

FAWCO TARGET PROGRAM 2019–2022

Health • Empowering Women and Girls by
Ensuring Healthy Lives and Promoting Well-Being



Shortlisted Target Project Proposal

Improving access to family planning and healthcare in rural Kenyan communities, a project of CHASE Africa

Highlights:

Who: Women, men and children in 4 counties in remote central Kenya

What and How:

- Train 18 local Community Health Workers (CHWs) to educate 41,785 women, girls and men about healthcare services and of sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR).
- Host 24 mobile health clinics in rural villages to provide: 12,960 women and girls access to free contraception of their choice for family planning purposes and 28,825 children and adults basic healthcare services.

Budget: \$139,854

87% of funding will go to direct services: i.e., training CHWs, mobile clinics, contraception, medical supplies. 8% of funding will support project monitoring, support, and building capacity, which will contribute to quality work and sustainable outcomes. 5% of funding will go to administrative costs for project implementation.

The Organization

Based in the UK, **CHASE Africa** was originally founded in 2000 as the Rift Valley Tree Trust. For the first 12 years, they were involved in tree planting, water harvesting and fuel-efficient stove projects. Over that time, they met many women who were having more children than they wanted due to a lack of family planning, trapping the family in a cycle of poverty.



In 2012, they changed their name to Community Health And Sustainable Environment (CHASE Africa) to reflect a new focus on community health programs alongside their existing environmental and tree-planting projects. Chase Africa's vision is a world where women and men can access basic healthcare and family planning, resulting in healthier, wealthier families and communities, and more sustainable environments. Their mission is to enable women and men in fragile rural environments to access basic healthcare; empower them to choose the timing, number and spacing of their children and to support environmental sustainability.

They achieve their mission working with local partner organizations, building trust within the communities to break down the barriers to accessing healthcare and family planning. These barriers may include lack of or distance to services, cost, misinformation and cultural norms.

Mobile clinics bring Kenyan Ministry of Health (MoH) clinicians to underserved, remote, rural environments. Prior to the arrival of a clinic, members of the community are recruited as "Community Health Workers" (CHWs), most often women, to build trust before the arrival of the clinics, raise awareness about the services offered, dispel myths about the use of contraception and mobilize households to increase attendance.

The Project

CHASE Africa requests FAWCO support for its project, Improving access to family planning and healthcare in rural Kenyan communities. In remote, rural locations in Kenya, healthcare services and professionals are few and far between. There are only 8.3 nurses per 10,000 patients nationally, well below the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended 25:10,000 ratio.

1 in 5 women in rural Kenya have an unmet need for family planning. A woman unable to access family planning risks starting childbearing in adolescence, giving birth more often than is healthy for the mother or baby, or seeking an unskilled abortion (abortion is illegal in Kenya). Nationally, there were over 400,000 unskilled abortions in 2012, 25% of which resulted in permanent damage to the woman. Women, or girls who give birth at an early age are less likely to complete their education and have less time for income-generating activities, which perpetuates poverty.

This project will address the fundamental human right to sexual reproductive health for women by addressing the unmet need for family planning and healthcare to women and their families living in the remote communities in Baringo, Laikipia, Nakuru and Meru Counties in central Kenya. CHASE Africa seeks to achieve these three objectives:

1. Increase awareness of sexual reproductive health rights for 41,785 women, girls and men.
2. Access to free, high-quality short and long-term contraception for 12,960 women and girls.
3. Improve basic healthcare services for 28,825 children and adults

Working with partner organizations in the local communities, CHASE Africa will meet these objectives utilizing Community Health Workers (CHW) and mobile health clinics run by clinicians from the Ministry of Health (MoH). Central to their approach is the recruitment and training of 18 CHWs. CHWs are trusted community members, often women, who provide information, advice and referrals for medical care and contraception, and encourage attendance of the mobile health clinics. CHWs engage not only the women, but also men in discussion surrounding family planning.

Women will be better equipped to make informed decisions about the spacing and number of children they have, reducing maternal mortality and improving neonatal and early child health. These services help women avoid seeking illegal and unsafe abortions through preventing unwanted pregnancies with voluntary family planning. Once a woman understands the benefits and advantages of using family planning, and has had access to family planning method of her choice, she is likely to overcome the cultural barriers and misunderstandings surrounding family planning and continue using family planning independently. Family planning can change lives, increasing per capita wealth in households by enabling women to choose the spacing and number of children they have.

The 24 mobile health clinics will also provide basic healthcare procedures, HIV testing and counseling, malaria tests, cancer screening, deworming and immunizations, to tend to the health and well being of the children and other adults in the household.

CHWs will ensure long-term community ownership of the project through their continued presence in the communities after project completion. The long-term goal is to create behavioral change so that once women and men see the benefits of healthcare and family planning, they will be empowered to access these services independently and teach them to future generations.

You are invited to learn more about the organization by visiting their website, [CHASE Africa](#). You may request a copy of the application by contacting Christine Rigby-Hall, Target Selection Chair at target-application@fawco.org.