**Project Title: Eliminating Gender Based Violence for Girls in Communities**

**Applicant:** Tag a Life International Trust(TaLI)
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**Country of Implementation:** Zimbabwe

**Region of Project Implementation: Africa**

**Project Duration: On Going**

**Budget: 10 000.oo**

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| **Project Description** This project responds to Gender Based Violence (GBV) against the girl child in Pre-adolescent, Adolescents and Early Reproductive health ages in the chosen Zimbabwean communities. GBV has led to HIV infections and vulnerabilities in girls in the Zimbabwean communities. The most significant sources of GBV that lead to HIV in girls in our society are G**ender Inequalities, Male Norms/Sexism and Lack of Access by Girls to Information and Productive Resources.** Many attempts to end GBV have isolated men and boys as solutions to these problems and this project seeks to involve them as part of the solution. We are currently working in Shurugwi District in schools.**The Status of Girls and Women:** Have you ever thought about the fact that majority of the people living with HIV are girls and women? In Zimbabwe 26% of new infesctions are amongst girls and young women ages 15 to 24 and that girls are 6times more vulnerable to abuse and vulberabilites than bo. This indicates a problem rooted in gender imbalances and, do we wonder why it has gone from generation to generation, same problems occur for girls and women one generation after the other? **Under this project called ‘Giving a Girl Child a Chance, One Girl at a Time’:** One of the objectives is to shift **boys from a ‘would-be-perpetrators’ position to become partners in curbing GBV against girls**, as well as **empower girls** to change their lives and those of girls around them**.** The project will also seek to **sensitize ‘the custodians** of the children’s rights’ that is the families and communities, as well as **partner with men and women** in creating safe environments that are supportive for the attainment of the girls rights and safety. Fathers have set the cultural and religious practices that have created vulnerabilities in girls such as early marriages, and various male norms/sexism that make girls and women subjects and second class citizens who have no right to speak into and make choices for their lives. These practices perpetuated abuse by boys to girls and the same boys when they grow up to their wives. At the same time girls have also been taken advantage of by older man and forced into marriages, or drop out of school to marry and earn the family dowry, which most often make the girl child exposed to HIV as she is normally unable to negotiate for safe sex and exposed to polygamy. This kind of environment does not only force girls to receive abuse from others, but it makes the girls believe that there is nothing good that can come out of them, and some of them voluntarily get themselves into trouble like getting involved with teachers and older man in communities who impregnant them and force them to drop out of school. This perpetuates poverty and vulnerability to HIV.This project has been crafted with a holistic approach in mind. It will target boys, girls, men, families and communities as this comprise the girl children’ environment. It seeks to shift the boys from ‘would-be-perpetrators’ to partners in championing the girls rights. It also seeks to empower the girls to be assertive about their own lives, to help themselves and other girls. Then finally targets the communities to provide a platform and environment in the communities for girls to claim their rights. This is the unique strategy that our organization TaLI brings to this world in the fight for the girls’ rights.Geographical Location and Description of Activities |
| **Engaging Boys to Challenge Gender Inequalities, Male Norms and Sexism behaviors:** To shift the boy children from a place of ‘would-be-perpetrators’ to patnerships in making communities a safe place for girls, TaLI **will Train identified boy leaders in schools on gender equality, cultural and religious male norms that expose girls to their vulnerability of violence, HIV, sexism behaviors and Reproductive Health.** This project targets to train 2 pupils (1 boy and 1 girl), 2 teachears/fascilitators from each of the 320 Schools in the 4 Districts of Shurugwi, Kwekwe and Gweru. There shall be 8 trainings in each District where schools will be grouped to come up with a number of plus or minus 40 participants, thus 10 schools in each training. Altogether this will target plus or minus 80 Schools per district. The groupings will be done according to geographical location of the schools. In schools training shall be two days per group. TaLI has a working relationship with the Provincial Offices of the relevant Ministries(Education and Gender) which are responsible for the targeted districts. The identification of students, both boys and girls shall be done throught the initial meetings with the District offices of the Ministry of Education who will communicate with the school authorities to identify students and teachers who are capable to participate and lead in clubs. In the Initial meetings between TaLI and the Ministries, the Training Schedules and Schools Groupings shall be done. Communication between TaLI and the schools shall be through the Ministry of Education’s District office. This is also to obtain support from the ministry as well as engage them for ownership of the project in the schools. Once the training is done in an area of a district, the Students, (boys and girls) with the help of their trained Fascilitators(teachers in their schools) are expected to begin clubs in their school. At the end of the Schools Group trainings, TaLi shall present a Copy of the Curriculum to each School which outlines the topics they trained on and how to run and fascilitate in their school clubs. Experimental methods will be used in training leaders, and they will be encouraged to engage these methods in their clubs to enhance learning. Edutainment in the schools by club members through dramas, poems, debates on assemblies and in classes is expected to spread the information even to those who do not attend clubs, sinse the clubs are voluntary. More support IEC materials are given to each school which is expected to be kept under the schools custody for use in the weekly meetings. To ensure a take-off of the clubs by the trained Schools TaLI will require each school to have an official Club launch day, any day one month after training. This will allow the school to have run the club for a few weeks. This launch activity will work as a publicity activity of the programme to raise awareness of the clubs to all students within the school, as well as present both the School and TaLI an opportunity to review any challenges and successes. This will also act as a monitoring and evaluation tool for club launches. The fascilitators are expected to submit monthly reports of club operations in their school which will feed into the quarterly report to the funder. TaLI shall visit each school at some point after training again to offer support in the clubs and to learn any new things from the clubs.The above described strategy and activities will not only focus on boys as change makers, but will also seek to **empower the girl child with her reproductive health rights, HIV information & Prevention(which includes Post Exposure Prophyluxis-PEP), Gender, Confidence Building, raising an awareness to Male norms, Gender inequalities and sexism that hinder their development as they are trained on assetiveness and advocacy for themselves, peers and communities.** As noted in the National Behaviour Change Programme, girls and youths at large are the least reached by this information and yet girls are the most at risk together with young women. We believe this engaging and training boys as advocates for girls issues amongst their peers and communities will fascilitate the beginning of a change process in boys on individual levels, in the way they conduct and view girls and women, bringing them to a place of equality and partnership, renouncing old male norms and sexist behaviors that disempower girls and expose them to conditions that lead to HIV. Once this happens, boys are potential partners in challenging constructed structures and beliefs amongst their peers in clubs and school, in the home and community that expose girls to GBV and HIV. We also believe that the trained girls begin to impact other girls in clubs in assetiveness and empowerment, which will make them rise up and claim their rights in all spheres of their lives. The force between boys and girls rising up for safer and equal rights based communities will leave a mark in their communities and change the fate of girls and their future, after all, an HIV free generation is almost possible! **In our programmes we have seen this happen. We have had testimonies of boys who went home and challenged their parents and began to help their sisters in household chores. We have boys who have been part of groups and are leading gender clubs in a few schools.** **Men and Women Speaheading Equality and Girls Rights as well as Challenging Male Norms and Sexism in the Communities**: As highlighted earlier on, it would be of great significance if men where engaged in championing interventions for safety of girls in their communities. Man have the power and knowingly and unknowingly have perpetruated the suffering of girls and women, some marrying the girls young, others sending them to get married while the rest make them second class citizens compared to boys. It was revealed that 74% of girl child abused was from the people they know. Yet most of it go unreported or unchallenged. Man do decide the fate of the family including the standard of life for girls and their protection. It is against that background that this project seeks to **target and educate man on the impact of GBV against girls in their communities, and to engage the men and women to curb this violence in our communities, at the same time educating them of the possible benefits of community development if girls where not supressed!** In Zimbabwe, because women have been raised in the same partriachal communities that exposes girls to different vulnerabilities like early marriages, gender inequality and HIV**, w**omen have passed this supression from their mothers to their daughters. They socialised their daughters to be wives at a very tender age through the words they use when she fails to attain certain chores(which are obviously not her age). It is in this age that girls are socialised to look forward and dream of being good wives while boys are playing, developing their minds and are dreaming of big things. Therefore mothers are important target in this project.To engage the men and women in their different roles towards a ‘Safe World for the Girls’ in their communities, in this project; Community Peer educators comprising of ‘Men and Women’ will be trained in issues gender and equality, of male norms, cultural and religious and cultural practices that expose girls to vulnerabilities. We believe there is more impact and a possible change when men hear from other men, and when women hear from other women. They will stop, listen, and be challenged to treat their daughters right! This strategy is mainly to support the school strategy so that when the girls and boys mention the issues in their communities, the custodians of their rights i.e their families and communities would have head about it and conversations between the young(boys and girls) and old(families and communities) begin, which will change the norms and culture of GBV against girls thereby lowering HIV infections and enhense general development of girls in these communities.To archieve the above engagement of men and women, TaLI shall train 3 Peer Educators(comprising men and women) per ward from the 3 Districts. A total number of plus or minus 24 wards per district will be trained for peer education in their communities. A total of +\_72 Peer educators will be trained per District, bringing the total number of Peer Educators in the 4 Districts to plus or minus 216. To train the 72 Peer Educators per District, there will be divided into 2 groups per District, thus each district shall have atleast 2 training groups for the Peer Educators. Once trained, the peer educators will be given educational materials in venecular languages that they will use and distribute during their trainings in the communities. They are expected to then identify village representatives whom they will work with and train to also sensitise their communities. The Peer Educators are expected to sensitise the communities on the issues of gender through ‘Village Head’s Community Gatherings’ which they are expected to have once or twice a month for 3 months(this will be decided on by the Peer Educators who will take into account what works for their communities). TaLI shall have initial meetings with local leaders that comprise of local ministies(Department of Social Welfarre, Minsitry of Women Affairs, Gender & Community Development, Police), local leaders(Chiefs, Head Men) and relevant stakeholders(other organisations like the Womens’ Coalition of Zimbabwe local chapter, Child Line) to introduce the programme, Learn from the Communities and develop partnerships.as sensitisation meetingsIn each district, prior meetings will be held at the beginning of the programme to sensitise the local leaders and gain their support of the programme. At the initial meetings in each District, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development shall host TaLi as they have done in the past, this usually enables locals to buy into the programme.TaLI for any developments in their communities, or reciprocally, for any information TaLI might have to further their knowledge and development. This will give TaLI an open door to always know what is happening in the communities.Structures like the Child Protection Committee will continue to run independent of TaLI and shall be handed over to the Department of Social Services as they continue to run. Efforts to fundraise for continued periodic supply and updating of IEC Materials especially in school clubs shall be done by the organization. In the Curriculum the Schools shall use, and in most of the IEC materials which will be developed under this project, TaLI shall compile a list of Services Organizations in these communities where children can go, refer their peers or communities for various needs ranging from Counseling, HIV information, HIV Testing, Child Abuse, Reporting various Cases, etc. |
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