

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Interim Grant Report
Submitted to Together Women Rise
November 2023

1. *Please provide the following information:*

- a. *Organization Name:* Too Young To Wed
- b. *Project Title:* The Butterfly Project: Bringing the Bedrocks of Lasting Change to Northern Pastoralist Kenya's Most Excluded Girls
- c. *Grant Amount:* \$50,000
- d. *Contact Person:* Jessica Tirado-McKinney
- e. *Address:* 1112 Main Street, First Floor, Peekskill, NY 10566

2. *Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve.*

The Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project brings reproductive health education and financial literacy training through games, music, and instruction during weekly meetings, among a suite of additional resources, to girls in Samburu County, Kenya who are most vulnerable to child marriage and other harmful practices. In partnership with local families, the Butterfly Project equips girls and their households with protective social, economic, and health resources, in order to delay marriage and increase literacy.

As stated in TYTW's original proposal: The Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project's main goal is to reduce gender disparity among historically excluded girls, beginning at age 9, who are at risk of child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practices in Samburu County, with the support of families and the greater community.

Project Outcomes:

- **Education as a Preventative Measure Against Child Marriage:** Highly vulnerable girls (those who have survived or are at high risk for child marriage) attend day

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

school or early evening educational programming, serving as a protective measure against harmful practices.

- Strengthened Protective Assets for Historically Excluded Girls, in the forms of Human, Social, Economic, and Cognitive Assets (identified by Protective Asset-Building Strategy House, [Building Girls' Protective Assets: A Collection of Tools for Program Design](#)).
- Reduced Incidences of GBV: Girls receive peer mentoring support from Population Council-trained mentors through Implementation of the Intentional Design curriculum, a safety intervention to reduce incidences of GBV and harmful practices.
- Increased Economic Assets among Beneficiaries and their Communities: strengthened numeracy education, financial literacy, and livestock provision, leading to greater economic independence.
- Sensitization and Long-Term Community Reduction of GBV: Parents and extended family members of girls in areas where harmful practices (child marriage, FGM, beading) are commonplace receive sensitization programming, helping to contribute to long-term social norm change.
- Strengthened Social Wellbeing: positive social connections, improved peer-to-peer relationships, strengthened sense of unity.
- Strengthened Individual Wellbeing in the forms of self-management tools, increased confidence, goal-setting skills.
- Transformation of Gender Norms leading to heightened societal consensus on the need to protect girls from GBV, eventually changing the marriage market.
- Lowered Risks Among Girls for Maternal Mortality and Infant Mortality (both of which are linked to child marriage).

3. *Has funding changed for this project? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?*

We are pleased to share that we have successfully secured an additional \$50,000 grant from the Obama Foundation's Girls Opportunity Alliance, a key partner dedicated to advancing global gender equality, to support the project as well. Their support enhances our capacity to empower adolescent girls through education, mentorship, and expanded opportunities.

We have also been notified that we were recently approved for an in-kind grant of nearly 250,000 meals from [Rise Against Hunger](#) for 2024, which will be available for use at the end of the first quarter. The special fortified meals will be used to support the Butterfly

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Project as well, enabling us to further supplement the food security needs of the community and to potentially reach more girls with TYTW's current resources.

Additionally, we are pleased to announce a new collaboration with the Westgate Community Conservancy, a community-owned and managed group ranch fostering coexistence among local communities, livestock, and wildlife. The Conservancy aims to alleviate poverty through eco-friendly tourism and conservation efforts within the Samburu pastoralist community, and is offering additional support for TYTW's shepherd school component of the program.

These positive changes in funding position our project for greater impact and sustainability. We are eager to leverage these resources to advance our shared mission.

- 4. Is your organization or project situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant project staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?*

There have been a few changes in our project's staffing structure since the approval of the proposal. While Moses Letitoyia has moved on from his role at TYTW, we are pleased to introduce several talented new additions to our Kenyan team:

Lynette Ouma - Program Manager:

Lynette is a dedicated development practitioner with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Moi University and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Gender and Development Studies at the University of Nairobi. Lynette has actively worked towards advancing universal sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services for adolescents and women in marginalized communities. As a published author and advocate, Lynette's work has influenced evidence-based policy at community, national, and regional levels. Her previous roles with organizations such as International Youth Alliance for Family Planning, Organization of African Youth, White Ribbon Alliance Kenya, and KMET Kenya demonstrate her commitment to transformative gender approaches and advocacy. As Program Manager, Lynette focuses on integrating SRHR-related interventions into the Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project and supporting the mentorship program in Samburu County, Kenya.

Joycelyn Wangui Mwangi - Head of Strategic Partnerships:

Joycelyn, a social worker and gender and protection specialist, comes to TYTW with over 10 years of professional expertise on issues of women's economic empowerment, youth empowerment, promotion and protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, ending

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

violence against women and girls, and prevention of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and elimination of discriminatory social norms like FGM and child, early and forced marriage. She has worked for the Gender Rights Network, as a consultant for the Anti-FGM Board, as a field officer for Amref Health Kenya, and as a researcher coordinator for Clitoralplasty UoN Kenya/ New York. Joycelyn holds a Master's degree in Rural Sociology and Community Development and a Bachelor's in Journalism and Media Studies from the University of Nairobi, and a Master's in Clinical Psychology from Daystar University in Kenya. Currently, she is working towards her PhD in Sociology and Social Work from the University of Nairobi.

Noreen Wahome - Bookkeeper & Finance Manager:

Noreen Wahome comes to TYTW with over seven years of progressive work experience in audit, accounting, grants reporting, and project budget process gained working for NGOs and the private sector, including Africa Centre for Open Governance and EBP Limited. She has experience managing grants of various international agencies which include, Embassies of Norway, Royal Netherlands and Finland, USAID/SUNY, UNDP(Amkeni Wakenya), DFID/DAI, OSF, DANIDA and CIDA. Noreen holds a BS in Applied Accounting from Oxford Brookes University and an Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business.

Edna Kiilu - Kenya Administrator:

Edna Kiilu is a versatile Operations Specialist with 8+ years of administrative experience in startups. Skilled in business operations management, travel management, tech tools, and project management platforms. Edna's background includes roles as a Virtual Assistant, Operations Manager, and Community Ambassador. Her expertise in coordinating international offices, managing budgets, and optimizing processes has consistently driven efficiency. Her ability to implement organizational and people culture strategies, IT, and information security policies showcases her multifaceted proficiency.

Florence Lerapayo - Program Officer:

Florence is a Samburu primary school teacher who holds a primary education diploma. She previously worked for TYTW as the Butterfly Project Mentor Supervisor.

Each of our local team members enhance our capacity to implement the project effectively and align with our commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering vulnerable communities.

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

5. *Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this please refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under Number of women and girls Directly Impacted and population Indirectly Impacted.*

As of the current reporting period, we project that the number of beneficiaries reached by the project will remain consistent with the figures outlined in our original grant proposal, and may even potentially expand with the advent of the new Rise Against Hunger partnership.

6. *What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching these challenges?*

TYTW's team encountered challenges, including the impact of drought on families' meal frequency, which we addressed by ensuring the continuity of meals in safe spaces. At times, heavy rains affected trainings and attendance, requiring collaboration with the committee for child safety monitoring. Parental reluctance for girls to attend all safe space sessions is an ongoing challenge, which our team is addressing through continuous direct engagement and community dialogues.

7. *Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?*

TYTW enrolled girls into the education and mentoring programs as young as six years old after learning more about their risk levels. This decision marked a slight adjustment to the initial eligibility criteria, which originally aimed to reach girls beginning at the age of nine. However, after careful consideration, the team recognized that involving younger girls in the mentoring programs would serve as a beneficial preventative measure against harmful practices.

Notably, numerous children lack birth certificates, creating complications when attempting to enroll in school, given that it is a prerequisite during the school registration process. Without proper documentation, children (especially girls) face numerous societal barriers, limiting their opportunities for personal and economic development. In response to the necessity for civil registration, during the International Day of the Girl (IDG) celebration, TYTW integrated a civil registration team to raise awareness and pilot local registration efforts. Consequently, 73 children were successfully registered to obtain their birth certificates. With the completion of civil registrations, girls are better positioned to assert their rights. Registration significantly reduces vulnerability to exploitation, encompassing issues like child labor, trafficking, and gender-based violence. Formal documentation enables authorities to monitor and protect registered girls, providing an additional layer of security. Achieving universal registration requires further sensitization efforts and increased opportunities for all girls.

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Otherwise, TYTW's program objectives are consistent with the original proposal.

8. What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objectives:

Before engaging with the community, TYTW conducted a comprehensive assessment to understand the specific needs, assets, and challenges in the village. TYTW's team held interface meetings with the community, TYTW leadership, and key figures to enhance collaboration. We also conducted a baseline survey targeting six villages, revealing low school attendance, particularly among girls of school age, emphasizing the importance of the Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project.

Mentors' Recruitment and Training:

Given the low literacy rate and high prevalence of GBV in the community, it proved difficult to find qualified mentors for the program. Consequently, TYTW's team recruited and trained four new mentors as a start to implement the curriculum, with four additional mentors being brought in as apprentices. They will take over their safe spaces as they gain confidence and become familiar with this kind of programming. The rigorous recruitment process, adhering to due diligence, included developing requirements, advertising, selecting a panel from the community project committee, shortlisting, and conducting interviews. The mentors completed training in life skills, conflict management, stress management, sexual and reproductive health, financial literacy, and facilitation skills. The training, conducted in two phases, resulted in improved self-esteem, contextual knowledge, facilitation skills, and enhanced knowledge of child protection practices. Florence Lerapayo is supervising all mentors on a weekly basis.

Education and Safe Spaces Sessions:

To date, 130 girls aged 6-11 are currently attending the safe space sessions (held three days a week to add extra protection for them during the two-month-long school holiday), focused on enhancing self-care, self-esteem, and protection. The girls reported increased agency and demonstrated a growing sense of self-efficacy. The curriculum covers financial literacy (savings, bank accounts, financial risks and planning), feminine hygiene and reproductive health, goal-setting, nutrition, conflict resolution skills, relationship dynamics, STI prevention, sanitation and water storage, and human rights.

Engagement with local teachers and volunteers led to the launch of lchekuti (shepherd in Samburu) classes—an alternative school for shepherd girls, with 60 enrolled, all of whom

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

would not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend school. We also enrolled 51 girls in the accelerated learning program, a short program designed to impart fundamental literacy and numeracy skills, until official classes resume in January 2024.

Community Engagement and Dialogues:

TYTW played a pivotal role in drafting the Samburu County Children's Policy, contributing to key principles for child protection and referral systems.

We convened four community engagement sessions, leading to the establishment of a project implementation committee, which TYTW supported through facilitated meetings, addressing project plans and child protection. Noteworthy outcomes include community engagement on issues like FGM and child marriage at the Manyatta level. We also conducted a community exchange where elders and mentors shared experiences with community members, fostering a stronger sense of community participation in the Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project.

Structured dialogues, especially on education, yielded positive outcomes, with instances of commitment to enrolling children in school. The celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child (Oct. 11th) garnered more than 100 participants, serving as an effective sensitization event and reinforcing the community's commitment to protecting children against child marriage.

TYTW leveraged the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence—a global campaign observed from November 25th to December 10th—and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to extend invitations to Kenyan media for coverage of the program. Notably, TV47, renowned as "The Home of Untold Stories," a popular channel with over five million viewers in Kenya, is currently preparing a lengthy feature on the Butterfly Project. Set for publication in December, the segment harmoniously aligns with the channel's audience aged 18-45, providing an excellent platform to share our mission with a broad and enthusiastic viewership.

9. Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing your project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?

We anticipate that the program's last session will conclude in June 2024, in line with the timeframe for the final report submission deadline.

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Beneficiary Stories - All images by Naisaie Lempushunah.

Mary (Butterfly Project new mentor, Namunyak)



Mary, 19, is the mother of a nine-month-old baby, and a newly qualified mentor with the Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project in Namunyak, Samburu county. Mary recently participated, along with six other young women, in two three-day training sessions that were held in Wamba this October, and has now started her mentorship with the recently launched Shepherd School and accelerated learning

program in Namunyak. “I am so happy because now I am confident and I have gained knowledge which I will go and share with our community. I will go and inform them about the many things I have learned here. I will inform them to stop FGM, child marriage and that they should take their girls to schools so that they will gain knowledge and be able to progress so that they will succeed in life.”

Rajipia (Butterfly Project participant, Namunyak)



Rajipia, 10, is the youngest of two children and lives in Namunyak, Samburu county, with her parents who are livestock keepers. Her favorite animal is her cow named ‘Mpus.’ She is enrolled in Namunyak’s newly-launched Butterfly Project, and enjoys attending the weekly safe spaces. When asked about challenges girls face in

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Samburu, Rajipia replied that one challenge was teenage pregnancy and that girls end up having to leave school.

Saja (Butterfly Project participant, Namunyak)



Saja is a ten-year-old shepherd girl from Lempaute village, Samuburu county. The youngest of seven siblings, Saja lives with her mother who works as a livestock keeper. Saja is responsible for looking after the animals, as well as carrying out household duties. In her free time, she likes to sing.

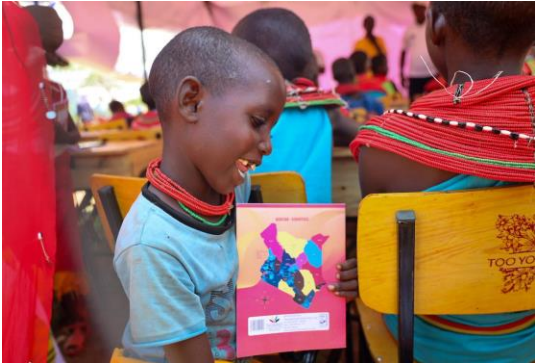
Saja has been a participant in the Butterfly (Sampiripiri) Project since the safe spaces launched in Namunyak. She says she likes her mentor, Mary, and enjoys her time there as she gets to meet her friends and learn for the future. She dreams of building a big house for her mother one day, and to own a business selling clothes and food.

TOO YOUNG *to* WED

Civil Registration, Namunyak, Samburu County



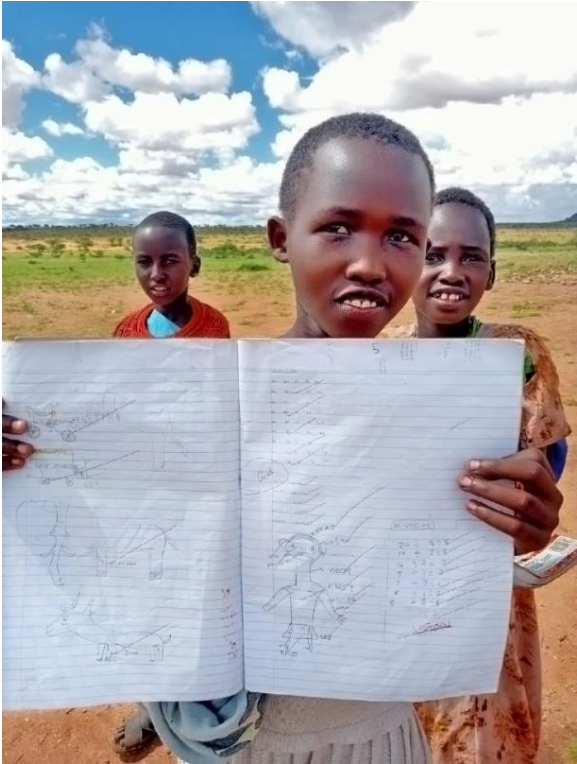
Shepherd School Opening Day



TOO YOUNG *to* WED



Safe Spaces



TOO YOUNG *to* WED

