

## **FOCUS AREA: GIRLS EXCEL INITIATIVE**

### **CALL FOR PROPOSAL**

**TITLE: TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS THE PREVALENCE OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/ CUT, TEENAGE PREGNANCIES, PERIOD POVERTY, CHILD MARRIAGES, AND PERFORMANCE IN STEM SUBJECTS BY GIRLS IN MERU COUNTY**

**JUNE 2021**

## **PROPOSAL CALL FOR PARTNERS**

Echo Network Africa (ENA) formerly Kenya Women Holding (KWH) is a women led women serving institution that works with other like-minded partners to catalyze development in Kenya with a plan to expand to the rest of Africa.

ENA seeks local implementing partners such as NGOs, CBOs, CSOs in Meru County to roll out a pilot program in 2021 to address the prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies, and Early Marriages and poor performance by girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Criteria for qualification;

1. Must be a registered NGO, CBO or CSO based in Meru County.
2. Must have been in existence for at least 2 years and demonstrate active community engagement in the thematic areas of Education, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Sexual Gender Based Violence.
3. Have a physical office in Meru County.
4. Have financial statements for the last 2 years.
5. Must submit a proposal as per the call. Download the application template from [www.enafrica.org](http://www.enafrica.org)

Kindly submit your proposal including a summary budget of not more than Kes. 200,000 for a period not exceeding 6 months on soft copy via [info@enafrica.org](mailto:info@enafrica.org) or hard copy to be dropped at Echo Network Africa Office in Nairobi County along Ngong Road off Muchai Drive not later than 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 5 pm EAT.

**NOTE: Only successful organizations will be contacted.**

**Terms and conditions apply!**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Echo Network Africa (ENA) is a women-led women serving institution that works with other like-minded partners to catalyze development in Kenya with a plan to expand to the rest of Africa. Our focus is to be a catalyst for development that propels the empowerment agenda by collaborating with broad community-based organizations and alliances to develop and innovate viable initiatives that enable women to advance their security and prosperity. ENA's focus has positioned the institution as a catalyst for development in the region while simultaneously building onto the gains made in the last three decades of working with women. ENA will maintain its edge by employing a private sector driven model to work with individuals and communities to attain its development objectives and catalyze societal change.

ENA's programs are anchored on four major pillars, namely: Women Empowerment (*Women Inclusion in the Aquaculture Value Chain*), Positioning/Democracy Trust Fund (*Addressing Gender Gaps and Engendering Reform Processes*), Mainstreaming (*Gender mainstreaming - To ensure gender concerns are an integral part of the design and implementation of all programs and policies across all focus areas in the institution*) & (*Tuvuke Peace Initiative - Building Safer and Inclusive Communities*), Girls Excel Initiative (*To catalyze acceptance and commitment by communities in the target areas towards the reduction of Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies and Early Marriages through accelerating the performance and uptake of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects among girls*)

## **GIRLS EXCEL INITIATIVE BACKGROUND**

ENA piloted the Girls Excel Initiative in 2018 in Meru and Homa Bay Counties to address the prevailing problems of teenage pregnancies, period poverty, and poor performance in Mathematics and Sciences among girls in schools. The initiative leveraged on existing governance structures including; schools (head & teachers), school boards, alumnus, community gatekeepers, county governments, community-based organizations, and male champions as allies for the initiative. These were the structures used to set up the advisory committees. The initiative also engaged young women in STEM professions as mentors and as role model for the girl in schools. This complemented the efforts from the teaching staff, volunteer teachers thus increasing enthusiasm among the students through mentorship as well as the great aspiration to secure better scores in Maths and Sciences.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) or female circumcision is a traditional practice that comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female

genitalia, or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination and cause of exclusion against women. It is nearly always carried out on minors and is a violation of the rights of children. The practice also violates a person's rights to health, security, and physical integrity, the right to be free from torture and cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to life when the procedure results in death. While the exact number of girls and women worldwide who have undergone FGM remains unknown, at least 200 million girls and women have been mutilated in 31 countries (UNICEF, Feb 2020). According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2014, FGM prevalence in Kenya was at 21% amongst girls and women aged 15-49. Some communities however recorded more alarming prevalence rates including Somali at 94 percent, Samburu at 86 percent, Kisii at 84 percent, and Maasai at 78 percent. There is some evidence of a trend over time to circumcise girls at younger ages of 5 years and below. Forty-six percent of circumcised women age 15-19 were circumcised at age 5-9, as compared with 17 percent of circumcised women age 45-49 ( KDHS).

The practice of FGM is deeply rooted in tradition and has prevailed in Kenya in at least 22 FGM hot spots even though the country has outlawed this practice under the FGM, Act 2011 along with other institutional, legislative, policy, and administrative measures to curb the practice. On the 8th November 2019, H.E The President of the Republic of Kenya issued a directive for the stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of #EndFGM activities by 2022. Evidently, there is sufficient political goodwill to eradicate FGM. This retrogressive practice is fueled and sustained by community gatekeepers comprising of young men, older men, and women.

When girls undergo FGM, they most likely do not resume schooling. For those that return to school, more than 60% fail to attain the pass mark. Many others are married off since they are presumed to have reached marriageable age by having undergone FGM and more still go on to get pregnant as teenagers. According to a 2018 research by the Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS), Meru County was rated with the second highest burden of teenage pregnancies and motherhood in Kenya at 37 percent. Teenage pregnancies in Kenya have been linked to poverty, high unemployment rate, and negative cultural norms and beliefs including FGM.

## **PURPOSE OF THE ENGAGEMENT**

ENA is seeking likeminded locally based CBOs, CSOs and NGOs to implement in school and community based initiatives in Imenti South Sub County in Meru County to catalyze acceptance and commitment by communities in the target areas towards the reduction of Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies, and Child Marriages through accelerating the performance and uptake of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects among girls.

**Overall Goal:** To catalyze acceptance and commitment by communities in the target areas towards the reduction of Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies, and Child Marriages through accelerating the performance and uptake of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects among girls.

The initiative aims at achieving the following objectives;

**Objective 1:** To contribute to the reduction of FGM, period poverty, teenage pregnancies, and child marriages among girls in Imenti South Sub County in Meru County.

**Objective 2:** To increase reintegration of adolescent teenage girls back to school after child birth in Imenti South Sub County in Meru County.

**Objective 3:** To increase in school interventions to improve performance of girls in STEM subjects in Imenti South Sub County in Meru County.

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- i. Reduced cases of FGM, teenage pregnancies, and child marriages
- ii. Increased reintegration of girls back to school after childbirth.
- iii. Improved performance in STEM subjects by girls in schools.

### **AREA OF FOCUS**

We are seeking organizations with innovative ideas that would improve community actions to reduce the prevalence of FGM, teenage pregnancies targeting communities in Meru County. Proposed work will initially start in Imenti South Sub County and later on scale up to other parts of Meru County.

The innovation is expected to improve girl child education, girls retention in schools, reduce teenage pregnancies, reduce prevalence of FGM, and improve access to menstrual hygiene. The innovation should bring out resilience to COVID 19 pandemic measures.

We seek organizations that have experience implementing community-based interventions, school-based education and life skills initiatives, and use evidence-based programming.

### **EXPECTED DELIVERABLES**

We are seeking a proposal as per the application form.

### **TIMELINES:**

Response to the call for proposal in by 5 pm on 9th July 2021.

The expected implementation time is within 6 months.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

All forms of communication will be via ENA & LIP official email contacts. Virtual meetings may be held randomly depending on the availability of necessary participants.

### **FEEDBACK**

The granting review team will communicate with successful organization/s before the end of July 2021.