

FAWCO TARGET PROGRAM 2019–2022

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



Shortlisted Target Project Proposal

S.A.F.E. (Safe Alternatives for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Elimination), a project of Hope for Girls and Women Tanzania

Highlights:

Who: Women and girls in the Mara region of Tanzania.

What and How:

- Safe haven for 500 at-risk girls coupled with family counseling services to ensure their safe return home, free from the threat of FGM.
- Provide healthcare and psychosocial counseling to 200 women and 300 girl survivors of FGM.
- Community sensitization through outreach programs and introduction of Alternative Rites of Passage as an alternative to FGM, with a potential reach of 25,000 individuals.
- Income-generating opportunities for 50 women and 50 girls and access to the National Health Insurance Fund plan.

Budget: \$142,062.96

95% of funds will go to programs and services: i.e., psychosocial support, training, community outreach and education, Alternative Rites of Passage celebrations, safe haven, medical and healthcare. 5% of funds will be used to monitor and evaluate programming through the 2-year period.

The Organization

Hope for Girls & Women Tanzania (HGWT) advocates to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practices affecting women and children in Tanzania including but not limited to intimate partner violence, child marriage and other forms of violence. HGWT works to promote and protect the rights of girls and women by providing education to girls and the community at large, strengthening social cohesion, promoting positive social change and increasing the capacity of women and girls to live free of violence through increased access to protection facilities and skills development. HGWT's mission is to promote human dignity and respect for girls and women by:



**HOPE FOR
GIRLS & WOMEN**
Tanzania

- Campaigning for the elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practices that affect children and women in their community
- Promoting respect, human dignity and equality of all human beings
- Empowering communities to break the cycle of poverty and inequality
- Supporting survivors of gender-based violence

The history of HGWT is a history of its founder, Rhobi Samwelly. At age 11, Rhobi lost a close friend to FGM. When Rhobi's parents began to organize her cutting ceremony at age 13, she strongly resisted. She abandoned a plan to run away when she realized she had nowhere to go. With no options, she underwent the ceremony during which she lost so much blood that her mother thought she was dying. These memories inspired Rhobi's commitment to save other girls from a similar fate. Her passion propelled her to become an anti-FGM activist and to establish HGWT. "My dream is to save girls from being cut, and I will never stop until FGM is history in my community." - Rhobi Samwelly

The Project

Hope for Girls & Women Tanzania (HGWT) requests FAWCO support for its project; S.A.F.E. (Safe Alternatives for FGM Elimination). 32% of women and girls aged 15-49 have undergone FGM in Tanzania's Mara Region, where the practice signifies a girl's transition from childhood to adulthood. It is considered honorable and is traditionally believed to increase a girl's value for marriage.

FGM modifies the female genitalia for non-medical reasons, a practice grounded in cultural traditions which risks the lives of girls between the ages of 1 and 15 and results in lifelong health complications. The United Nations warns that this human rights violation can lead to extreme bleeding, recurrent bladder and urinary tract infections, infertility, complications during childbirth and newborn deaths. FGM perpetuates a cycle that sustains gender inequality and limits girls' ability to maximize their full potential in life.

The project's goal is to protect girls from FGM and to foster positive social change within FGM-practicing communities in the Mara Region so that girls and women can live healthy and empowered lives, free from FGM and adverse FGM-related health complications. S.A.F.E. will work directly with individual girls and families, as well as operate at the community level.

Key to their work are HGWT's safe houses which provide a safe haven to girls at risk of FGM. S.A.F.E. will fund the average 21-day stay for 500 women and girls, during which time they will receive counseling, healthcare, medications and access to clean drinking water. Family counseling will be offered to support reconciliation between the girls and their families to ensure their safe return home, free from the threat of FGM. Checks will be made through house calls to verify the ongoing safety of the girls.

In addition, 200 women and 300 girls who have undergone the practice of FGM will be provided with services ranging from extensive 3-day counselling sessions to training in life skills, reproductive health, maternal health and care of newborns.

From their beneficiaries, 50 women and 50 girls will be selected to participate in vocational skills training in tailoring, agriculture, food processing and hotel management. 20 economic groups of 5 individuals will be established and provided with seed money to support their ventures. These 100 women and girls will be able to contribute to their family incomes and will receive the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) card ensuring access to health care services.

In parallel to their work with individuals and families, S.A.F.E. will engage government officials, local clan leaders, church leaders, teachers, parents and girls as they implement a multi-prong strategy to end the practice of FGM in Tanzania's Mara region. Community outreach will include a public PR campaign, 20 school awareness programs, 15 women's village forums and 15 road shows, culminating in 5 Alternative Rites of Passage ceremonies.

Developed according to guidelines created by the UNFPA and the Tanzanian Government, Alternative Rites of Passage (ARP) celebrate a girl's transition into adulthood, respecting the rich culture of the Mara region. ARP ceremonies preserve positive cultural traditions while eliminating the practice of FGM, demonstrating to communities how valued traditions can be maintained without compromising the health, well-being and human rights of girls.

Local facilitators and leaders will be trained on how to carry out all aspects of ARP ensuring local ownership. Following preparations with the girls and their families, the ceremonies will feature music, dancing and public declarations by respected community leaders denouncing FGM. Each girl will also be presented with a Dignity Kit, which includes feminine hygiene products and health educational materials.

Capacity of community leaders and trained facilitators will be developed through this project, thus enabling communities to continue to adopt and implement ARP celebrations instead of traditional FGM ceremonies into the future, creating societal change and bringing an end to this harmful practice.

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