commitment to adjust and accountability to reduce our face-to-face connections and reactivate our big elephant ears and starting to manoeuvre the sometimes-intimidating world of virtual media. We had to also do more introspection and get better at our Impact Ambition of Ending othering by refining and naming the systems in which our most meaningful longitudinal work lies with lasting sustainable impact. This year could not have humbled and strengthened me more, contracting COVID 19 meant standing still and taking care of myself. I had to admit that I needed help both medically and mentally and that I owe it to myself to take it day by day to survive. Knowing myself as a fixer and dependable being for those around me, being vulnerable was no small task! Now, I have renewed strength, to continue the much-loved work at PV and serve humanity in the best way possible.

Salen Kambinda
Director: Namibia

We cannot reflect on 2020 without mentioning the impact that the national lockdowns, in all the countries in which we operate, has had on both the programmatic activities and the operational functioning. The wider programme team were proactive in quickly establishing the impact and challenges for partner organisations in other countries and brainstorming innovative solutions to ensure that programmatic impact continued despite the challenges. The inability to travel shifted responsibility for implementation to in-country partners which led to refinements in our grant-making processes. This greater shared responsibility is something that I see remaining part of the way we operate going forward. Remote working has precipitated a move to more comprehensive centralised online data storage and communication. Disparate teams are meeting more regularly as online meetings have become the norm. The sense of unity and communication has improved across the organisation contrary to expectations. I am proud to see the growth in scale of our programmes anticipated over the next few years. The broader reach in both rightsholder groups and geographic locations will result in greater impact. The development of the new strategy is an exciting project that will articulate our shifts in thinking and our role, in collaboration with our partners, in bringing significant change towards ending othering.

Michelle Davidson
Finance & Operations Director
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PV’s work in 2020 centred on four connected rights-holder populations in eleven countries:
- LGBTQI+ people
- Adolescent girls and young women (AGYW)
- Sex workers2
- People Living with HIV (PLHIV)2

Numerous signs of improvement in individual self-efficacy have been documented, as have many promising signs of emerging leadership. In Namibia, the HIV-prevention needs of more than seventeen thousand adolescent girls and young women have been addressed directly. And, in ten Southern and East African nations (including Namibia), a range of programmes promoted self-efficacy and health-seeking behaviours among LGBTQI+ people; built a growing sense of solidarity and strength within national and sub-regional movements; strengthened local organising; and crafted influencing strategies that have begun to bear fruit at local, national, and even global levels (in relation to agencies such as PEPFAR, USAID and the CDC).

Practitioners and organisations that we have accompanied have deepened their effectiveness – both in serving their constituencies, and in engaging more systemically and influentially with local and national structures to effect change in the interests of health, equity and justice.

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1 Ten countries on the African continent (Southern and East Africa); and one in South-East Asia (Indonesia).
2 Often a subset of the first two populations.
In the process, methods for doing this work (e.g. a highly effective approach to community-led health monitoring called Setting the Levels, as well as many of PV’s flagship Looking In, Looking Out [Lilo] processes) have been meaningfully and responsibly transferred, and in many national and institutional contexts there are hopeful signs of movement and traction in relation to policy change and wider community building within vulnerable and marginalised communities.

These effects have begun to positively affect the life experiences of people within these groups, setting in motion a virtuous cycle which contributes directly to lessening the dynamic of othering, oppression and prejudice in their societies and regions.

The sense of community and constructive connection between the people and systems with whom we engage is also clearly growing, with Communities of Interest and Practice (comprising organisation and movement leaders, as well as practitioners of various PV-designed and co-created methodologies) playing a critical role in implementing, steering and developing our shared programming. In short, a well-connected community of committed fellow-travellers working towards the same broad impact ambition has constellated in both East and Southern Africa – a firm foundation for future expansion within and beyond these sub-regions.

Our practice, and that of our partners, is being documented and shared in a variety of ways – a contribution to developing a solid knowledge base about how othering may be addressed, and eventually, ended.

These are heartening and possibly surprising signs, given the global and regional context during this period.
2020 was a disturbed and disturbing year for most of the world. We lived through:

- a global health crisis engendered by COVID-19, and all its economic, social, and cultural fallout
- highly visible movements centred on questions of identity and oppression (and the backlash that swiftly followed)
- weakened democracies and corrupted governance in many nations and regions
- growing mental health issues in multiple populations
- the ongoing march of various technologies, and the ubiquity of social media – all of which tend to amplify chaos and complexity in human discourse, even as they offer opportunities for connection and development.

This is not an exhaustive list; it was a busy year.

We see ongoing splintering and polarisation of discourse, of paradigms, and of ideological positions at war within national, regional and global politics. There are deep divisions about matters of power and authority, about the ends of social change and social justice, and indeed, about how to make any kind of meaningful, positive contribution to social development.

Too often, the voices of those most affected by inequality, prejudice and oppression are not heard. They are drowned out by louder voices attempting to speak for them, or to condemn them. Relations between ordinary people and the systems and authorities that help shape their lives are disconnected at best, actively destructive at worst. Listening and connection are rarities, and so is authentic and mutual relationship.

Obviously, the currents are complex, and the waters, muddy. This is certainly the case for organisations whose work centres on supporting socio-structural change and the promotion of well-being, justice and equity for all.

PV has had to negotiate these dynamics, adapt to them, and find functional ways of responding to complexity and chaos. Our responses to these problems have centred not on positions, but on building an approach and a practice – a way of working, with and in complexity, towards our larger goals.

This emphasis on approach, practice, learning, and adaptation has been a key theme for the past four years (2017-2020). 2020 was not only a year of continuing adaptation, but also of culmination. As well as several significant achievements and signs of real impact, many threads of work, thinking and learning came together in 2020 to reshape our thinking and refine our approach.
Notwithstanding the background of chaos, and the many tensions and challenges affecting the development arena, we continue to believe that it is possible to effect meaningful social and structural change in ways that foster collaboration, mutual understanding and constructive movement.

Societies are co-creations of their members – given appropriate tools, connections and conscience, their members can begin to remake them. PV’s practice is one cogent argument for how this can be done. Part of the answer lies in finding fresh and innovative ways of connecting the grassroots experiences of ‘othered’ (marginalised, excluded, often vilified and discounted) people, to those of duty-bearers at multiple levels of their societies.

Our approach is underpinned by the foundational idea that human beings have a set of universal and inalienable rights. Building on this base, the work of ending othering begins by establishing people’s common humanity, common vulnerability, common rights, and then building connection and community within, and across, groups – towards some common convictions and constructive actions.

In other words, the expansion of community lies at the heart of our approach to ending othering. Community is the polar opposite of othering, alienation, and disconnection. Learning how to do this work with others (and across many different contexts), lies at the heart of our practice, and that of our partners’. In essence, all of PV’s work is about learning, with people like and unlike ourselves, how the systems which surround us – and which we help to constitute – work, how they might be different and better, and how we can begin to change them, together. Every process in which PV engages is an invitation into a conversation about these fundamental matters.

The expansion of community lies at the heart of our approach to ending othering. Community is the polar opposite of othering.

We initiate and facilitate programmes and processes that enable people to encounter themselves and their own experience of othering, and to meet, in meaningful ways, people like themselves, as well as people who seem very different.

These points of connection (and often, empathy) – in the course of workshops, shared activities, neighbourhood gatherings, policy forums, or simple dialogues enable social actors to find enough common ground and willingness to cooperate, and ultimately to make some changes that invite alienated groups into community with each other. These changes are often practical in nature (e.g. removing the barriers that prevent a trans man from attending a clinic; adjusting the words of a policy to include a disenfranchised group), but they also begin to enable cultural and systemic changes. People form new webs of relationships and new maps of their worlds, and begin to make use of their voices and authority to catalyse further change.

This is PV’s special, and perhaps unique niche: an approach, underpinned by a concrete set of transferable practices that enable social change, are inherently inclusive and affirming of everyone’s rights and humanity, and open up the possibility of community and solidarity between individuals and groups which are currently disconnected from, or in tension with, one another. (For example: LGBTQI+ people and health workers in many African states; sex workers and district councillors; civil society organisations and state institutions.)
This report reflects our response to the present reality: a response centred on some core principles which do not deny complexity and difference, but embrace them, while foregrounding connection, centring systemic readings of the world, and privileging processes which enable otherted, excluded, marginalised or vulnerable people (and their organisations) to contribute in practical ways to co-creating change and making a difference.

It is not a traditional “annual report”, but a first attempt at an “annual synthesis report” in line with our new approach to monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning (MEAL) which has been in development over the course of 2019-2020. In it, we take the wide swathe of work and outcomes from the past year, make meaning of them, and connect them to the future. In this sense, it is a kind of learning product – a record of the development of our thinking, as well our impact.

As such, we are not primarily concerned with project outputs and activities here. That kind of narrative reporting is addressed in project- and programme-specific reports. However, links to a range of documents and other media have been included (see Section 3 in particular), so that readers can learn more about specific pieces of work in specific country contexts, or engage in more depth with evidence of impact.

Section 2 briefly unpacks PV’s Theory of Change and Impact Framework – both of which unpin our approach to programming and MEAL.

Section 3 offers an overview of the nature and scope of PV’s work in 2020.

Section 4 uses PV’s new Impact Framework to sketch out our overall impact in the period and attempts to address the question: “What was our contribution to ending otherting in 2020?”

Section 5 links the previous sections to significant developments in the coming period (2021 and beyond) and offers a sense of the future trajectory of PV’s work.
This section maps out the core, underlying assumptions and conceptual bases for PV’s work in 2020. These ideas will continue to inform our approach and programming in the coming years. They are, of course, subject to refinement and adaptation based on evidence and learning from practice.

We will do this by unpacking two central frameworks:

- PV’s Theory of Change (ToC) - which is also a theory of ‘othering’
- PV’s Impact Framework (IF)

In each case, we share a diagram which presents the concepts and their connections in a simple form, then offer a brief explanation.
Othering is a symptom, a product, and a cause of an unequal, unlevel social system. That system is multidimensional, complex and self-preserving. It cannot be reformed through isolated, one-dimensional activities. To effectively address othering and shape societies that are increasingly equitable requires a sensitive, strategic response that engages multiple dimensions of the social, cultural and structural environment that constitute the system.

Towards this ambition, PV adopts a whole-systems worldview to programming, and develops and transfers supportive methodologies targeted at a range of specific elements across the system. These are designed to increase critical awareness and agency (conscientisation), especially amongst people who are oppressed or excluded. And since no single organisation can engage an entire complex system, PV seeks out connection and partnership to amplify impact and scale.

However, inequality gives rise to a characteristic social and systemic phenomenon – i.e. othering – which in turn works to cement inequality. The ‘other’ is invisible, or bad, or unworthy, so can be safely ignored and/or suppressed – a process which also shores up the status quo and preserves social stratification and inequality. Stigma, prejudice, exclusion, marginalisation, invisibilisation, and other effects experienced by some groups of people are expressions and manifestations of othering. To effectively reduce the impact of these effects, we need to focus on the dynamic of othering itself; this in turn will enable people to begin to unpick the socio-structural matrix that helps to preserve inequality in our societies.

The phenomenon we refer to as ‘othering’ exists because, fundamentally, our societies are unequal. Inequality of status, power, wealth, access, and privilege creates an unlevel gradient in society. People with lesser equity fall – or are pushed – to the margins of the social system: they are othered. Inequality itself is an enormous problem, and there are few (if any) highly effective ways of directly addressing it, at least from the position of a regional civil society organisation such as Positive Vibes.

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### OUR THEORY OF CHANGE (AND OTHERING)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT AMBITION</th>
<th>THE END OF OTHERING</th>
<th>STRATEGIC RESPONSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Equitable Societies</td>
<td>Whole Systems Worldview</td>
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<td>Targeted Methodologies</td>
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<td>Partnerships for Scale</td>
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### PROBLEM

- **Othering**: Inequality gives rise to a characteristic social and systemic phenomenon – i.e. othering – which in turn works to cement inequality. The ‘other’ is invisible, or bad, or unworthy, so can be safely ignored and/or suppressed – a process which also shores up the status quo and preserves social stratification and inequality.

- **Stigma, prejudice, exclusion, marginalisation, invisibilisation, and other effects experienced by some groups of people are expressions and manifestations of othering. To effectively reduce the impact of these effects, we need to focus on the dynamic of othering itself; this in turn will enable people to begin to unpick the socio-structural matrix that helps to preserve inequality in our societies.**

### ROOT CAUSE

- **INEQUALITY**: The phenomenon we refer to as ‘othering’ exists because, fundamentally, our societies are unequal. Inequality of status, power, wealth, access, and privilege creates an unlevel gradient in society. People with lesser equity fall – or are pushed – to the margins of the social system: they are othered. Inequality itself is an enormous problem, and there are few (if any) highly effective ways of directly addressing it, at least from the position of a regional civil society organisation such as Positive Vibes.

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The diagram at left is best read from bottom to top. The text in the table below should also be read in this way – first the bottom row, then the middle row, and finally the top row.
These are big ideas, and not entirely uncontroversial ones. It is worth restating and slightly expanding this description ...

We recognise that the dynamic of othering – i.e. the systemic exclusion and rejection of some groups within our societies – arises from the deep inequality embedded in these societies. We work with human beings, within their social and structural contexts, to facilitate conscientisation: a visceral and personal understanding of the systemic roots of inequality, of how it is reproduced, and of how to challenge and change it.

To seriously challenge inequality, we must first disrupt the dynamic of othering, which prevents marginalised groups from being seen, heard and recognised as equal human beings.

Othering is intrapersonal (internalised), interpersonal and intergroup (personal prejudices and blind spots, but also in-group privileges and oppressive social norms), and systemic (part of the ‘personality’ of systems and societies; built into ‘the way things work around here’).

To begin to address othering requires that people and systems confront their complicity in it, that they make conscious choices to change, and that these choices are accompanied, supported and monitored. To enable this, we:

- facilitate processes in which members of marginalised and vulnerable populations begin to reclaim their personhood and their personal power, and to more deeply understand their rights;
- encourage and support dialogues and actions that challenge, subvert or disrupt othering in creative and constructive ways;
- build bridges of communication and accountability between previously silenced or ‘invisible’ groups, and those who hold formal and informal power (duty-bearers, service providers, religious leaders, law enforcers, policy-makers, etc.);
- develop and transfer methods, approaches and a person-centric, systems-oriented worldview that promotes conscientisation and helps build movements for change;
- monitor, make meaning, learn and strategise with partners and allies so we can identify, deepen and embed change effects;
- constantly refine our own approach and practice to this complex field.
OUR IMPACT FRAMEWORK

In order to see whether or not our work is connecting and producing movement towards the end of othering, we needed a way of collecting, organising and making sense of data, observations and evidence collected in the course of our work.

Our Impact Framework (at right) offers a structured and manageable set of lenses through which to view the interlinked subsystems that any programme or project – and our work as a whole – might aim to constructively influence and disrupt. As already noted, supporting significant and lasting systemic change requires movement across multiple dimensions of impact. The Framework is a tool to make these dimensions more readily noticeable and accessible: a way of looking holistically at any socio-structural context (or human system) with our impact ambition in mind.

Three fields for monitoring and evaluation

We need to pay attention to:

POSITIVE VIBES & PARTNERS
This innermost (and most inward-looking) field is about our own practice of transfer, accompaniment, facilitation and learning, and the extent to which programme design and implementation is aligned to our Theory of Change. This field is also concerned with the connections between programmes, such that they amplify each others’ effects and impact, and are responsive to shifts in, and learning from, the wider Impact Environment.

COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST & PRACTICE (CoIPs)
Communities of leaders and practitioners bridge the space between PV and its impact environment. It is essential to stay connected to, and participate in, these growing communities, and to cultivate mutual support and learning.
IMPACT ENVIRONMENT
This is about changes in ‘the world’ - external shifts in socio-cultural & socio-structural systems at various levels (local, national, regional, etc.). Signs of these changes could be seen by tracking:
- individuals and their experiences
- organisations, as they change and adapt
- dynamics in local systems
- the transfer of ideas, practices, approaches, beyond programme boundaries
- shifts in the policy and/or legal landscape

The internal (PV & partners) and bridging (CoIP) fields are critical for our effectiveness and need to be monitored closely. However, it is in the wider Impact Environment/s – and the extent to which we make progress towards ending othering and changing systems in the real world, at local, national and regional levels – that the meaning and value of PV’s work should become visible.

Each impact environment (whether a neighbourhood, district, country, sub-region) has its own characteristics and dynamics which can be usefully mapped and tracked by focusing on…

Five dimensions of impact

The Individual Dimension
Changes in individual human beings, their experience of themselves, and their engagement with their environment:
- Increased confidence, initiative and awareness
- Conscientisation and personal action
- Skills development and learning
- Well-being and resilience
- Shifts in perception, participation and engagement

The Dimension of Organisation
Incremental or transformational changes in organisations:
- The emergence of organisations
- Shifts in strategy and programming
- Shifts in ideology and methodology
- Shifts in practice and behaviour
- Shifts in organisational culture
- New modes of organising (in a specific context)

Much of PV’s work is done in partnership with local, national, regional and international organisations. Organisations are critical vehicles for programme implementation, but also have a significant influence on many other spheres. Among othered groups, in particular, organisations can also play a key role in building community, and in sparking or supporting movements for change.

Our interest in this dimension is both in general organisational shifts – any significant changes in resourcing, programming, dynamics, etc. (whether apparently ‘positive’ or ‘negative’) – but also quite specifically in organisational adaptation.
By organisational adaptation, we mean signs of conscious choices on the part of organisations’ leaders and members to improve sensitivity to their environments, and to enhance effectiveness and impact. For example, an organisation which had previously limited itself to supporting health service provision now beginning to work on influencing the nature of the services offered by the state. Such shifts reveal signs of increasing complexity and sophistication in an organisations’ analysis of their own environment: a sign that the conscientisation process is unfolding.

The emergence of new organisations or new modes of organising (e.g. cooperation between LGBTQI+ organisations that had previously not cooperated; signs of intersectional organisation/cooperation) are also of special significance. They may point, for example, towards the development of local and regional movements worth supporting.

The Local System Dimension

Shifts in the local systems where people live:
- New connections and signs of movement in neighbourhoods or geographical communities
- Shifts in local discourse about othered people
- Shifts in patterns of discrimination/acceptance/exclusion/inclusion of othered people
- Civic engagement or other local action

Shifts in relationships within/between relevant sub-communities, and/or between local institutions and community members.

It is not unusual to track individual and organisational change, but shifts in local systems are often neglected in work done on a national/regional scale. A local system is simply a neighbourhood or geographical community.

The prevailing culture, common practice, set of acceptable norms and attitudes where people live their lives all feed into ‘the way things are around here’, and therefore, into what it’s like to be me/us around here. Othering lives, and is reproduced, in powerful ways in local systems. To end it, we must pay attention to this, support local people to disrupt the patterns that sustain othering, and catalyse change at community level.

Further, the informal (even, unconscious) dynamics at this level of the whole system (e.g. the local communities that make up a district, or province, or nation) influence what is possible in the formal/structural sphere (and vice versa).

Some things to look for at this level include:

- The emergence, or strengthening, of community. Community is, at least to begin with, usually a local phenomenon, and has to do with the existence and quality of connections between people, groups, and, to an extent, organisations and institutions (which often become centres for engagement and connection; or sources of disaffection). For example, a growth of support between people who were previously othered is a significant shift towards growing healthy, inclusive communities.

- ‘Passive’ or emergent changes in social norms. These kinds of shifts often appear ‘causeless’ but are worth noticing and, where possible, making collective sense of, with local people and partners. For example, less judgemental or exclusionary messaging in a local church. A feeling of increased safety among local trans people or lesbian women. Shifts in language – less use of pejoratives to refer to othered people. Or, conversely, increases in violations or hate speech. All can signal that something in the local system is being disrupted and may need to be responded to, managed, or mitigated.

- Active local system response. Visible action and movement within the community. This is often catalysed by an inciting/disruptive event (e.g. a community meeting; a public rights violation; a local organisation’s response; a decision by local leaders), but it evolves into a community-level conversation or process with the potential for lasting impact – shifts in local language, behaviours, beliefs. This is often a powerful indicator of traction, of movement towards impact, and perhaps, of a local organisation’s effectiveness.
The Dimension of Transfer

Transfer of energy, vision, strategy, ideas or approach beyond a project or other planned action:
- Invitations from new groups
to engage, share learning or collaborate
- Unplanned, but aligned actions on the part of participants and/or non-participants
- Emergent joint initiatives, and other signs of self-organisation/movement

Transfer refers not to a social sub-system (like the previous dimensions), but to a social process. It also provides us with a partial measure of scale.

It is worth looking for signs that activities, language, ideas and spin-off initiatives have ‘escaped’ the formal project boundaries, and are beginning to grow organically. Transfer tells us valuable things about readiness for social change, about the extent to which the ideas and approach with which we work are gaining currency. It’s an especially good sign when people and systems not connected to a programme or project begin to adopt its core ideas – e.g. “accompaniment” or “lifeworlds” or even “othering” – as their own. This points towards some fruitful next steps for an existing project or initiative – where it could expand, with whom it might partner, what new opportunities and spaces might be opening up.

Transfer is also a sign of network strength – it happens primarily through relationship (formal or informal), so the more cohesive the system with which one is engaged, the higher the degree of transfer that might be expected. Transfer also correlates with visibility and reputation (positively or negatively). Noticing transfer provides information about the positioning of our work in a given context.

The Policy & Law Dimension

Shifts in powerful structures and formal systems:
- Shifts in policy conversations at local, district, national or regional level
- Changes in civil society engagement with policy/legal processes, or in the processes themselves
- Shifts in protocols and guidelines
- New or amended policies
- Law reform

This is the most obviously structural dimension of the IF. It is also often a limiting factor to changes at other levels. For example, if same-sex relations are effectively criminalised, it is more difficult to organise effectively (even registering an organisation may be difficult or impossible). It is also more difficult to shift community norms, change organisational practice (e.g. at clinics), and therefore improve individual lives, when national frameworks reinforce patterns of exclusion and othering.

Sustained, integrated impact depends on shifts in all of these dimensions – certainly including this one. Work in this sphere may need to be indirect in contexts where partners are at high risk of state violence or suppression, but influence is often possible through mechanisms involving global donors (e.g. PEPFAR, the Global Fund) or by leveraging whatever support resides within the state and other powerful players.

Section 4 applies this Impact Framework to our work in 2020 and uses it to begin making meaning of PV’s contribution to ‘the end of othering’ in the period. Before doing this, we turn to a high-level summary of the work itself: Section 3 briefly unpacks PV’s 2020 programmes, core relationships, and reach in the period. This serves as background to our discussion of impact.
3. The Work of 2020

This section offers a brief response to the question: What have we been doing?

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

Highlighted countries indicate active programming in 2020. Namibia is shown in a different shade because this is PV’s country of origin. As a consequence, a very active programme of PV-led and implemented national activities is undertaken in Namibia, in addition to Namibia’s participation in several multi-country or sub-regional projects.

In 2020, PV worked principally in two sub-regions: Southern Africa and East Africa. This reflects a slight reduction in coverage against 2019 – a consequence of several projects coming to a close in 2019. The inset – Indonesia – relates to a two-country project called Strong in Diversity, implemented in Kenya and Indonesia. This work came to a close in 2020.

Some programmes will expand into new territories in 2021 and beyond, and several new programmes expand PV’s reach both on the continent (to West, Central Africa, and North Africa) and in the Americas and Asia. For more information about the expansion of this footprint in the coming years, see Section 5.
PEOPLE AND PARTNERS: WITH WHOM AND IN WHOSE INTERESTS DID PV WORK IN 2020? AND WHAT DID WE DO?

The bulk of PV’s programming in 2020 focused on LGBTQI+ people, and on adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). A smaller proportion of the work centred on sex workers (SW) and People Living with HIV (PLHIV), often as a subset of one of the previously mentioned groups.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRH-R) was a key organising theme within which a great deal of person-centred, community-building, organisational strengthening, knowledge generation, and policy-influence work took place – often using SRH-R as an entry point into more fundamental conversations about human beings’ realities and rights.

The table below offers a breakdown of PV’s programmes, and names some of our key partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMME / PROJECT NAMES</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK</th>
<th>DONORS &amp; INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS</th>
<th>FOCAL COUNTRIES OR SUB-REGIONS</th>
<th>RIGHTS-HOLDERS OR DUTY-BEARERS</th>
<th>FURTHER READING &amp; RESOURCES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGYW programme</td>
<td>Providing combination HIV-prevention packages to adolescent girls and young women, and addressing issues of bodily integrity and bodily autonomy.</td>
<td>Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services (channelling Global Fund finance) / ARASA</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>AGYW</td>
<td>- ‘Vulnerabilising Contexts’ and Namibian Young People’s Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ti Soros Ge</td>
<td>On the Verge of a Breakthrough</td>
<td>AmplifyChange / ViIV Healthcare</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>LGBTQI+ and SW organisations and individuals</td>
<td>- Perceptions and Perspectives: Kuisebmund, Walvis Bay.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community-led Monitoring through KPIF</td>
<td>Human Sciences Resources Council of South Africa (channelling AmplifyChange finance) / OSISA and Human Dignity Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Penis-Centric Priorities: The Invisibility of Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer (LBQ) women and Female-bodied trans-diverse people in sexual and reproductive health services.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Schools Out</td>
<td>COVID-19 support was also provider to several rights-holder organisations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Regional conference for LGBTQI+ from SADC states process report.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COVID-19 support project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adolescents &amp; Young People - Strategy Development</td>
<td>Developing a strategy to address the challenges facing othered young people through community-centred action and influencing. (Implementation may follow in 2021/22; funds were not yet allocated during the COVID-19 period.)</td>
<td>CISU (channelled through our design and implementation partner, SPOR Media, Denmark)</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>Young LGBTQI+ individuals, young Sex Workers and young People Living with HIV</td>
<td>- Somewhere Over the Rainbow: A situational analysis of sexual and gender minority adolescents and young people in Namibia. - Inclusion, Acceptance &amp; Safety: A strategy to address marginalised &amp; vulnerable youth in Namibian communities and state responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Collaboration for Inclusive Development</td>
<td>Developing, introducing, contextualising, and transferring the LILO Inclusion methodology in Zimbabwe.</td>
<td>UK AIDS (channelled through FrontLine AIDS)</td>
<td>Zimbabwe (the larger project included a focus on Nigeria and Myanmar)</td>
<td>‘Most marginalised’ people, including women and girls, LGBTQI+ people, ethnic minorities and People Living with HIV (PLHIV)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bridging the Chasm</td>
<td>Building an alliance for SRH-R practice for key populations in East and Southern Africa (2019-2020) through community-led, participatory health service monitoring, improving access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, and challenging stigma, discrimination, attitudes and laws.</td>
<td>AmplifyChange</td>
<td>SOUTHERN AFRICA: Botswana Namibia Uganda Zambia Zimbabwe</td>
<td>LGBTQI+ and SW organisations and their constituencies</td>
<td>- Setting the Levels: Method and process guide - Perceptions and Perspectives (a selection of STL reports: - Gulu - Mbarara - Masaka - Ripples in Reality: Exploring the nature of impact through stories from Bridging the Chasm - Cultivating Change: Insights for effective influencing - Talking Points (influencing briefs from Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) - Firmer Foundations: Recommendations to PEPFAR, USAID and CDC for policy and structural reform towards equitable, dignified, sustainable Key Populations programming; lessons learned from community monitoring of the Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know the Present, Imagine the Future</td>
<td>Influencing practice under the Key Populations Investment Fund with the aim of strengthening systems for health, movements for advocacy at national and regional levels, and improving national and regional programming and practice. This work was strongly aligned with that funded by AmplifyChange (see above). In addition, it created opportunities for direct engagement with and influencing of USAID, PEPFAR, and CDC at country-level and beyond.</td>
<td>ViV Healthcare Positive Action Fund Key Population Investment Fund</td>
<td>SOUTHERN &amp; EAST AFRICA: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda</td>
<td>LGBTQI+ and SW organisations and their constituencies</td>
<td>- Setting the Levels: Method and process guide - Perceptions and Perspectives (a selection of STL reports: - Gulu - Mbarara - Masaka - Ripples in Reality: Exploring the nature of impact through stories from Bridging the Chasm - Cultivating Change: Insights for effective influencing - Talking Points (influencing briefs from Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) - Firmer Foundations: Recommendations to PEPFAR, USAID and CDC for policy and structural reform towards equitable, dignified, sustainable Key Populations programming; lessons learned from community monitoring of the Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF)</td>
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| Changing the System, Together | Building the capacity of local partners, and strengthening PV’s own approach to programming and implementation science, by learning together about the process of ending othering. The work included a strong focus on disruption and influence, and the application of a range of methods, including STL processes and LILO methods. | VOICE (Hivos and Oxfam-Novib) | Uganda | LGBTQI+ communities, with a focus on LBQ women | - Selected videos  
- As We See Ourselves: Trans lifeworlds in Mbarara  
- Rewriting Herstory: LBQ lifeworlds in Gulu  
- Going to a Better Place: Learning from communities to improve quality and standards of care in health facilities and programmes delivered to, especially, sexual and gender minorities  
- Disrupting Our Own Thinking about impact, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning |
| Realising Rights Strong in Diversity* | Reducing minority stress and increasing levels of self-acceptance, self-efficacy and well-being among LGBTQI+ people in East Africa (and Indonesia, in the case of Strong in Diversity). There was also a strong emphasis on strengthening LGBTQI+ organisations and allies to promote equal rights for LGBTQI+ people at country level, and to strengthen regional collaboration between participating organisations. An element of COVID-19 emergency support was integrated in 2020. | CISU & the Obel Foundation (channelled through our design and implementation partner LGBT+ Denmark)  
The COVID-19 pandemic, and its knock-on social and economic effects at national and global levels, certainly affected PV’s programming in 2020. However, it had less of a dampening effect on our contribution to change than might be expected.

From an activity perspective, the pandemic required significant reprogramming – a move away from large in-person workshops, severe restrictions on travel to and within countries, and the need to invest energy in supporting partners’ efforts to adapt to the crisis (while doing so ourselves). In particular, less of PV’s flagship LILO workshops were facilitated in 2020 than in previous years. All programmes succeeded in adapting successfully, though a few suffered delays in implementation – mainly those involving high levels of local contact. Online tools were adopted, wherever feasible, and a great deal of learning and partnership-building work unfolded in virtual spaces such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. This included PV’s own internal learning processes – such as the one which concretised the new Impact Framework described in Section 2 of this document.

In some places and programmes, the pandemic produced actively positive effects and innovations. For example:

- Deepened relations between PV and some East African partners; in some respects, the shift towards online work created more space for regular and intensive contact than had previously been the case.
- Increased self-reliance and programme ownership on the part of some partners who were able to successfully implement several activities without direct support from PV. This further equalised relationships and took them another step along the road to mutual and strategic partnership.
- Innovations around economic empowerment began to emerge in response to straitened economic circumstances (e.g. the MoneyWise workshop developed by a partner in Kenya) – signs that partners are beginning to set the programming agenda for themselves and build on the processes and conceptual tools that we have shared with them, or developed together.

In both Southern and East Africa, significant strides towards building stronger, more influential LGBTQI+ movements were taken: the seeds of a highly effective African LGBTQI+ movement are clearly germinating. Of course, this cannot be attributed only (or even primarily) to PV’s engagement and support, but it is heartening to see that many of the approaches and practices which PV has pioneered over the past decade are being integrated into these movements’ ways of approaching, conceptualising, and working towards change.

In summary: There are challenges, and some real fragility and vulnerability within the movements, sectors and organisations with which we partner. However, our 2020 experience confirmed that there is also a deep resilience, swiftly developing leadership, and a profound commitment to human rights and justice among both local and national partners on the continent.
REACH & SCALE

This subsection offers an overview of PV’s direct reach in 2020. Namibia, where the nature of programming allows direct contact with much larger numbers of people, is treated separately. Regional programming tends to target fewer, more influential people who in turn reach others (within, or beyond, their specific rights-holder grouping).

Namibia:

- 17,141 AGYW were reached via 904 HIV/SRH-R training sessions, Teen Clubs and Positive Parenting Workshops
- 450 community gatekeepers (414 men, 36 women) were reached via Man-to-Man forums and Community Dialogues
- 154 partner learning events and other gatherings attended (accompaniment)
- 80 COVID-19 relief packages provided to 11 LGBTQI+ or sex worker organisations

Rest of Southern Africa & East Africa:

1,965 people were directly reached via 458 separate contact sessions – a significant reduction on planned activities due to COVID-19 restrictions on larger gatherings and workshops.

- 969 of these contacts - about 50% - consisted of, arose from, or related to community-led monitoring work (mainly using the Setting the Levels methodology). These were not all Setting the Levels convenings, but included ongoing support to local actors’ work on influencing local and/or national health systems towards greater inclusivity and SRH-R service quality, as well as wider advocacy efforts focused on USAID, CDC and PEPFAR.
- Another 25% of these contacts happened in the form of small group sessions known as Ekyoto, in telephone follow-ups, or via counselling sessions (569 people)
- The remaining 25% mainly took the form of LILO workshops and partner learning events (the latter, often online).

At least 60% of participants were cis gender people. Roughly equal numbers of cis men and cis women were reached, with slight variations across programmes. Most of these identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Participation by trans people varied from 10-32% across different projects and contexts.

Similar numbers of trans men and trans women were engaged.

Where data is available, up to 2% of participants identified as intersex.

In some contexts – especially in parts of East Africa – participants were less likely to openly disclose (and write down) their gender identity or sexual orientation for reasons of security and risk.

While the regional numbers are important, they are not primary indicators of impact or movement – the depth of relationships with the partners who co-created much of this work lies at the heart of our regional strategy and regional impact (see also Section 4 of this report).
ORGANISATIONAL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

PV’s current strategy – Strategy 2017-2021: Health, Equity & Justice in Africa – will come to an end in 2021 (Click here to access the Strategy). It focused on four main Strategic Directions:

A. Strengthening systems for health:
   PLHIV, LGBTQI+, sex workers and other marginalised groups experience greater well-being and improved health.

B. Strengthening movements for effective advocacy at national and regional levels:
   Strong PLHIV, LGBTQI+ and sex worker movements, organisations and coalitions engage in effective advocacy to further their agenda/s at national and regional levels.

C. Influencing national and regional programming and practice:
   Local and national civil society organisations in this field (and beyond) integrate developmental, personcentric approaches to their work, leading to increased conscientisation, change and impact at individual, social and structural levels.

D. Developing and positioning Positive Vibes:
   PV is a leading African intermediary NGO, positioned to sustainably pursue its goals with a strong network of allies and partners.

Significant strides have been made within each of these areas, though notably the emphasis on working with PLHIV (as a broad target group) diminished in scale, and emphasis on AGYW increased markedly, and will continue into the foreseeable future. There are also signs of a broadening of scope to include people with disabilities and displaced people in some projects which will begin in the 2021-2022 period.
More detailed information about PV’s programming in relation to Strategic Directions A through C may be found earlier in this section, and its outcomes are addressed in Section 4. Below we focus briefly on Strategic Direction D for the 2020 period.

**Expanding PV’s strategic network**  
PV cultivated or deepened a range of important strategic partnerships in 2020.

Most notably, we collaborated with several partners to develop the “We Lead” and “Free To Be Me” Programmes, both financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both are described in more detail in Section 5 of this report and will begin implementation in 2021.

PV launched a joint 5-year programme with UNDP in 2020: the Inclusive Governance Initiative. This sees PV engaging at Africa Regional Economic Committee level, pursuing LGBTQI+ Inclusion. The PV-Namibia team is also leading on two country programs with UNAIDS and UNFPA. These three programs will help cement with United Nations agencies.

**Financing our work**  
A total of nine successful funding applications were submitted in 2020. While fewer applications were made than in 2019, they represent more than double the investment value. In the 2021 budget period, we anticipate the lowest budget shortfall in PV history.

**Increase/decrease in income from the previous period**  
There was a 17% decrease in income in 2020 when compared to 2019. The Comic Relief and Soul City projects ended in 2019, and some 2020 funds were received in 2019.

An AmplifyChange grant also concluded in June of 2020, so this disbursement was significantly lower than in previous years.

**Restricted:Unrestricted income**  
90% restricted, 10% unrestricted.

**Submission of donor reports**  
All donor reports were submitted on time in accordance with donor requirements.

**Governance, board engagement, board profile**  
Two Board meetings were conducted in 2020, in May and November. Each included a Finance Risk and Audit sub-committee meeting approximately a week before the official board meeting. Due to COVID-19, both meetings took place online.

The Board Chair is Uno Katjipuka, the Vice Chair is Melanie Jackson. The other trustees are Agnes Phiri, and Lelanie Basson.

The trustees constitute four members and one Financial, Risk and Audit Committee Advisor. The four trustees are all female. Two trustees identify as queer.

**Audit**  
The statutory audit was completed and signed off by the Board Chair in June 2019.
4. Our Contribution to Impact

Through the projects and programmes listed in the previous section, and through its strong network of relationships on the continent and beyond, PV contributed to some significant shifts in 2020: shifts in people’s lives; in their local communities and organisations; in the larger formal systems which affect them; and in discourse and practice within the SRH-R and LGBTQI+ spaces, on the continent and beyond.

This section applies the Impact Framework (introduced in Section 2) to describe the ‘ripples in reality’ to which PV contributed in the past year. It is an attempt to answer the question: How are we contributing to the end of othering?

The material below is necessarily brief, and specific examples have been chosen for their representative power. Unless otherwise indicated, quotations are from programme participants (some of which have been translated from the original language, or paraphrased). The parts must stand, to some degree, for the whole; the depth and richness of each of the individual, organisational and national narratives involved are necessarily somewhat reduced in the act of summarising. For a more fulsome example of the application of the IF to a specific project, see Ripples in Reality (2020) which used the IF to focus on the Bridging the Chasm project (Botswana, Namibia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe).

It is worth stating at the outset that the new Impact Framework only began to be integrated into PV’s programming practice and thinking in 2020 (after being first articulated in 2018-19). The process of adapting our monitoring systems and practices to track data and make meaning of it in line with this Framework remains work in progress. As PV’s skill and capacity to do this grows, we expect more depth and nuance to emerge. This should, in turn, feed into ongoing improvements in reporting, project steering, ongoing learning, and future programme design.

Below, we consider each dimension of the Impact Environment in turn, touch on the other two fields of the framework (Communities of Interest and Practice; PV itself), and offer some concluding comments about PV’s 2020 contribution towards our longer term goal of ending othering.

PV contributed to some significant shifts in 2020: shifts in people’s lives; in their local communities and organisations; in the larger formal systems which affect them; and in discourse and practice within the SRH-R and LGBTQI+ spaces, on the continent and beyond.
THE INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION

The Regional and Namibian programmes noted some near-universal signs across all projects and sub-programmes: increased confidence; new levels of self-esteem; and more effective use of personal voice and agency to make changes, small and large.

I now know and understand that I am a normal human being and I shouldn’t blame myself for being gay. I didn’t create myself … Life has become a bit easier.

I no longer hate my society for not understanding me. I have learnt to live in our community.

I found the power to define my life freely, and what that means to me as a person.

My participation grew me as a leader. After attending LILO Identity, I felt the need to organise my community. It was like a calling.

In general, rights-holders came to a deeper understanding of their rights and the systems around them, and felt more able to use their voices to raise issues and challenges. One small sign of this shift included improvements in documentation from practitioners with whom PV works: when voice is freed, reporting improves – a prosaic, but significant shift. Practitioners and leaders also displayed increased (and more focused) energy and interest in exploring new arenas, trying our new approaches, and engaging more actively and constructively with issues around service delivery, service access, and policy change. In many cases, new leaders began to emerge and, sometimes, new organisations.

Participants across multiple contexts – especially those in which the Setting the Levels (STL) process was applied – displayed deeper understanding and ownership of the local health system, and increased capacity to claim their rights within (and beyond) it. In general, individuals displayed enhanced capacity to make sense of, and map, their local systems, and to think strategically about how they might act to promote positive change within them.

One thing I’ve learned as a leader in this process is that our voices can cause change if we use them. Every time we don’t hold anyone accountable for things going wrong or missing the mark, people assume that the services are good. That’s what happens unless we speak up, and use our voices.

Health workers and other allies forged personal relationships with, and deeper understanding of, LGBTQI+ people. Many signs of increased empathy, greater acceptance, and deeper recognition of LGBTQI+ people’s needs as human beings were visible.

During the STL here, when we started talking about challenges and problems facing sex workers and LGBTQI+ people when they want to access healthcare, one of the doctors said, “Right now, there’s only one person focused on Key Populations. What if all of us were trained?” That got people thinking about processes and behaviours. “If all of us change,” he said, “the structure will change - there won’t be only one focal person to address KP issues. Then we could all offer appropriate services.”

In Namibia, PV’s work with AGYW is also producing significant shifts. AGYW better understand their rights, speak out with more confidence, and seek support from peers and professionals when they need it. As a consequence, local health facilities attest to an increase in health-seeking behaviours among young women.

These conclusions are supported by data from a range of sources, including several knowledge products and evaluations completed in 2020 (Ripples in Reality; Perceptions and Perspectives: Gulu, Mbarara, Masaka) and 2021 (Realising Right East Africa Evaluation), as well as by facilitators’ stories of change, and programme managers’ observations. These sources, and other links provided elsewhere in this report (see Section 3) all provide additional and more in-depth evidence and examples.
THE DIMENSION OF ORGANISATION

In general, partner organisations have demonstrated and reported an increase in visibility, enhanced reputation, and a stronger sense of ownership of our shared work. They represent themselves more clearly and confidently, which has assisted in improved networking with policy-makers as well as other organisations in the region.

In Namibia, Southern and East Africa, there are growing signs of cooperation, collaboration and solidarity between organisations – signs of a positive movement-culture beginning to form around sets of shared goals and interests. For example:

- In Uganda, a local PV partner collaborated with a local human rights organisation to address the challenges and abuses facing sex workers during COVID-19.
- In Namibia, PV and nine local, regional and international organisations issued a joint statement condemning an act of violence against a trans woman (a video was released on social media).

Partner organisations strategise more thoughtfully and effectively, as well as recognising and picking up on new opportunities. There are also clear signs of more conscious accountability to their own constituencies, and a real interest in listening to and learning from them, and from other stakeholders in their environments. They have assertively positioned themselves within their communities, as well as in relation to power structures in-country.

Growing and learning together
A project in Namibia included a focus on obsolete laws. We and our partners explored these laws and their relationship to the concepts of bodily integrity and autonomy, and to reproductive justice. We also looked at the specific implications of different laws for AGYW, LBQ women trans men. This built PV’s capacity, as well as that of our main partners in this work. We forged shared language and shared understandings. Intelligence generated through our community-led monitoring processes also gave us evidence and language to talk about the needs of these specific groups, so we were better able to tailor our responses, communications materials, and strategies to population-specific needs.

Now that we are taking this approach, we don’t just want to be looked at as ‘implementing partners’. We want to be there when you make decisions about us.

I want my voice to be heard... When we work on the ground, we don’t want to feel like we are just doing things because someone else’s plan says we should, whether or not it works for our community.

I see how partner organisations’ capacities have changed and improved. Things we thought were impossible have become possible. Most of the organisations were not thinking much about advocacy and influencing at a higher level. We are now. We are more about influencing, about engaging certain groups of people, about strategic thinking for influence.

This kind of mutual learning and development characterises most of PV’s relations with partner organisations: it is central to our approach – an outgrowth of partnership itself – and largely replaces more traditional, top-down ‘capacity building’ efforts. That said, where it is required, more technical support is also provided within several programmes, but always in the context of increasing organisational strength for the purpose of better contributing to our shared task and shared impact ambition. Partnership, purpose and positive contributions are centred, not presumed deficits.
Although COVID-19 did make it more difficult to maintain close connections at community level, many reported and directly observed signs of local system change were visible in 2020. These included new connections and collaborations between local groups and institutions, growing alliances, and new, local projects starting as a result of PV’s programming.

Perhaps most critically, PV and partners also worked to build and deepen a sense of community within the groups of rights-holders we address.

_I used to live as if I was in prison. I did not want to increase my LGBT friends, because inside me I felt they hated me and would cause troubles to me. Now I am very social and very open to my friends in the community._

_I’ve had many one-on-one conversations with [local LGBTQI+ people]. Most say that even if things go South they have a community and safe space here. Knowing this makes a big difference. There is always someone who can listen and help you find a way through._

One programme evaluation (Realising Rights East Africa) noted:

> “This programme is an exemplary community-building effort, both at local level, with ordinary LGBTQI+ community members, and between practitioners and leaders in the East African LGBTQI+ movement. It is both transferring and co-creating an East African approach to building a movement with integrity, heart, significant organising capacity, and a well-articulated and principled approach to working with human beings, to healing and holding vulnerable communities and systems, and to supporting emergent change.” (Evaluation Report)

Many LGBTQI+ people and sex workers experienced the pandemic as a mental health crisis as well as a physical and economic threat. Having peer counsellors in their communities (a strong feature of PV’s work in East Africa) expanded the resources and support available and, in some cases, helped people to survive. It also worked against the sense of otherness and isolation that might otherwise have overwhelmed vulnerable people.

_Counselling saved my life many times. I was feeling very suicidal, especially during COVID. With the bars closed and travel restricted, many times I felt trapped inside my house and couldn’t move or even visit friends. Just being there thinking about my problems. I felt frustrated especially in the night. I would call a LILO counsellor to get help when I was feeling suicidal._
Health care worker perspectives of the LGBTQI+ community in many places also show signs of shifting, with local facilities recognising and acknowledging their roles in relation to LGBTQI+ community members. There is an increased interest in working together, and, in several sites, a growing sense of partnership between healthcare workers and community members.

The [local clinic] was and is very keen about the process and about making changes! They are our model clinic because they didn’t wait for us to come to them after the STL process – they followed up to ask when we were coming, to request additional meetings, to ask how to engage with the community outside of the clinic. Even through lockdown (COVID-19), we’ve called them and they’ve called us. They’ve referred a counselling client to us, and we’ve certainly sent people to them.

We have a community member – a trans woman – who recently defaulted on her antiretrovirals. She’d fallen into depression and stopping her HIV meds was part of that. She became very ill. We had to make the right referrals at the right time, before it was too late. She was transferred to a hospital we had worked with (together with PV) and admitted for four days. We helped make sure that she was safe, and had food. And we monitored her care. She received the right care; she was placed in a female ward; she wasn’t discriminated against or judged. People used the right pronouns – they didn’t make assumptions as they used to. When we took her there, we were expecting backlash; some negative reactions. But it all worked well. She even sent a letter afterwards saying that she had received good care.

Community members’ understanding of their role and position within their local health system has expanded and developed. This provides them with the confidence to reach out for help when they need it, and to hold the system to account.

The health authorities know that communities are looking at them now... Of course, there was defensiveness, but also some celebration and real connection. There’s been a shift in ownership of health services by community members; and ownership of methodologies to make health services more accessible, affirming, nice for communities. The change is noticeable. STL and the whole approach brings people together. Health facilities understand that community members won’t take crap anymore but they, and community members have also found a viable way to work together to improve health services.
Local partner organisations have shifted their approaches, and begun to use PV methodologies without direct support, and beyond specific PV programmes.

These methods we have learned from working with PV – STL, but also workshops like LILO Connect – are part of our approach now. They inform how we look in to focus on people’s personal experience, and create opportunities to connect to this, then look out, and connect with how their socialisation, the environment, and other people impact on them. We’ve learned what it takes to facilitate dialogue. We have made the essence of the PV development methodology our own, and use it flexibly in our influencing work to respond to situations and opportunities.

Several non-participating organisations requested engagement with PV programmes – they were interested in, and excited by, this way of working. Even local health facilities have expressed an interest in being included, despite the fact that doing so would invite feedback and challenge from their local communities.

At least two other health facilities in the district heard about the STL process we went through with their sister clinics. These other clinics heard about what happened and felt left out – they want to be part of the next STL process, and our community members want to work with us [and with them]...

Increasing interest in, and transfer of, some of PV’s core ideas and discourse into the wider development community have helped make PV a desirable partner in international consortia. We have been able to expand the use of methods and approaches – such as Setting the Levels (STL), a process for community-led health systems monitoring and influence, initially developed with Southern African partners – to inspire and resource the development of larger, more ambitious programmes with significant international partners. STL, alongside PV’s approach to working with Communities of Interest and Practice, are key ingredients in several programmes developed in 2020, which will move into implementation in 2021 (see Section 5 for more information on future directions).

Several other specific and significant instances of transfer also involve the STL process. As a consequence of PV’s work with STL in Namibia and elsewhere, community-led health system monitoring has been prioritised as a strategy for building resilient systems for health in the Namibia HIV/AIDS National Strategic Framework. Further, the Global Fund response in Namibia integrated community-led monitoring as part of its approach, and PV successfully applied for grants from both the Global Fund and UNAIDS to support community-led monitoring processes. The approach was also presented at various (online) conferences and gatherings in 2020, helping to spread these ideas further afield amongst practitioners, development professionals and academics.
THE POLICY & LAW DIMENSION

PV’s approach to influencing shifts in policy, law and other formal systems, tends to be bottom-up: we draw on evidence from local experience – gathered with and by partners, and through processes such as STL – to inform influencing agendas and strategies. And partners’ and their constituencies’ voices, experiences, participation and leadership are critical to the process of working towards policy change.

Many partners increased their engagement with local and district government in 2020 – a move made necessary by COVID-19, but also enabled by PV’s support over the previous years, and, in many cases ongoing accompaniment as they framed their plans and positions. Several have gained access to structures such as Country Coordinating Mechanisms, or Technical Working Groups linked to National AIDS Councils, and begun to use these access points strategically to further their goals, and to build the kinds of working relationships that enable effective policy influence.

The simplest and clearest examples of progress in relation to this dimension arise from PV’s own work in Namibia (where direct influence is possible, because PV is a Namibian-registered Trust), and at regionally and international levels.

**Regionally and internationally**, PV and its partners have compiled a significant body of evidence on the functioning of the Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF), and used this to engage several global players including PEPFAR, the CDC and USAID. Early signs suggest that these submissions and engagements are garnering both interest and attention from these institutions. This is significant at country-level too, because adaptations in these kinds of global institutions feed back into priorities, practices, and outcomes within countries. This work has also begun to point towards a possible global influencing agenda and role for PV.

In **Namibia**, work around policy influence and law reform has progressed on several fronts (see box). These, in turn, provide experience and learning to feed into and inspire our engagement in other country contexts.

**Progress in Namibia**

**Decriminalisation; addressing discriminatory or obsolete laws**

Early in 2020, PV and the Human Dignity Trust (a USA-based organisation) convened thirteen Namibian LGBTQI+, feminist, and youth-focused organisations, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, and the Law Reform and Development Commission (LRDC). Together, we finalised a legal advocacy brief on the decriminalisation of the sodomy offense for review by the LRDC.

This collective also compiled a list of obsolete and/or discriminatory laws as a contribution to LRDC’s Obsolete Law Project. Areas of law identified included: the sodomy offense; sex work within the Combating of Immoral Practices Act; abortion law; strengthening the grounds of non-discrimination to include SOGIE in Labour Act; adapting Article 10 of the Constitution (on non-discrimination); and

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4 Firmer Foundations: Recommendations to PEPFAR, USAID and CDC for policy and structural reform towards equitable, dignified, sustainable Key Populations programming; lessons learned from community monitoring of the Key Populations Investment Fund

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expanding the definition of a domestic relationship to include same-sex couples in the Combatting of Domestic Violence Act.

We continue to await feedback on the status of the obsolete laws. However, the review of the sodomy offence has been submitted to the Minister of Justice, and is pending review by the relevant parliamentary standing committee.

PV also contributed to redrafting the Namibian Hate Speech Bill. This bill and the Combatting of Domestic Violence Act have been motioned for review by Parliament.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

This work is aimed to create a more enabling environment for the realisation of SRH-R through policy change in the education system. It involved active engagement with the Ministry of Education and its Life Skills Curriculum. Significant gains included:

- a strengthened relationship with the Executive Director of the Ministry of Education;
- civil society organisations worked together to make a joint submission to the LRDC and the Ministry; and
- the Life Skills curriculum was reviewed and updated – among other changes, it now contains affirming content about sexual diversity for Grade 11 learners.

Health and SRH-R policy impact

PV was part of the technical team that reviewed the Namibia HIV/AIDS National Strategic Framework and provided evidence related to the experiences of LGBTQI+ sex workers and AGYW. This information, collected through our various studies and reports, was used to review areas of progress, strengthening, and gaps in Namibia’s collective HIV/AIDS response.

Community-led monitoring processes, in particular, PV’s Setting the Levels process, were highlighted as good practice by the review. Community-led monitoring/STL was named as a core strategy by the review, and were included in the Global Fund Country Proposal and in PV’s successful application for Global Fund Key Populations financing (see Section 5 for more detail on this work which begins in 2021).

Building relationships with policy-makers, and strengthening their capacity

PV’s relationship and influence with Namibian parliamentarians was strengthened by direct engagement with them. Through the parliamentary technical committee on SRH-R, we had the opportunity to work with 35 members of parliament from all political parties, as well as representatives from the National Assembly, Ministries of Health, Education, Gender and Justice, and other agencies. This work focused on building their capacity to advocate for, and influence, national responses to sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.
Enabling all of these shifts – these ripples in reality – are the communities of practitioners and leaders with which PV works most closely.

Of course, PV’s staff and associates also constitute a community of practice dedicated to activating our Theory of Change. This smaller community, in turn, cultivates wider Communities of Interest and Practice (ColPs) which connect us strongly to the multiple contexts in which we work, learn with us about the process of supporting personal and socio-structural change, and effectively co-create and co-implement our programmes.

These ColPs are an essential bridge between PV and the impact environments in which we work, as well as a point of connection, solidarity and support between their members. Members include practitioners and facilitators formed (at least in part) by PV; people making use of some of PV’s methods, process and change technologies, and contributing to their development.

Essentially, ColPs are semi-structured networks affiliated with PV and its work. They include growing online platforms (supplemented by face-to-face meetings when possible) which are actively used by more than 50% of their members. Members from across Southern and East Africa use these platforms for their own learning and reflection, and to reach out to colleagues within the network when they need support. ColPs strengthen a sense of community and solidarity between their members, as well as resulting in improvements and adaptations to project designs, partners’ practice, and PV’s own approach. They help to build an evidence base about what works and what doesn’t. They also work with, and learn from, the processes and outputs of various evaluations and other forms of practice-documentation – making meaning together and, ultimately, guiding and informing our shared strategy towards ending othering.

Equally central to the effectiveness of PV’s work is the maintenance and ongoing development of our own practice, approach and organisation. As the organisation expands and broadens the scope of its programming in the coming years, we will place even greater emphasis on:

- developing and maintaining up-to-date contextual intelligence about all the spaces and systems within which we work;
- consciously learning from, and about, our practice of accompaniment to ensure this core ingredient of our approach continues to align with our values and to produce increasingly significant impact; and
- deepening connections between projects and programmes, and integrating our new approach to MEAL across the whole organisation – it should provide a means of making meaning, together with partners, of our work, and steering our strategy.

Significant strides in this direction have already been taken. 2020 saw the adoption of several systems and practices that improved PV’s capacity to collaborate across countries and contexts using virtual tools, as well as laying the groundwork for a new approach to impact monitoring. Further, PV has continued to document its practice extensively and disseminate this documentation through its website and in more direct ways. (Samples of this documentation are hyperlinked throughout this document, especially in Section 3.)
IN CONCLUSION: ENDING OTHERING?

To end othering is an ambitious and complex goal. It is also a process rather than an event, or even a series of events.

Thus, our adoption of a more process-oriented way of looking at impact – through the lens of our Impact Framework. This framework helps us to make smaller shifts and sub-processes visible, en route to our larger goal. From these smaller changes – whether localised and personal (though still extremely significant for those affected), or more systemic and far-reaching – we hope to see the seeds and foundations of more profound change.

Beneath our Theory of Change is the idea that producing a profound shift – such as the End of Othering – requires movement across multiple dimensions of the socio-structural system to catalyse serious impact. If we saw movement in only one or two dimensions of impact, that would call into question the effectiveness of our overall strategy and approach. This is not the case.

PV’s 2020 programming promoted and contributed to enabling movement in all five dimensions of the Impact Framework – and within each context/system with which we work. Above, we have named a range of significant, measurable signs of change in the dynamics that sustain othering, inequality, and the denial of the humanity and human rights of several critical groups on the continent.

Despite the challenges, indeed, the chaos that characterised much of 2020, we are moving in the right direction. There is real cause for hope.

As new connections and threads are woven into the tapestry – into the web of systems that constrain and limit people, or free them to live good lives – the larger picture begins to change. A world without denial of people’s humanity and human rights, without violence inspired by difference and the denial of it, without destructive barriers to human potential and thriving isn’t just around the corner, but it is possible. We see the signs of this in all our programming, and have tried to make this movement visible (at least in broad brushstrokes) in the preceding pages.

This inspires us to deepen our commitment to this work, and to seek ways of expanding it in the coming years. It also encourages us to deepen our application of the Impact Framework to track changes within and across each context – to allow an even richer picture of this process and its effects to emerge over time.

PV’s future programming builds on the progress described above. The last section of this report speaks to where our work in 2020 (and recent years) has led.
DEVELOPMENTS IN PROGRAMMES: FOUR MAJOR, NEW INITIATIVES

Four significant new grants begin (or move into full implementation) in 2021. All build on past successes, relationships and traction, and significantly expand PV’s reach and scale of programming, from eleven countries in 2020, to more than twenty by the end of 2021.

Some of these programmes introduce significant components of regranting (including participatory grantmaking modalities) and an increased emphasis on using social media for influencing and communication. Together they also point towards a global influencing agenda around approach, praxis, and substantive issues in relation to SRH-R, AGYW and LGBTQI+ programming, and to PV’s capacity to speak increasingly authoritatively to these issues at regional and international levels.

The first two programmes are global, multi-country, consortium-driven initiatives which present significant opportunities to deepen PV’s impact, as well as a range of challenges to adapt to – not least the capacity required to manage work at this scale and complexity in ways that remain true to PV’s core approach and values.

The third is an existing programme, initiated in 2020, which will move into full implementation in the coming period.

The fourth is a Namibian programme in which PV steps formally into a very significant national role - managing a key component of the Global Fund programme in-country. This cements several years of work on repositioning PV for influence and impact in Namibia.
i. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Young Women

Goal: By 2025, resilient young women (including LBT women) can claim their sexual and reproductive health and rights, and that these are recognised and respected by society.

We Lead strengthens the potential of young women and their organisations to both claim a more prominent role in broader SRH-R and human rights advocacy spaces, and to develop and pursue their own advocacy agendas. The programme will bring together the rights-holder groups within inspiring national-level Communities of Action (CoAs) and empower these CoAs to build inclusive movements. (CoAs are a development of PV’s thinking about Communities of Interest and Practice, sharing many of the same characteristics.)

Within CoAs, rights-holders will be supported to shape and sharpen their SRH-R advocacy strategies and define joint actions. These spaces will not be formal networks or static platforms, but exciting places shaped by the ideas, actions and learning of the young women and their organisations. From those spaces, we will connect with existing movements, programmes and networks, to ensure that advocacy efforts include and respect the voices, ideas and SRH-R needs of young women.

With the CoAs as a solid base to strengthen local organisations’ and rights-holders’ capacities to promote their SRH-R, we will support them in developing and implementing strategies to shift social and gender norms – starting with their direct environment and gradually reaching the general public. We Lead will help rights-holders influence SRH-R service providers in order to improve their access to SRH-R information and services, and support them in lobbying duty-bearers to adapt laws and policies to enable more young women to realise their rights.

We Lead will leave young women rights-holders with improved capacities, increased self-confidence, stronger networks, new knowledge, and more inclusive movements, so that even after We Lead ends, they are able to continue to claim their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Countries: Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Niger, Mozambique, Lebanon, Jordan, Guatemala, Honduras

Consortium partners: Hivos, Positive Vibes, Restless Development, FCAM, Marsa, FEMNET

Technical partner: M&C Saatchi World Services
iii. The Inclusive Governance Initiative

This programme is led by UNDP with technical support from PV. The programme kicked off in late 2020, but will only move towards full implementation during 2021. The Inclusive Governance Initiative is designed to support countries in sub-Saharan Africa to become increasingly accountable to, and inclusive of, their entire populations, including LGBTQI+ people. This in turn will contribute to better laws, more responsive public sector services, and social norms that affirm LGBTQI+ people’s human rights. In particular, the Initiative aims to include sexual and gender minorities in national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to promote and protect human rights.

Combining country-level work with South-South cooperation, sub-regional activities, and engagement with regional institutions and networks, the IGI will contribute to the following five outcomes:

1. Strengthening the commitment and capacity of African decision makers to include, and respond to, sexual and gender diversity issues (including parliamentarians, judges, human rights officials, religious leaders and others).

2. Strengthening the capacity of LGBTQI+ activists and allies from other SDG-focused social movements (gender equality, poverty alleviation, health for all, etc.) to understand and work with each other and to influence decision makers.

3. Including sexual and gender diversity issues and LGBTQI+ communities in the development and implementation of laws, policies and programs.

4. Stimulating demand for, and use of, relevant ideas, evidence, and innovations.

5. Sustaining and expanding international donor funding for evidence- and community-informed LGBTQI+ and key population regional work in Africa.

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Free To Be Me is the first program of its kind to pave the way for targeted lobbying and advocacy to get issues around sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) mainstreamed in economic development programmes. Although a disproportional number of LGBTQI+ people are poor, unemployed and economically disadvantaged, few actors have addressed this either practically, or structurally. Our alliance aims to fill this gap through a combination of national-level approaches, and foundational work at global level.

The programme will support LGBTQI+ people to assert their rights and initiate change in their communities and countries, and beyond. Similar to We Lead, one key way of doing this will be through Communities of Action (CoAs). Here, people belonging to all parts of the LGBTQI+ rainbow can meet, become stronger, and jointly develop and implement plans to advocate for their rights. Free To Be Me will enable local organisations to become sustainably resourced and to lead on influencing public opinion, legal and policy changes, and access to socio-economic rights.

Countries: Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Consortium partners: Hivos, ILGA World, Positive Vibes

Technical partners: Global Interfaith Network, Workplace Pride and Sogicampaigns

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iv.

The Global Fund

Key Populations Grant in Namibia

This 2021-2023 programme will aim to reduce the incidence of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, gender-based violence among men who have sex with men, transgender women and sex workers (female SW and trans women SW). This will be achieved through an HIV-prevention, treatment and care package that will address:

- Stigma, discrimination, and violence
- Behaviour change interventions
- Community empowerment
- Comprehensive sexuality education
- Gender-based violence prevention and post-violence care
- Social protection interventions
- Community systems strengthening
- Community-based monitoring

Partnering with local LGBTQI+ and sex worker organisations in eight sites, PV will implement a range of LILO methodologies, Setting the Levels (community-led monitoring), and provide on-site linkages to testing, prevention, treatment and pre-exposure prophylaxis, based on individual needs.

This programme area complements the work done by the PEPFAR funded KP Star grant in the remaining Namibian sites and other HIV prevention, treatment and care programmes implemented by national government and other national stakeholders.

DEVELOPMENTS IN STRATEGY

As mentioned earlier in this report, PV’s current strategy will come to an end in 2021. During the course of 2021, participatory reflection, evidence generation and learning process will feed into the development of a new strategy. This process will afford us the opportunity to pause and consider what PV is becoming and to think through some of the tensions and challenges that come with growth and expansion. This process will be informed by some independent input and analysis, as well as input from partners and colleagues. It will also be informed by the outputs of our new MEAL system, of which this document is an early example.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ORGANISATION

The PV team will continue to remain lean and draw on the expertise of a small group of core staff, augmented by associates and consultants as necessary. However, some expansion of numbers and competencies will be required as we embark on these large programmes.

In addition, it will be a priority to continue to deepen and strengthen our practice, and to continue to grow leadership from within the organisation, as well as introducing new managers and other personnel from without. Some specific areas in which additional capacity may be needed include regranting, media work, as well as existing core functions, such as project management and accompaniment.

As we change and grow, we will continue to collaborate creatively with others, in the clear awareness that our relationships and partnerships are our greatest strengths, as well as the primary pathway to the achievement of our impact ambition: the end of othering, in the years to come.
Contributors

This report was compiled using material supplied by:

- Abigail Solomons, Programme Manager
- Benjamin Janse Van Heerden, Programme Manager
- Nadia Thom, Programme Manager
- Oscar Shiweva, Programme Manager
- Zuki Ntshuntsha, Programme Officer
- Michelle Davidson, Finance & Operations Director
- Lee Mondry, Deputy Director
- Flavian Rhode, Executive Director

Contact information

For queries related to this report, please contact Lee Mondry:
lee@positivevibes.org

https://positivevibes.org/