

FAWCO TARGET PROGRAM 2019–2022

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



Shortlisted Target Project Proposal

Stepping Stones to Health and Well-Being, a project of Safe Spaces Foundation

Highlights:

Who: Young women and girls in the Eastland slums of Nairobi, Kenya

What and How:

- Create a Recreational Semi Juniors Basketball Team adding 30 girls to the Healthy Bodies program.
- Expand the reproductive health program from 500 to 1500 girls by 2022 and enrich the program with a new e-learning tool, the World Starts With Me (WSWM).
- Fight malnutrition by providing health checks and nutritional support to 60 basketball players, 90 participants of WSWM, 30 peer educators and 10 staff members annually by 2022.
- Establish a community e-reader library with content geared toward reproductive health, nutrition and early learning, and facilitate reading groups for 400 girls and mothers with young children.

Budget: \$139,850 of \$330,525

FAWCO will join with seven foundations to form a Sponsor Consortium* to fully fund this project. FAWCO funding will cover 42% of the overall project budget.

The Organization

Safe Spaces Foundation was registered as a not-for-profit in 2016 in the Netherlands to support Safe Spaces, which was founded in 2008 to help girls in the Eastland slums of Nairobi save their own lives. The mission is to provide a safe space for girls and young women to learn, develop and grow into strong self-advocates to escape poverty, violence, poor health and systematic exclusion. The goal is to build a stronger generation of young women who are confident leaders and can make a difference in their communities: The motto “I’m the change” underlines the importance of self-empowerment. Each girl is taught that she has the power to protect, care for, and stand up for herself and to take charge of her life and her future.



Peninah Nthenya Musyimi began Safe Spaces with just three girls who wanted to get out of the slums. Now there are 1200 of girls in the program. By teaching herself to play basketball and obtaining a basketball scholarship, Peninah became the first woman in the Nairobi slums to work her way through school and university. Her story reflects those of the young women she now works tirelessly to help. Her pathway was fraught with obstacles, but she embraced these challenges and viewed them as her own personal stepping stones on her life journey to success.

Safe Spaces key programs offer academic scholarships, health and hygiene training, life skills and leadership training, sports and vocational training. Through Peer Education, girls share their knowledge with one another, their families, and the wider community. Measurable outcomes include: improved school attendance, increased numbers of girls successfully completing secondary education, elimination of child marriages/pregnancies, improved personal safety/awareness, and reduction in STDs/HIV infections.

* Sponsor Consortium is made up of the following foundations: Safe Spaces, Triodos Bank, Koornzaayer, Cottier, Dioraphte, Wings of Support, and Mars Wrigley.

The Project

Safe Spaces would like FAWCO support for its Stepping Stones to Health and Well-Being project. Among the 75% of Nairobi's population that live in slums, young women continue to be the most severely affected by poverty, violence and systematic exclusion. Beyond facing discrimination, social and economic vulnerabilities put girls at serious risk of forced early marriages, early and unplanned pregnancies, maternal mortality, malnutrition, disease and violence. Their plight is invisible to the community. Over time, they begin to believe they are invisible, even worthless.

The overall goal of this multifaceted project is to provide girls with the tools they need to achieve health and well-being: teach them to stay healthy, get an education, learn a trade and achieve economic empowerment. With these tools they can alter the trajectory of their lives and those of their families. They learn to meet challenges head on and see them as stepping stones bringing them closer to their own goals.

Building on their original focus on girls' basketball, this project will add a third basketball team to their roster providing 30 girls the opportunity to join the Recreational Semi-Junior Team and participate in their Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds! program. The objective is to instill sports and training discipline so girls learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe and to gain self-confidence. FAWCO will provide 17% of the funding for this program component.

Safe Spaces teaches reproductive health through its Information is Power afterschool program. This project will expand the reach of this program by doubling the number of peer educators and increasing the number of girls served from 500 to 1500 annually by 2022. The program will be enriched with the addition of weekend and holiday workshops utilizing a new e-Learning tool, the World Starts With Me (WSWM). Girls will learn about reproductive health, menstruation, safe sex, prevention of STDs and HIV infection, while gaining computer skills. FAWCO will provide 17% of the funding for this program component.

FAWCO will provide 100% of the funding to launch new programs to fight malnutrition. The symptoms of malnutrition, such as small stature or lethargy, are often misunderstood in families. Adequate nutrition is especially critical for women: malnutrition wreaks havoc not only on a woman's health but also the health of her children. The project's objective is to fight malnutrition through regular health checks (weight, height and BMI) coupled with nourishing meals and awareness-raising to help the girls grow better, build muscle tone and improve their general level of health. By 2022, the program will serve the 60 players on the two junior basketball teams, 90 participants of WSWM, 30 peer educators and 10 staff members.

In addition, the project seeks to establish a new community e-reader library to improve women's and girls' health and well-being through education and awareness raising. The goal is to create an informal learning environment to combat "lack of information" (regarding reproductive health, nutrition and early learning) – one of the key challenges that threaten the health and well-being of women and girls. The library will facilitate reading groups for 400 girls and mothers with young children. FAWCO will provide 52% of the funding for this program component.

Safe Spaces views young women as a community's strongest asset. Their good health and well-being creates a continuous circle for community health. As they grow and develop with the support of Safe Spaces, they learn to care for their own health and best interests, they achieve economic empowerment, invest in their families, and teach their children to follow the same path to health and well-being. The community absorbs these benefits and the former unequal power balance is removed. Girls and young women are seen as valuable assets to the community and they are supported, instead of being ignored – and the circle begins again. In this way, and as a grassroots organization, Safe Spaces Nairobi is deeply embedded in the community and can affect change from the bottom up. Safe Spaces also encourages the concept that learning never stops and everyone can teach: through its Peer Educators and Community Outreach programs, it creates long-term local community ownership.

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