

Chance for Childhood's Innovation Fund 2018 Round Gender and Justice Challenge

How might we effectively protect and improve the rehabilitation prospects of girls entering in conflict with the law?

Background to the Challenge

Chance for Childhood's experience support prevention and juveniles justice programmes in East Africa has highlighted the complex trajectories of girl offenders, often pushed into breaking the law in response to injustice or having been victim of violence, neglect or discrimination in the first place, and the frequent **criminalization of their welfare needs**. For example, our Right2Change programme in Uganda found that attempted suicide was the most common offence amongst girls in conflict with the law, revealing unmet needs in mental health services. Other girls engaging in 'theft' or 'physical assault' have often experienced discrimination at home, abusive relationships or domestic violence.

It is estimated that girls and women make between **7 and 10%** of total detainees population, a minority whose specific needs (in education, medical care or hygiene) are routinely overlooked. In rare instances where training or rehabilitation programmes may be provided whilst or after their experience in the justice system, they tend to reflect the traditional and stereotypical role of girls in society. Girls and women trained in low-revenue handicraft or hairdressing trade are unlikely to lift or maintain themselves out of poverty, in turn increasing the odds of recidivism.

The negative consequences of imprisonment have a long-term, negative impact on young women and girls, and their families: they range from heightened poverty linked to the loss of employment, poor mental health resulting from family separation, poor nutrition and mistreatment whilst in detention, and a disruption to education, healthcare or housing needs for children and other dependents.

We believe that more can be done to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of adolescent girls, from better identifying girls at high risk to better responding to factors of risk such as unaddressed mental health needs, lack of positive role models or access to legal aid. The lack of investment in gender-sensitive rehabilitation programmes also represents a critical missed opportunity to reducing re-offending and ensuring girl offenders are offered a second chance.

Chance for Childhood believes that complex and protracted issues affecting children and young people we support require urgent strides to achieve impact and realise the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Through this dedicated Gender and Justice Round, Chance for Childhood aims to enable strategic investment into early-stage ideas and innovative approaches that may solve this challenge. We are calling all activists, visionary changemakers, organisations and social entrepreneurs, **working in Uganda and/or Rwanda**, to submit ideas that have the potential to generate new evidence on successful strategies to protect and improve the rehabilitation prospects of adolescent girls at risk or having becoming into conflict with the law, and ensure **girl offenders are not forgotten**.

Rebuilding young lives for a better future

Westmead House, Westmead, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LP

Tel: 01483 230250 **Email:** info@chanceforchildhood.org **Web:** www.chanceforchildhood.org

Registered Charity Number: 1013587 **Registered Company Number:** 2735643

Investment Opportunities

Chance for Childhood is looking to make between 4 to 6 investments, in the following areas:

- **Prevention and identification:** solutions improving the identification of girls at risk of offending, the dissemination of information on avenues to seek advice, and in particular, legal assistance, innovative methods or pilots to promote positive behavioural change, positive role models and peer support. Examples of solutions we would fund include the use of innovative communication methods and safe places (online and offline) for girls at risk of violence or offending to access support and advice, interventions promoting adolescent girls' engagement in healthy, productive activities, reconciliation or community service initiatives to engage girl offenders as an alternative to detention.
- **Access to justice and other offender support services:** inspiring ideas enabling adolescent girls in contact with the law to access gender-sensitive legal aid and advice, as well as mental health or employability support in a safe, confidential way. We might for example invest in the adaptation or replication of existing services so they can better cater for girls in conflict with the law and include them in their client groups, or innovative training modules or resources on gender for frontline workers. We are particularly interested in ideas that might meet the unique needs of particularly vulnerable groups of girls in contact with the justice system, such as adolescent girls with disabilities.
- **Rehabilitation:** initiatives improving the prospects of adolescent girls who have been in conflict with the law, especially targeting their successful reintegration into education and/or employment. Solutions might also tackle the stigma experienced by girl offenders to ensure their successful rehabilitation, as well as self-stigmatization through helping girls develop a positive self-image, make safer choices and develop healthier relationships in the long-run.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

Through this inaugural round of the Innovation Fund, we will fund:

- Ideas that are new or in early stages of development, i.e. we will not be funding the ongoing costs of an existing project
- Solutions designed to be implemented in Rwanda or in Uganda (or both)
- Ideas put forward by an organisation, entrepreneur or group that is registered in some way in at least one of the two target countries
- Initiatives that will be implemented and able to demonstrate impact within a 12 months period

Although not compulsory, solutions that have the potential to be brought to market and executed under a viable business model, will be considered favourably to be granted social investment.

Process and Timeline for the Challenge

The round will open for applications on the 15th of September 2018, and will close at midnight (GMT+1) on the 17th of October.

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Applications should be submit online via our Google Form or through downloading the application form and sending it to challengefund@chanceforchildhood.org, inserting GENDER ROUND in the subject line.

Winning ideas will be announced by the 26th of October, with funding disbursed before of the year.

Useful Background Readings

[Girls in conflict with the law in Uganda: the needs and experiences of girls before, during and after contact with the criminal or informal justice system \(Chance for Childhood, 2017\)](#)

[Resources for implementing a gender-sensitive approach to non-custodial sentences, Penal Reform International](#)

[Effective Gender-Responsive Interventions in Juvenile Justice: Addressing the Lives of Delinquent Girls, Center for Gender and Justice](#)

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