HOPE FOUNDATION FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Women of Hope Abled Differently launched their poshomill business!

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FOREWORD

To our esteemed friends, supporters, and stakeholders

How grateful we are that we get to talk to you through our work compiled into this annual report for 2020. There is no better word to describe this year than resilience. The outbreak of Covid-19 sent the world-Kenya not exempted into a panic mode. Public health concerns dominated talks everywhere with governments and stakeholders grappling with the spread of the Covid-19 virus. While the disease is still here with us, we are slowly learning to embrace the new normal of operating and implementing project activities that align with our strategic objectives.

This year, we focused our efforts on our anti-FGM advocacy, especially through the media. This was important as we experienced such a sharp increase in GBV, FGM, and teen pregnancies. Our efforts also centered on women living with disabilities and elderly women who happen to be most vulnerable during the pandemic. Due to resource hardship, we also had to put more effort into mobilizing more resources to support the various projects within HFAW. Although our efforts were negatively affected by the economic burden of Covid-19 on people, including our main and targeted donors, the resources we successfully obtained we used in supporting financial literacy, business management, and leadership skills for women living with disabilities, loaned a woman group money to support their businesses, facilitated life skills, end-teenage pregnancy and training of community health promoters, media outreach, provided relief-support to elderly and women living with disabilities who are survivors of FGM, and marking key internal days crucial for the empowerment and progress of girls and women. We are also having a hard time getting loans to be repaid due to the pandemic which hurt women's businesses. HFAW continues to make monthly follow up and giving technical support when needed.

Looking forward to 2021, we are highly hopeful of expanding our grant portfolio to improve the sustainability of HFAW projects while still supporting our staff and volunteers.

Also, we hope to continue pursuing our strategic goals especially deepening our agenda to end FGM. Many Nyamira wards are still unreached. Teenage pregnancies and FGM is rampant in some sections of Nyamira. Some children were unwell and HFAW gave support, thanks to our donors. Other issues on our agenda for 2021 include supporting WWD and reaching out and sensitizing the community on issues affecting elderly women who were drastically affected by Covid 19. We will continue building the capacity of our community health workers and promoting community empowerment through ending gender inequalities and achieving economic empowerment.

We remain grateful to you for holding our hands and being our greatest supporter. Indeed, we are encouraged by your generosity, encouragement, motivation, feedback, and guidance. We are excited to see the magic we shall do together in the next year. Thank you again.

Sheila Jane Mutuma (PhD)



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Grace B Mose Okong'o

Board Chairperson

Board Secretary

HFAW CEO



Vision

A society free of gender inequalities

Mission

Reduce gender inequalities through economic empowerment, gender advocacy with FGM as a priority, promote sexual, reproductive health and Support human rights in Kenya through Popular Education Model

Values

- Honesty
- Openness
- Passion
- Excellence
- Innovation

2020 AT A GLANCE

4.5 Million

People Reached through Media Outreach

50 Teachers

Trained on Supporting Ending FGM in schools

40 Women

Benefited from HopeKit Loans worth 450,000/-

514 Youths

Reached with skills and Knowledge on being at the front-line in ending FGM

102 Adults

Trained on Practical skills on how to sensitize the community on Ending FGM, GBV, and child abuse

100 Men Living with FGM

survivors

Sensitized on the effects of FGM on women and how to be allies in Ending FGM

35 Elderly and Women Living Disabilities

Benefited from Covid-19 safety supplies and caution fund

4000 Students

Sensitized on Ending and Staying safe from FGM

100 Teenage

Girls

Empowered through Life Skills Education

450 Readers

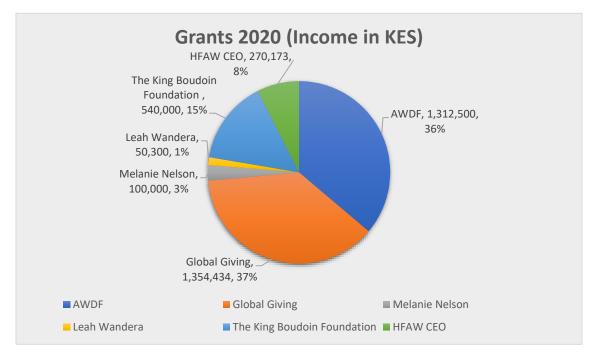
Reached through Ability Magazine

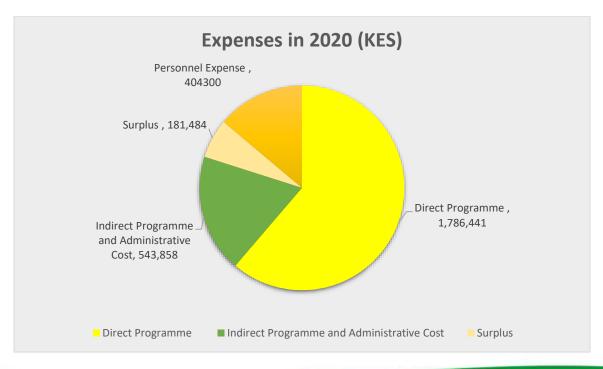
11 schools

Reached with End-FGM and life-skills education outreach

Financial Sustainability: OPERATING REVENUE AND EXPENSES IN 2020

Undeniably, the outbreak of Covid-19 worldwide-Kenya not exempted, has had a severe impact on resource mobilization and prioritization of problems deemed equally critical to the safety and health of the community. Nevertheless, HFAW continue being resilient on progress towards sustainability and diligently using the resources available. The figures below show the income and expenses of the year just ended.





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WWDs showing the first flour milled through the machine after the launch

The goal of the leadership, business management, and financial literacy project was to protect full economic rights and justices for women living with disabilities (WWD) supported by the African Women Development Fund is to promote economic rights of WWD will empower them to organize themselves and participate in the formal in informal economies. The activities of the project included training of 24 women living with disabilities from Kajiado County, conduct monthly mentorship sessions to help cement the skills and knowledge acquiring from the 3-day training, provide financial support to the trained WWDs to start and/or support the growth of their businesses from the HopeFund Kitty, conduct media outreach mainstream and showcase the importance of the project to WWDs and advocate for the economic rights for WWDs, and publish 2 editions of Ability magazine detailing the journey of the women to financial freedom. The project was implemented successfully despite the restrictions of movements as a result of Covid-19 safety protocols enforced by the government of Kenya. It is important to note that the first part of this project was implemented in 2019 and reflected in last annual report.

Achievements

Increased the Capacity of 24 WWDs on leadership, business management, and financial literacy

Through the skills the WWDs acquired after an intensive training by a financial literacy expert, Gender issues expert, and a facilitator on the rights of women living with disabilities in Kenya. To support the deaf in the group, HFAW also included a sign language interpreter. The 3-day training enlightened the

WWDs on various leadership and economic issues that concern them and how they could successfully overcome the socio-economic challenges facing them hence setting an example for other WWDs in the country. By the end of the training, the women had acquired knowledge and skills on saving, budgeting, formulating business ideas, successfully managing businesses, their rights, and how to handle the violations of their rights.

Creating awareness on the economic rights of WWDs through Mass sensitization on Media and publication of the 2 editions of Ability Magazine

The project also led to successful mass sensitization on issues affecting women living with disabilities in Kenya. This was done through a radio outreach programme on the Kenya national broadcaster radio station, Radio Taifa, and design and distribution of 2 editions of Ability Magazine. Consequently, we reached at least 2 million people who listened to the show directly through radio and other online streaming platforms. Also, we reached approximately 450 people through the publishing of the Ability Magazine posted on our social media and embedded on our website (<u>www.hopefaw.org</u>). We encourage the reader to access the magazines to see testimonials from the women who directly benefited from this project.

Provided psychological support to WWDs

At HFAW, we understand that learning is an ongoing process that need to be constantly reinforced. Through this project, we conducted monthly meetings with the trained WWDs. The sessions provided an opportunity to take them through the process of planning and starting a business. Apart from the HFAW team, the financial literacy expert also joined in to guide the WWDs on planning from their finances.

Supporting Digital Inclusion of WWDs through issuing digital phones to the WWD

Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in Kenya, the government enforced various restrictions to prevent the further spread of the disease. The measures banned gatherings including meetings and placed curfew restricting movement between 8:00 pm and 4:00 am. While this created a challenge, especially for conducting our monthly mentorship meetings, on the flipside, it created an opportunity of establishing how the WWDs could virtually attend the meetings. As such, with approval from the African Women Development Fund, we moved the meetings to virtual. Because most of the WWDs could not afford to purchase the digital phones to enable a faster transition into virtual meetings, we issued the phones plus monthly internet bundles for the same. Thankfully, the change in implementation led to success since, after training on using virtual systems, the WWDs continue with the mentorship sessions online.

Supported the financial freedom of WWDs through supporting the launch of a Posho mill through the Hope Fund Kitty

In November 2020, the WWDs launched a posho mill business under their official group name; Women of Hope Abled Differently after securing a loan of 200,000/- from HFAW Fund Kitty. The launch was successful with members of the group giving speeches on how the process and the whole project has been transformative to them and their families: A sample of the responses are as below:

'I remember how encouraged we were at Beacon of Hope during the training on financial literacy. I know God is taking us far. People who did not believe we could be financially stable. I remember there

was a time in life when I was not even invited to social events. A late friend once encouraged me that a time will come when I would be seen as equally a human being. I have seen a lot change in my life just by believing that I am a capable person. Being part of this initiative is a further proof of what we are capable of achieving if women living with disabilities believe in themselves', said Esther.

'Since we started this program, I saw God being faithful. It is because I was not aware of my rights as a PWD. However, now I know them and I will not continue to feel sorry for myself. I do not know how to thank the person who started this initiative. I do not know. Because of it I have friends, I have people who I can confide in. I am very grateful to HFAW and AWDF for sponsoring the training. When we come together, I believe we will progress,' said Faith.

'Although we really struggled to get a house to rent for this posho mill, I am happy that we finally found a house and launched the posho mill. I would like to encourage us to work as a team. I know we will go far', said Pamela.

Apart from the women, in attendance were two men living with disabilities who offered to provide entertainment during the launch. Both were visually impaired; one a DJ and another an upcoming musician. This was significant moment of unity of PWDs in that they support each other something that we could all emulate if we wish to go far. Also, the moment signified that disability of any kind should not be a hindrance to pursue dreams. Below are additional photos of the launch:



Entertainment session during the launch



WWDs demonstrating flour gotten from the poshomill after the launch





Challenges Facing the WWDs

- 1. Even though our WWDs project launch was a huge success, we noticed that WWDs continued to need hands on guidance on how to run the business in terms of managing, accounting and daily supervision. HFAW has continued to provide this support
- 2. WWDs had established a poshomill in an occasion that was not ideal as the income monthly income between launch in October and end of 2020 was very low. So low they could not even pay the poshomill managed nor pay December rent for the premise. HFAW was compelled to step in and support by paying rent and premise manager. HFAW also helped them search for a new more ideal location and evacuated the posho mill. WE even helped pay rent, deposit, costs for mill installation and all kinds of technical support to the WWDs
- 3. The WWDs also informed HFAW that because of low stock they could not turn the business around for maximum production. Again, HFAW stepped in and stocked the posho mill. This dramatically increased the monthly outcome from below \$40 dollars to over \$670 for the three months HFAW was involved. HFAW discovered that additional hands on mentorship, support and strategies is needed to ensure that WWDs can be fully independent and that their project will be self-sustaining. Even though HFAW has been committed to support his important project we have found it to be expensive both in terms of staff time and financial resources. There is therefore critical need for more funds to help lead this project to prosperity and sustenance
- 4. A number of WWDs felt that over time they will need their own businesses in addition to the shared one. This will simplify management issues but will also be more rewarding to each WWDs households. In the new year, HFAW will assess individual WWD for loans, financial and technical support.

COVID-19 RELIEF FOR ELDERLY AND FEMALE PWDs WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF FGM

This project, supported by the International Women Leaders for the World Fund, targets 35 elderly and WWD of Nyamira county, Kenya who are survivors of female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM survivors already live a traumatized life. The unexpected COVID-19 pandemic is causing additional and unprecedented struggle and suffering for elderly and people with disabilities especially women.

As such, the project involves providing 35 elderly and WWD with a gift bag containing food (corn meal, beans, rice, oil, salt); soap, sanitizers and face masks as they have no social support. The project also involves training 20 volunteers to sensitize elderly and WWD on preventative measures of Covid 19. The 20 volunteers will sensitize 400 community men and women on how to protect the elderly and WWD including people living with disabilities (PWD) and media outreach.

Although most activities of this project run throughout the year, so far, HFAW has conducted one radio event and distributed supplies to 36 who were trained on how to stay safe from Covid-19 and become advocates of the end of FGM.

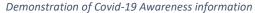
After receiving the knowledge, skills, and gifts, some of them burst into song, such so voluntarily out of sheer joy. IWLWF brought so much love and care to these women. We are just so grateful. We invited 35 women, over 45 turned up without invitation plus truly needy men. We only managed to assist one additional woman due to her very extremely needy situation. For the other women HFAW and the leaders explained to them to bear with us. Without promising we told them that we will try and find further funding. We took their names down. It was very hard to see their emotional disappointment of

not getting especially the blanket. We will submit some photos and videos about the event. Everything was conducted in Ekegusii local language as many of the participants do not speak a second language, Swahili or an official language English. Therefore, we are faced with financial challenges to allow interpretation. This event was covered by media on that evening and the morning news bulleting which raised awareness of the vulnerabilities of elderly and WWD and the need for communal support. Moving forward, HFAW is planning on conducting the remaining the activities and we shall use the feedback received from the earlier activities to make the remaining activities more impactful.

"We are so grateful to you for remembering us. We have received blankets, sanitisers, masks, food and hygiene supplies, cash, and knowledge. May God add you abundantly, we are so grateful!", Regina Bwari.

Assistant Chief addressing the participants

A section of the Elderly and WWDs











LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION TO END TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Life skills Education (LSE), can influence youth behaviors in a way that improves sexual reproductive health outcomes. Young girls have unique health and development needs, they are faced by enormous challenges such as teenage pregnancies which often compromise their health and future. Every year an estimated 21 Million girls aged 15- 19 become pregnant in developing regions. Kenya demographic health survey (2014), indicates that 15% of girls age 15-19 has at least one birth, where the prevalence rate of our intended project area Nyamira has the second highest rate of early childbearing at 27.8%.

With the Life Skills Education to End Teenage Pregnancy, HFAW has been doing various work as shown below in bullets. We appreciate the support given by Melanie Nelson, Lisa Fontes, Carol Larkin and everyone who donates to Life Skills Education through Global Giving.



Public Health official during Life Skills Education Outreach at a school in Nyamira

Group photo during a school visit

Achievements

- This year, we reached 73 young members of the community between 12 and 15 years with life skills education through an event held at Botana, in Nyamira County. Accompanied by 2 public health officers attached to the county, empowered the young girls, boys, teenagers, and teachers with skills on how to be vocal against the rise of teenage pregnancy in the region.
- We have more teachers engaged in following and reporting to HFAW on the violation of rights at home or school. This is an improvement.
- Also, through this Programme, we formed a great relationship/partnership with the public health department at the county-level. This is because, during the visits related to this Project, at least two public health officers accompanied HFAW Community Health and Human Right Promoters to the field hence solidifying the messages and amplifying the skills that we shared with beneficiaries.

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HFAW's Gladys, facilitating during one school outreach session

Fontes, Carol Larkin, and other donors through Global Giving.

Gladys handing over End-FGM posters to the headteacher

"If I get anybody supporting FGM again, or planning to cut a girl, I will educate them on the effects of FGM. I have heard what I have not heard before, kindly come back when all the students will be available", -Mogaka

Achievements

With this Programme we successfully taught Women, men, and children the myths surrounding FGM, and the long-term damage the practice inflicts on girls, their families, and communities:

- We reached 11 schools-Karantini Primary school in Nyamakoroto, Machururiati, Kiamwarimu primary, Don Bosco, Hillview Complex, Ritongo primary school, Nyakongo, Riamoni Mixed Secondary, and Eronge secondary school. In these schools we reached approximately 4000 students and 50 teachers.
- We reached 250 youths in Gachuba, Kiang'ende village Masaba, Enchoro polytechnic, Kebirichi, and Ritongo Youth Polytechnic with skills and knowledge on how to be on the frontline in ending FGM from the community.
- We collaborated with public health officers attached to the department of health, Nyamira County, who not only empowered the participants on the health effects of FGM, but the need to adhere to Covid-19 safety protocols.

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END-FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION -SCHOOL OUTREACHES

With this project, HFAW targets using popular education approach to teach the community on the health effects of FGM and the need, root causes of the practice, its impact not only on the girl but the whole community and what they can do as a community to end and prevent it. HFAW is humbled by the support it has received for this project from Melanie Nelson, Lisa

TRAINING OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTERS

This project is rooted in the strong belief of the potential of women in Kenya which is significantly hampered by GBV, FGM, poverty, illiteracy e.t.c. Gender discrimination against women is chronic in Kenya. The 2010 constitution provides them protections but there is no implementation of laws. Women toil in peasant life, languish in poverty, lack reproductive healthcare, experience rampant domestic violence, HIV/AIDs and are ignorant of their human rights and harmful cultural practices like FGM. During 2020, with support from Melanie Nelson and other donors on Global Giving, we made significant steps in training of trainers programmes courtesy of generous support from supporters on Global Giving.

"You have taught us very well, thank you for that, please can you help us with pads to support vulnerable girls even as we move in the community to implement the skills and knowledge that you have taught us", -Nancy.



Group Photo during one of CHHRP Training



Participant sharing experience on the training

Key Achievements

- Through the engagement of Community Health and Human Rights Promoters, we reached at least 100 men living with FGM survivors who learned how to be part of the campaign to end FGM thereby assuring the current and future generations of girls and women safety from FGM. Through this, we got male allies who have been instrumental in not only presenting the male perspective of FGM but also holding interpersonal forums in a bid to bring to strongly advocate for the end of FGM.
- We directly reached 102 adults at Girango Dispensary and Rigena, Nyamira with skills and knowledge on how to speak and train members of the community on transformative change i.e ending FGM, GBV, child-abuse, poverty, and teenage pregnancy.

MEDIA OUTREACH

In 2020, we conducted media outreaches to stations (local and national) based in different areas of the country. Media is commonly referred to the 4th estate and watchdog because of the oversight that it provides in various socio-economic areas of the country. Generally, HFAW conducted 11 outreaches to two radio stations (Egesa FM and Radio Vuna), one TV station-K24, and a podcast station (Men-End FGM podcast host showed that 523 listeners followed events live and advocacy through mainstream that have more than 4 million listeners country-wide.



(From left) HFAW's Gladys during an interview at Radio Vuna

(Top Right) HFAW's Lancer Wao participating in the End-FGM podcast

Achievements

- Through the media outreach, we mainstreamed conversations on the need for everyone to advocate for the end of FGM because of its severe health impacts on girls and women, feedback from the podcast host.
- We strengthened our partnership with the media who are very critical in triggering and driving nation-wide conversations on key issues because of the wide-reach nature of the platform.
- We increased the capacity of the members of the community to speak about FGM, GBV, childabuse, teenage pregnancy, teen marriage, school-drop-out, and other pressing social issues in a constructive way that can lead to solutions that keep girls and women safe.

ECONOMIC-EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN-HOPE KITTY

Women play a significant role in driving the economy. The Harvard Business Review shows that women now control at least \$20 trillion of the world economy and the amount is estimated to increase to \$28 trillion in the next five years. This gives HFAW hope that the businesses it is helping successfully manage through supporting women in rural Kenya with financial literacy skills and loans from the HopeFund kitty is making a significant difference in cementing the contributions of women in driving the world economy.



HFAW's Gladys handing over group loan to a Mong'oni Group representative

This year, HFAW issued 250,000 to 16 women from Mong'oni Women group to support them in growing and expanding their businesses. Apart from this, HFAW continued with loan collection. Sadly, the repayment was not as encouraging as we had seen before. We understand that Covid-19 hardly hit businesses and we continue to stand in solidarity with the loankit beneficiaries as we encourage to continue making payments so that other women in need of the loans can have access to them as well.

SUPPORTING STAFF AND COMMUNITY TO SAIL THROUGH ECONOMIC HARDSHIP DURING THE OUTBREAK OF COVID-19

The outbreak of Covid-19 undoubtedly created challenges to all members of our community. The pandemic hit at a time when many families were barely surviving following the rising cost of living in the country. As the country was grappling with these challenges, the government in a bid to control the spread of the disease, enforced measures which limited movements and meetings. The fast transition and changes of operations affected everybody-including staff. Thus, through the support of Global Giving, HFAW received a hardship allowance grant of \$1000 from the Global Giving organization.



Some of HFAW staff during staff retreat

This grant helped HFAW staff in self -care activities as they are often overworked and underpaid due to limited resources. Other activities in the short project included capacity building (see report below on Motivating staff), advocacy in the community through media and collaboration with community health volunteers to create awareness on Covid-19 safety measures, continue sensitizing the community on the health effects of FGM, and promote respect for children's rights during a time when parents and guardians were dealing with a lot of socio-economic issues. Through this project, we reached 264 school-young adults at Riamoyi secondary school, 300 adults in the community, and over 40,000 people who directly listened to the radio shows.

• Supporting the National Efforts of Ending the Spread of Covid-19

In partnership with public health officers from the Ministry of Health, Nyamira County, HFAW CHHRPs sensitized community members on the outbreak of Covid-19 and safety measures such as washing hands, maintaining social distance, and wearing masks.

• Supporting the Protection of Children's Rights during the enforcement of partial Lockdown

During the enforcement of the partial lockdown in Kenya, there were numerous reports of children being physically and emotionally abused with no tangible response from children's officers. Upon learning this, HFAW moved in quickly by mobilizing its community health volunteers to continually advocating for the protection of children even through interpersonal meetings and radio.

• Motivating Staff to Sail through the Socio-Economic Challenges created by Covid-19 through team building and cash support

As part of building the capacity of HFAW staff members, we held a staff retreat in Rongai for 4 members. During the meeting, we discussed how to revive the HFAW Fund, design a new loaning policy, make the

Female CHHRPs proactive, streamlining communication and knowledge management, resource mobilization, formulating new projects, and making the organization self-sufficient. The team building not only provided a platform to check on staff members but also allowed the team to have conversations critical to the successful running of the organization. Consequently, the team created action plans surrounding the HopeKit fund, new loaning policy, possible recruitment of additional CHHRPs, resource mobilization, and streamlining and knowledge management in the organization.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2021

Mosiala during discussion session on why women are not reporting GBV

The international women's day 2021, under the theme, 'Choose to Challenge' was marked through reaching out to 27 women from the Kiang'ende Village, Nyamira County. 2 HFAW CHHRPs and 4 facilitators from the Ministry of Health, department of public health facilitated the sessions. Through this event, we chose to challenge the FGM, GBV, and abuse of children's rights in the region. The objective of the outreach was to empower the rural women from Kiang'ende village on how to challenges issues that hinder their development.

"I thought that only women are affected by GBV. But I have also realized that men and children are also affected since GBV. When GBV Happens, the whole household is affected. The problem is triggered by lack of awareness and we are so grateful to you for letting us know that even ordinary women like us can end the practice. What I know is that most women do not report when they are battered because of shame or do not trust in the court processes given the many reports of corrupt officers.", said Esther.

"Most women do not report GBV because they fear if they do, they will be thrown out of their homes by the husbands. But now we know that staying silent encourages GBV and puts more women at risk", added Mosiala.

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16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBV

Gender-Based violence continues to be a thorn in the assuring the safety and health of women and girls in Kenya. It is a severe form of inequality and discrimination against females and threatens the group from fully realizing its potential. In 2020, HFAW conducted a social media -Facebook and Twitter, campaign to create awareness on the effects of GBV on the safety, healthy, and development of girls and women. The campaign occurred for a week and it reached 577 people cumulatively.

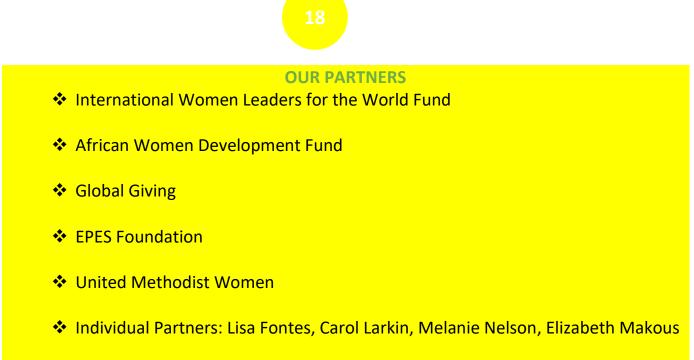
ZERO TOLERANCE DAY FOR FGM INTERNATIONAL DAY

Under the theme, "*No Time for Global Inaction: Unite, Fund and End FGM*", HFAW held a school outreach at Esani Secondary school. Through this activity, HFAW reached 27 girls. Our target was lower because we wanted an intimate session where we could listen to challenges facing the girls and how they wished HFAW, other stakeholders and duty bearers could help them. Consequently, we learned that 14 of them had children, 4 were pregnant, and 2 reported having problems with their reproductive system. This was truly a sad state and we hoped it was the first step towards finding a solution. At the time this report was being developed, the 27 girls had received hygiene supplies (sanitary towels, soap, pants) and cash support and one of them was supported to seek medical care for advanced Urinary Tract Infection courtesy of a grant received from Leah Wandera, Former Acting CEO HFAW.

"I am so grateful for HFAW for helping us. This is the second time I am meeting the organization and I am so happy that this time, they came with very important hygiene supplies. May God continue blessing the organization.", Damaris Gesare, a student at Esani who benefited from the supplies.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Even though HFAW's work is deep and reaches a huge number of beneficiaries, HFAW has limited funds. To help strengthen our resource base individual donors have helped in different ways. We passionately thank our committed individual donors on global giving including Lisa Fontes, Carol Larkin,and Melanie nelson. Melanie Nelson went out of her way to fund a professional grant writer with more than \$1000 to support our grant writing efforts. With strong reference letters written on HFAW's behalf in addition to these efforts as well as our internal efforts we see a bright future.



THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US THROUGHOUT 2020, HERE IS TO A SUCCESFUL 2021 OF ENDING FGM AND EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY

