

## **GEWEC- Chanua Dada Sanitary pads Concept paper**

**Name of the Organization:** Gender Empowerment & Wellness Centre (GEWEC)

**Project Title:** Chanua Dada Sanitary Towels Concept paper

**Project period:** 6 Months

**Project Location:** Baringo County

**Physical Location:** Chambai Springs, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

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## **Background of the organization**

Gender Empowerment & Wellness Centre (GEWEC) is a community- based organization based in Baringo County, formed in 2015 and that seeks to promote the wellbeing of women and children at the grassroots levels through community- based initiatives such as women empowerment initiatives, life skills education, mentorship programs, HIV/ AIDS programs, Sexual and Gender Based Violence programs and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) education and provision of SRH commodities among others.

## **Mission**

We empower women and children through community- based initiatives that seek to improve their lives for a better living.

## **Vision**

We envision an engaged community in which women and girls have achieved equity, safety, and reproductive freedom, and access to opportunity.

## **Past Activities**

- I. Since inception in 2015, GEWEC has conducted over 50 mentorship sessions in different schools and churches in Baringo County under the Chanua Dada Mashinani (empower girls from rural areas) campaign
- II. GEWEC has distributed over 5000 sanitary towels to young girls in and secondary schools since inception
- III. GEWEC recently conducted a small participatory research on the emerging trends on Female Genital Mutilation in Baringo County.
- IV. GEWEC has recently launched annual mentorship sessions targeting young people in primary & secondary schools and tertiary and university students in Baringo County. This forum also brings parents and guardians together and aims at creating synergies amongst all stakeholders in improving education in the community
- V. In partnership with the Social Development Office, GEWEC helps in identifying the vulnerable groups such as persons living disabilities and lobbying for their inclusion in welfare services such cash transfers.
- VI. In partnership with the Office of the Woman Representative, Baringo County, GEWEC conducts a rehabilitation programme for the alcohol and drug addicts in Baringo County.

## **Justification**

According to the African population and health Centre (APHRC), Limited access to safe affordable, convenient and culturally appropriate methods for dealing with menstruation has far reached implications for rights and physical, social and mental well-being of many women and adolescent girls

in Kenya, it undermines sexual and reproductive health and has been shown to restrict access to education. Recently on citizen TV there was a shocking story about young girls in Marigat, Baringo county who use chicken feathers, goat skin, soil and even leaves during their periods due to lack of options, as shocking as this can be, it is happening, many girls are forced to use unhygienic methods to keep dry during their monthly period. (the story can be viewed by following the link [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hn822TrKXo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hn822TrKXo)).

A 2016 UNESCO report estimates that one in 10 girls in Sub-Saharan Africa is absent from school during their menstrual cycle. Data from the Ministry of Education indicates that a girl absent from school for four days in 28 days (month) loses 13 learning days equivalent to two weeks of learning in every school term. In an academic year (nine months) a girl loses 39 learning days equivalent to six weeks of learning time.

A girl in primary school between grades 6 and 8 (three years) loses 18 learning weeks out of 108 weeks. Within the four years of high school a girl can lose 156 learning days equivalent to almost 24 weeks out of 144 weeks of learning. In November 2017, the government removed duty charged on raw materials used in production of sanitary pads, giving manufacturers a shot in the arm. Before the concession, raw materials used in the making of sanitary pads attracted value added tax (VAT) at 16 per cent and excise duties of 25 per cent. This was despite sanitary pads being exempt from VAT and attracting zero excise duty

The Basic Education Amendment Act places the responsibility of providing free, sufficient and quality sanitary towels on the government in order to reduce the number of girls missing school during their menstrual cycle. President Uhuru Kenyatta on April 2018 signed the Bill into law, which also compels the government to provide a safe and environmentally sound mechanism for disposal of the sanitary towels.

This recent development is a great stride that the government has undertaken in the recent past. GEWEC as a rural based organization is suitably placed to collaborate with the government at the grassroots level in manufacturing sanitary towels and distributing to girls in the rural areas. This is a social venture that GEWEC is currently working on in order to improve the financial portfolio of the organization and also promote economic sustainability of the organization. This is also an opportunity to create jobs for women and youth of Baringo County as they will be highly involved in providing labour.

### **Project description**

Our idea is to develop the products/pads from natural raw materials (non-chemical) that benefit to human health while ensuring affordable price for low-income people to use our products (young girls from rural schools). It addresses the issue of rampant unemployment amongst the poor women in rural areas of the country. GEWEC will work with schools and women organizations to mobilize women

and girls and educate them on puberty education, menstrual hygiene, how to use the sanitary pads, how to access to educational resources and motivate them to stay in school.

GEWEC will also adopt a hybrid model, by selling some but also have some for demonstration for about six months. After the expiry of the pilot phase, GEWEC will introduce business model that will distribute these products to government schools in Baringo County. We believe that this model will give us a sustainable revenue generating enterprise. GEWEC will not compromise on the quality of the sanitary napkin as the raw material to be used will come from bamboo fiber and not from cotton (cotton is not widely available in Baringo County). GEWEC will also produce two types of sanitary towels (reusable and disposable). Within the six months pilot period, GEWEC will have acquired important lessons and be able to make a decision whether to proceed with the production of the reusable or the disposable pads or both. One important factor to note is the inadequate water supply in Baringo County (it may be difficult for girls to use the reusable pads in areas where there is scarce supply of water) and this has informed the decision of piloting the two products, before making the final decision.

### **Our experience**

GEWEC has some experience of raising awareness about menstrual hygiene, which has been integrated with our Chanua Dada Mashinani (empower girls from rural areas) campaign. GEWEC's community initiatives under the Chanua Dada Mashinani project respond to the different health, empowerment and education needs of young women and girls living in the rural areas. So far, GEWEC has reached over 30 girls schools in Baringo County and has distributed over 5000 sanitary towels. These key issues include sexual reproductive health, HIV and AIDS, leadership development, career development and education empowerment. This way the young women and girls from rural areas learn about issues that affect them and strive to focus on making their lives better.

This campaign is enshrined in different policy agendas both at the national and county government. Gender equality and women empowerment is a development objective in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Women empowerment is critically important to achieving other development objectives, and to improving efficiency of efforts to reduce poverty and support economic growth. The benefits are not just for today's women and men, their families, and their communities, but for all generations to come. When girls are empowered it lowers fertility rates, reduces maternal mortality, and improves the health of their children.

This campaigns is carried out within Baringo County. The target population for these campaigns are young women and girls and we work with institutions such as schools, churches and other institutions. This we also do through media campaigns such as the use of radio, television, social media and print media that extend the campaigns to all corners of the county.

### **Project benefits**

This project has defined project benefits in three levels: social, environmental and economic impacts.

### **Social Impacts**

- The project will have an impact on health status of girls through improvement in the health status and personal hygiene of the girls as a result of using Chanua Dada sanitary pads.
- Reducing the number of girls who miss school due to their menses in Baringo County.
- Empowering girls to take control of their bodies and initiating broader dialogue to eliminate stigma and shame.
- Providing accessible childcare facilities to workers, encouraging mothers to join the enterprise.

### **Environmental Impacts**

- Reducing environmental impact of importing raw materials by sourcing locally available materials, especially banana fibers.

### **Economic Impacts**

- Establishing a new value chain based on local raw materials and targeting a mostly untapped market with affordable products.
- An income generating activity for women
- Increasing overall productivity by empowering women through improved access to education and access to income generating activity.

### **Proposed activities**

1. Register a company name, since this proposed social enterprise will involve working with the government and communities, it will require some form of licensing in Kenya. GEWEC will acquire the necessary licenses to run the social enterprise in Baringo County.
2. Benchmarking with the Malkia Investments Ltd, a company based in Tanzania and well known for the production and distribution of Elea Reusable Sanitary Towels in Tanzania.
3. Startup of production of sanitary towels in Baringo County. With the seed funding, GEWEC will purchase machines required for the start up. GEWEC will adopt the Low-Cost Technology to setup mini Sanitary Napkin manufacturing machine, which are commonly found in India
4. After production and testing with the state's standard control entities, the final product will be packaged with eight to twelve sanitary pads.

5. Besides collaborating with the national and county government in the supply of the Chanua Dada sanitary towels, GEWEC will also reach out to the supermarkets, pharmacies, wholesalers, local stores and retailers to market their product. More importantly, the Chanua Dada sanitary towel will be affordable, accessible and of high quality.

### **Social and economic sustainability**

GEWEC is currently working on resource mobilization towards this social enterprise start up. Some of the potential partners that we are currently talking to includes the Slovak Embassy in Kenya, the Baringo County National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), the Baringo County Government and local banks based in Baringo County.

Our target is to raise \$30,400 for the start up. Evidently, the proposed social enterprise is a self-sustaining project. First, the fact that Kenyan government has just pledged to ensure that girls in both primary and secondary schools have access to affordable and quality sanitary towels gives us an opportunity to collaborate with the government, especially the county government and ensure that girls in Baringo county have access to reproductive care and sanitary pads. As this project is a social enterprise, the revenue from the business will be used to scale up. More importantly, an equity will be allocated for the GEWEC's operational and activities cost. This is important for us as besides being able to ensure that girls have access to sanitary towels in Baringo County, we will still be able to promote economic sustainability of the GEWEC.

Owing to the kind of products that we will be producing (biodegradable) and re-usable, the extent to which pollutions accruing from poor disposal is at minimum and if it occurs such material shall decompose naturally. As for the machines GEWEC shall give instructional details on the kind of machine to procure to ensure that it is environmentally compliant to avoid huge emissions into the atmosphere.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring of this social enterprise project implementation will be conducted at different levels. Monitoring at community level will entail the community members themselves, girls, school administrators, parents and teachers. The project aims for an efficient, cost-effective way to make sure that the monitoring is relevant, and not too much or too few data are being collected. Therefore at the start simple, operational, measurable indicators will be formulated.

As much as possible the monitoring will be undertaken by Project Steering Committee as part of their daily/weekly/monthly routine, in order to notice changes or deviations from the expected. Mid-term internal review exercise will be conducted, taking into account the findings of the monthly monitoring by officers from GEWEC and partners such as the county government and teachers. Further, the documentation consists of the publication of the findings from the monitoring activities through articles and a blog as well as every 6 months a project progress update and work plan.

**Proposed budget**

<b>GENDER EMPOWERMENT &amp; WELLNESS CENTRE (GEWEC)</b>						
<b>CHANUA DADA SANITARY PADS</b>						
<b>6 MONTHS BUDGET</b>						
<b>S/N</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>No. Units</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Amount (kshs)</b>	<b>Amount (\$) Kes. 100</b>
1	<b>Preliminaries for takeoff</b>	Local napkin manufacturing machine	2	80,000	160,000	1,600
		Assorted materials (Start-up)	1	100,000	100,000	1,000
		Clearance and taxes		50,000	0	0
		Other accessories	1	20000	20,000	200
	<b>Sub-Total</b>				<b>280,000</b>	<b>2,800</b>
2	<b>baseline Research, prototype development and piloting</b>					
		Data collectors/consultancy	1	50000	50000	500
	<b>Sub-Total</b>				<b>50000</b>	<b>500</b>
	<b>Total Project Costs</b>					
	Running Capital for six Months		1	50000	50,000	500
	Administrative Costs		1	50000	50,000	500
	Project Staff support		1	50,000	50,000	500
	Company registration & licenses		1	20,000	20,000	200
	<b>Sub-Total</b>				<b>170,000</b>	<b>1700</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>500,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>