

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND STORY IDEAS FOR A REGIONAL MEDIA FELLOWSHIP ON SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN EAST AFRICA. **2015**

From Journalists in East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda & Burundi)

The Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) working within the Coalition to Stop Maternal Mortality due to Unsafe Abortion (CSMMUA) is now accepting concepts for investigative story ideas on Sexual, Reproductive Health and Human Rights (SRHR) from journalists working in mainstream and digital.

Journalists working in mainstream and digital media from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi are therefore encouraged to submit story ideas which will form a basis from which successful candidates will be invited to participate in a media fellowship for the year 2015.

This Media fellowship seeks to improve media coverage, promote dialogue, debate on topical SRHR issues. The fellowship will also create a platform for media to make better recommendations on how issues of SRHR can be improved through objective reporting. This year's fellowship will focus on the impact of unsafe abortions to economic and social development in Uganda and the East African Region.

1.BACKGROUND

As 2015 fast approaches, East African countries (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi) are finding themselves in the unfortunate position of not being able to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) number five which among others aims at reducing maternal mortality by three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) and achieving universal access to Reproductive Health (RH) by 2015.

Maternal mortality ratios in East Africa remain unacceptably high. For instance, in Uganda the rates are estimated at 438 deaths per 100,000 live births (UBOs 2012), in Tanzania at 454 per 100,000 live births (TDHS, 2012), and estimated at 460 deaths per 100,000 live births in Kenya. This adds up to about 500 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births on average in the three countries. On the other hand, unsafe abortion has been identified as one of the major causes of maternal mortality. For example, in Kenya and Uganda unsafe abortion accounts for more than 35% and 26 % of maternal deaths respectively, this is far higher than the global rate which is at 13%.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 21.6 million unsafe abortions were estimated to have occurred in 2008, causing the deaths of 47 000 women. Eastern Africa recorded highest numbers with an estimated 2,430,000 unsafe abortions causing a rate of 36/1000 abortions for women aged 15–44years; and 13, 000 resultant deaths due to unsafe abortions. This concludes to the fact that if unsafe abortions were dealt with, East African countries could achieve MDG five by the year 2015.

There is a persistent lack of consistent and informed media coverage of Sexual and Reproductive health issues which has partly been attributed to the lack of information readily available to the public on these critical issues. It is against this background that CEHURD through the CSMMUA initiated a media fellowship to build capacity of journalists to report and cover accurate, quality and analytical SRHRs issues that can enrich civic life, inform public discourse and influence legal and policy change.

2.OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

The major objective of the competition and media fellowship is to build capacity of journalists in main stream and digital media to pursue high-quality, balanced and informative reporting on SRHR through training and a mentoring.

Successful applicants will take part in the 2015 Media fellowship training in SRHR, and will be supported to investigate, document and disseminate their stories on the impact of unsafe abortion in East Africa.

This will help to increase awareness of the public about the magnitude of the public health crisis of unsafe abortion and its impact through the dissemination of analytical and well balanced stories developed through this competition

3.FOCUS OF THE STORY IDEAS

Concept story ideas that are eligible could cover the following areas;

- The problem and magnitude of the public health crisis of unsafe abortion
- The legal and policy framework on access to safe abortion services
- The Public health system cost of treating complications from unsafe abortion
- The individual and household cost of unsafe abortion

The Investigative stories/articles may take one of the following formats;

- A feature story, documenting the impact of unsafe abortion in any of the above focus areas;
- A radio feature story that seeks to document the impact of unsafe abortion within one of the above focus area;
- A blog that provides a platform for the discussion of SRHR issues with a focus on unsafe abortion;
- A well-researched article that seeks to espouse some of the gaps within any East African Country's Health and Legal system, and how these fuel or contribute to unsafe abortion in that country;
- Any other story ideas in the area of Sexual reproductive health and rights that may have a direct or indirect bearing on the impact of unsafe abortion in any East African Country.

4.METHODOLOGY

Successful applicants will attend a week long residential orientation training on sexual reproductive health and rights and will be supported to investigate their submitted story concepts which will then be edited printed and published. During the one year fellowship program, every media fellow will be linked to experts in the fields of reproductive health and rights, law and media, who will provide technical guidance during this fellowship. The media fellows will be routinely engaged in community and policy work as part of their capacity building in reporting sexual reproductive health and rights.

5.ELIGIBILITY

This call is for journalists in mainstream (print, electronic, online) media from countries in East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi).

Applicants are also encouraged to apply either in teams (editors and reporters), or to apply as individuals.

6.SUBMISSION

Interested candidates should send a one-page concept including;

- a brief description of the story or idea;
- a cover letter,
- an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae (CV), and
- a brief description stating clearly the intention to participate in the 2015 Media fellowship

7. AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Successful applicants will receive technical and financial support to investigate and disseminate their proposed stories

Adherence to Submission deadline:

All concepts should be submitted by Thursday 30th November, 2014 by 5.00p.m Kampala Time GMT +3 to info@cehurd.org and copy Serunjogi Francis at serunjogif@cehurd.org and Ms. Kwagala Primah at kwagala@cehurd.org

You can also **call us on:** +256 414532283 and +256700940112 or

Visit our **website:** www.cehurd.org for more information.