

KATSWE SISTAHOOD



Founded in 2007, Katswe Sistahood is a feminist organisation fighting for the full attainment of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) by women in Zimbabwe. Katswe is a platform that enables young women to mobilise, organise and articulate their needs with regard to SRH education, SRH services and legal protection and helps them to better develop their capacity to understand and pursue their rights. “Rooted in a feminist analysis and women’s lived realities, Katswe creates safe spaces for learning, sharing and consciousness-raising that catalyse women’s collective power to act”. (2019 Annual Report).

Approach and Methodology: The Pachoto Model

Katswe’s programming is centered on 5 main areas:

- Information, dissemination and awareness raising;
- Advocacy;
- Capacity building and training;
- Provision of referrals to key services and commodities; and
- Developing partnerships and networking.

The organization has two main modes of service delivery, one of which is the development of Pachoto Groups which is being utilized in the implementation of this project. Pachoto is a Shona word meaning fireplace and represents the coming together of women to share stories and skills. Katswe has adopted the concept and uses it as a space for discussion and self-awareness with the aim of creating a vibrant feminist movement that has the capacity to analyse and respond to local, national and regional issues that affect women and girls. Each community-based Pachoto group is made up of 20-25 young women, aged between 15-18 and 18-35. The approach has the following goals:

- Girls and young women are informed, are confident and have a critical consciousness.
- Girls and young women can identify and propose tangible solutions to community problems.
- Girls and young women who are talented in the Arts gain opportunities for growth and economic empowerment.
- Girls and young women should achieve emotional, physical, political and economic wellbeing.
- More girls and young women get into leadership positions.

As noted above, the organization engages in rigorous policy advocacy activities. A 2019 example is the Campaign on the unconditional retention of pregnant girls in school. This was adopted as a policy position for inclusion in the Education Act that is currently under review. Another key achievement is the #HappyFlow Campaign which, after a 4 year campaign, has resulted in the availability of free sanitary products in schools.

Learn more about Katswe Sistahood: <http://katswesistahood.net/>