



FAWE Forum for African Women Educationalists
Forum des éducatrices africaines

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FAWE Research Initiative 2010/2011 Call for Proposals Strengthening Gender Research to Improve Girls' and Women's Education in Africa

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) announces a call for the second round of research proposals from research institutions for its *Strengthening Gender Research to Improve Girls' and Women's Education in Africa* Initiative. The initiative, which is supported by the Norwegian Development Corporation (Norad), promotes girls and women's education through the integration of gender into education policy and practice in sub-Saharan Africa. Grants are awarded to provide support to institutions and research centres working in the areas of gender, education, or policy advocacy.

FAWE believes it is imperative to invest in research in Africa as way producing relevant, up-to-date information to buttress advocacy in education policy. Thus, this three-year research initiative aims to work collaboratively with established research institutions to produce pertinent and robust research that can be used to constructively engage government, policy makers and other regional bodies on strategies to advance girls' education in Africa. Findings from the research will be used to inform FAWE's advocacy work and help redress gender inequities that hamper girls' and women's fulfilment of their right to education and meaningful participation in Africa's social and economic advancement. The initiative has three main objectives:

Objectives:

1. The first is to **support research institutions** in conducting research that uses gender as an analytical category in education research. Sub-Saharan Africa has a long history of gender-biased practices that have translated into entrenched gender inequalities in education, the labour market, and the political and social arenas. Research is a vital tool for demonstrating the high cost of missed opportunities for African girls and women to policy and decision makers and for suggesting innovative strategies for redress.
2. The second is to **strengthen the research base in Africa** through a mentoring component whereby senior researchers will groom young women graduate students or recent PhDs, in the area gender in education research. Given the limited amount of applied research from a gender perspective anchored in the African context, training mentees to engage in this process will empower young researchers with valuable experience and prepare a cadre of future gender researchers.
3. To **strengthen the study of gender-responsive research methodologies in African Universities** through the development of a gender-based research methods course, specifically geared towards education. The course will combine gender analysis and innovative rights-based research methodologies in order to strengthen current gender research training at university level.

Grants:

FAWE will award five grants ranging from USD 30,000-35,000 for research project for be conducted during the grant period. Research findings will be published in the *FAWE Research Series* and submitted to refereed academic journals for publication. FAWE will also facilitate a dissemination of research findings through conference and relevant education fora. The Lead researcher and mentee will be expected to attend three workshops during the grant period, a planning workshop at the beginning of the grant period In June, a mid-year Sharing Workshop in November, and a colloquia style forum for presentations of final reports in March 2011.

Eligibility:

Applicants must be members of research institutes or centres working on the issues of education, gender, and/or development in Africa. **Applications from individuals not connected with an institution will not be considered.** Research projects can use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method approaches to address issues specific to gender and education at national and regional level. Proposals should not replicate past work on gender, but should raise new questions and offer innovative strategies.

Application Requirements

All applications for Research Grants must include:

- An up-dated curriculum vitae (CV) for principal researcher and mentee (s).
- A research proposal (limited to 5 single-spaced pages) that addresses the following:
 - ❖ Statement of the research problem
 - ❖ Brief review of relevant research/policy literature
 - ❖ Conceptual/theoretical framework
 - ❖ Description of methodology including proposed data set and criteria for selecting data, and sampling.
- Importance of findings to education policy and practice
- A proposed budget
- A sample publication

Application Deadlines and Submission

- Proposals for Research Grants must be received by **Saturday May 15, 2010**.
- Applications are accepted in English and French.
- Materials must be submitted as a Word or PDF document to bceptus@fawe.org.

Possible Research Themes and Topics:

The implication of gender neutral education policies on girls' education;
Comparative country performance in eliminating gender gaps;
Factors that contribute to girl's success in education;
Evaluation of girl-friendly school initiatives and reforms;
Education and training to eliminate gender inequalities;
Gender empowerment measures and analysis;
Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals and gender gaps;
The economic costs of low enrolment of girls on productivity and national growth;
Regional and national comparisons of gender and achievement.

Elements of a Standard Proposal

Statement of the Research Problem/Justification:

The section should offer a clear and concise description of the nature and importance of the proposed research, provide a brief background to the research question, and demonstrate a grasp of the research topic and its complexities. Avoid lengthy surveys and focus on the scope of the problem with explicit reference to feasibility and policy relevance.

Literature Review:

The review of literature demonstrates familiarity with the major theoretical and empirical work in the field, and an understanding of the current gaps in literature. The review should draw attention to the expected contribution of the proposed research and justify the relevance of works cited. Proposals should include a list of references should appear at the end of the proposal.

Conceptual Framework:

The section should display a clear statement of the theoretical and conceptual approach(es) that will guide the research. The soundness of the research approach should be introduced by elaborating on specific and concrete questions for which the proposed research intends to provide answers. Working hypotheses should be falsifiable. This section should be free from jargon.

Research Methodology:

This section should elaborate on the research methods to be employed, their appropriateness and how they answer the research questions. The section should indicate the type of the information required, and the data collection techniques to be used. It should explain how the information will be analyzed and interpreted. Sufficient details should be provided on any one technique to be used. For example, if a survey is to be undertaken, how will the sample be chosen, what is the research design, and what are some of the questions that will be included? If the work involves a case study, or series of case studies, what is the basis for selection of cases, and what are the main questions to be answered?

Time Frame:

The time frame for the research project will be 9 months, June 2010-March 2011. Provide a general breakdown of activities to be performed during this period that will enable timely completion of the proposed project. Project must be completed and prepared for presentation **by March 2011**.

Budget:

Research costs must show the following categories of expenditure: research assistant/s, data collection expenses, administrative costs. FAWE will cover the cost of travel and accommodations for a lead researcher and one mentee to all workshops, seminars and conferences researchers are required to attend.