

MEETING BETWEEN HEALTH NGOs NETWORK (HENNET) AND COUNTY FIRST LADIES' ASSOCIATION (CFLA)

VENUE: HENNET BOARDROOM

DATE: 14/04/2024

PRESENT:

Janet Sayo	Coordinator, CFLA
Faith Ndung'u	Advocacy and Communication Manager, HENNET
Ruth Warutumo	Partnership and Resource Mobilization Coordinator, HENNET
David Baka	Communication and Media Officer, HENNET
Brian Anyega	Program Assistant, HENNET
Stephanie Achieng	Communications and Media Intern, HENNET



MEETING BACKGROUND

The meeting focused on exploring potential collaboration opportunities between the Health NGOs Network (HENNET) and the **County First Ladies Association (CFLA)**. HENNET, established in 2005 and registered in 2007, coordinates and networks civil society organizations (CSOs) in the health sector. This provides a common platform for sharing experiences, collaboration, and advocacy on health-related issues in Kenya.

CFLA is a forum, which brings together spouses of the 47 Governors is recognized for bringing unity of purpose and a voice of reason in advancing development agendas of the county. The office of the County First Lady holds a unique position at the pinnacle of society, providing a platform to champion important social and development goals at the county level.

The meeting aimed to discuss how the two organizations can work together on projects and initiatives related to maternal and child health, as well as community development and advocacy.

HENNET'S ROLE IN PRIMARY HEALTHCARE AND ADVOCACY

HENNET delves into primary healthcare (PHC) and advocacy through several approaches:

1. **Coordination and Networking:** HENNET brings together different civil society organizations working in the health sector, facilitating collaboration and networking among them to address primary healthcare issues effectively.
2. **Resource Mobilization:** HENNET works on advocacy around domestic financing to support primary healthcare initiatives and advocates for increased budget allocation and funding for health-related projects.
3. **Advocacy and Policy Influence:** The organization advocates for policy development and implementation for primary healthcare improvements, including community-based health programs, maternal and child health, and immunization efforts.
4. **Capacity Building and Training:** HENNET provides training and capacity-building opportunities for CSOs, helping them gain the skills necessary for effective advocacy and PHC delivery.
5. **Information and Awareness Campaigns:** Through awareness campaigns and educational initiatives, HENNET promotes health knowledge and advocates for better primary healthcare practices within communities.

THE ROLES OF THE COUNTY FIRST LADIES' ASSOCIATION

The meeting shed light on how county first ladies balance their responsibilities and make an impact in their communities.

Given their position and influence, county first ladies play a key role in uniting the people through developing a common strategy to unlock the potential and address problems affecting the residents of the county. The association seeks to sensitize and support the County First ladies on their roles and responsibilities in line with the CFLA constitution, key

devolution initiatives they can champion as an association, outline critical actors that CFLA can pursue partnerships in advancing their roles effectively, share experiences from preceding County First Ladies including good practices, challenges and solutions sought in carrying out their duties and Identify and capitalize on individual strengths and opportunities that the County First Ladies bring on board.

- **Advocacy:** The CFLA offers a platform for advocacy on SGDs on ending poverty, inclusive and equitable quality education, gender equality and empowerment, ensuring healthy lives while mobilizing resources to present greater impact
- **Community Engagement:** Actively engage with the community, including working on projects such as youth empowerment, maternal child Health, family planning, mental health advocacy, and education. Their involvement helps implement these programs more effectively.
- **Influence and Collaboration:** County first ladies play a key role in influencing the development agenda at the County level. This is through work closely with the Governor's and other county officials to achieve their goals.
- **Championing Causes:** They serve as champions for specific causes such as maternal health, Menstrual Health and hygiene, HIV interventions, teenage pregnancy prevention, Cancer awareness and HPV vaccination campaigns among others. Their leadership helps drive these initiatives forward.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Through partnerships with various organizations and agencies, county first ladies have been instrumental in the achievement of different outcomes at the County level. This collaboration enhances the success and sustainability of their efforts.
- **Impact on Local Policies:** Their advocacy efforts can lead to changes in local policies, such as incorporating family planning and mental health services into the county health system.
- **Acceptance by Community:** County first ladies are often well-received by the community due to their role and influence, which opens doors for them to engage in various forums and initiatives.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS:

- **Collaboration:** HENNET and CFLA explored opportunities to collaborate on various health initiatives, focusing particularly on PHC and MNCH including improved immunization uptake. The discussions emphasized the potential for joint efforts to enhance advocacy and support for these critical areas of healthcare. By working together, both organizations aim to leverage their respective strengths to drive impactful change and improve health outcomes in their communities.
- **Partnership at the PHC and immunization advocacy focus Counties:** HENNET indicated that they will be having PHC and immunization advocacy interventions in 8 Counties and sought the support of the CFLA in having County first ladies' collaboration as well as being PHC and immunization champions in their respective Counties.
- **SMART Advocacy Training:** HENNET and CFLA discussed the importance of providing advocacy training for the County First Ladies Association. This includes SMART advocacy and digital advocacy to help first ladies effectively promote health initiatives and

community projects. HENNET aims to equip the first ladies with the necessary skills and tools to excel in their advocacy roles and maximize their impact across different counties.

- **The Role of First Ladies in Advocacy:** The meeting acknowledged the key role of County first ladies in health initiatives, particularly in promoting maternal and child health and addressing female genital mutilation (FGM), menstrual health and hygiene among others.
- **Continuity of Initiatives/ Sustainability:** HENNET and CFLA discussed the importance of ensuring continuity and sustainability of health initiatives, particularly in the areas of child and maternal health including increased immunization uptake. They emphasized the need to integrate programs into CIDP and ADPs to maintain momentum and impact, even with changes in leadership.
- **CSO Coordination and the County and national level:** The challenge on CSO coordination especially in the desire to collaborate with county first ladies at the county level. The CSO players need coordination to ensure a structured engagement plan
- **Digital Presence.** The meeting determined a gap in CFLA social media presence. This was raised as an area where HENNET can offer support to CFLA

NEXT STEPS:

- **Development of Content and Materials for Awareness Creation:** HENNET and CFLA will collaborate to create educational materials and content to raise awareness on crucial health issues, targeting diverse audiences across counties. – **Timeline: Progressive**

Action:

- HENNET communication team to follow up with CFLA Secretariat on the modality of the support
- **Smart and Digital Advocacy for CFLA:** HENNET will conduct a training on SMART and digital advocacy for CFLA, empowering the first ladies with the latest strategies and tools to enhance their outreach efforts and effectively engage with their communities. – **Timeline: 3 months**

Action:

- CFLA will update HENNET on the advocacy training that PATH supported CFLA with for the determination of the capacity-strengthening areas
- HENNET to share Smart advocacy topics and plan for the tailor-made session with CFLA
- **Collaboration at the County level:** HENNET and CFLA should have an inception meeting with CFLA Executive committee and the 8 Counties of interest for the PHC and immunization advocacy projects – **Timeline 4 months:**

Action:

- HENNET- Develop a plan for the inception meeting
- CFLA – Participate in planning the inception meeting and invitations to the County First ladies

- **Activation and Management of CFLA Social Media Accounts by HENNET Communication Team:** The HENNET communication team will support CFLA in activating and managing its social media accounts to enhance their online presence and reach. **Timeline: Immediate.**

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