



Love Alliance Last Mile Grant

Children of Structurally Silenced Women

Concept Note

May 2024



Table of Contents

1- General Outline	3
2- Introduction	3
2.1 MENA Rosa Background	3
2.2 Project Overview.....	3
3- Activity Description	4
4- Objectives	5
5- Target Population	5
6- Timeline	6



1- General Outline



Title of the Grant	Love Alliance Last Mile Grant: Children of Structurally Silenced Women
Donor	Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+)
Activity description	Conduct a national qualitative survey on the barriers faced by women at risk and women living with HIV to access services preventing HIV vertical transmission in Egypt.
Estimated Implementation Date	April – September 2024

2- Introduction

2.1 MENA Rosa Background

MENA Rosa is a pioneer network of women living with HIV (WLHIV) in the Middle East and North Africa.

MENA Rosa’s mission is to support and empower women and girls in their diversity, those living with HIV, women and girls at high risk of infection, as well as their partners through the development of their leadership, the promotion of effective participation in response, advocacy, networking, awareness-raising, and resource mobilization to ensure their rights, universal and equitable access to care, treatment, support, prevention and better quality of life.

The network was launched in 2010 and is currently made up of a regional secretariat based in Beirut, working hand in hand with 17 Focal Points in 11 countries making up the Middle East and North Africa region (Algeria, Bahrein, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen).

2.2 Project Overview

Children living with HIV, and those children mothered by women from key-populations continue to be left behind in the HIV response. Only about half of children living with HIV are on life-saving treatment, according to UNAIDS. Even though the number of children acquiring HIV annually has declined by 75% since 2000, progress to reduce vertical infections has stalled in recent years.

Vertical transmission of HIV occurs from mother to child during pregnancy, delivery, and breastfeeding. UNAIDS reports that in 2022 about 130,000 new HIV infections occurred among children globally. Eastern and Southern Africa region has witnessed a notable decline of 61% new HIV infections among children, nonetheless the rate of vertical HIV transmission



after breastfeeding is still estimated to be 8.6%, underscoring persistent barriers for mothers and parents to access services that would allow them to experience safe pregnancy and breastfeeding practices, and ensure zero vertical transmission during this period.

According to the [2023 UNAIDS report](#), MENA region has the lowest HIV treatment coverage globally (50%), with delayed HIV diagnoses. In 2022, only 67% of people living with HIV knew their HIV-positive status, and an even smaller percentage had access to treatment (50%), with treatment coverage lowest among women (49%). Only 34% of children living with HIV were on treatment in 2022.

The Last Mile Grants - Children of Structurally Silenced Women initiative by the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) aims to gather evidence regarding the obstacles faced by women living with HIV and women from key populations in accessing reliable information and services for preventing vertical transmission. The evidence will be based on the experiences of such women in Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa. Key informant interviews with global and regional stakeholders will further inform the development of a Global Report, highlighting the barriers to vertical transmission prevention.

MENA Rosa will implement the data collection in two MENA countries: Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria, Minya) and Morocco (Agadir, Casablanca, Marrakesh and Tangiers).

3- Activity Description

The overall project will be initiated by a qualitative study in Egypt addressing women's diversity in reproductive age. Data collection will be initiated through different methodologies:

- 1- Desk review.
- 2- Focus Group Discussion: FGDs will be implemented during the second quadrant of 2024. The FGD will be an opportunity to provide a short informative session on HIV (transmission, prevention) and treatment literacy. In Egypt, MENA Rosa will conduct:
 - Two FGDs with 15 WLHIV each (among nationals and refugees displaced by conflict) in Cairo and Alexandria.
 - Two FGDs with 15 sex workers each in Minya.
 - One FGD with 15 women who use drugs in Cairo.

Some of the covered topics are HIV testing of pregnant women, delivery of WLHIV, formula milk to children born to a positive woman, pediatric ART, and stigma and discrimination.

- 3- Key Informant Interviews: The assigned consultant will conduct interviews with national CSOs, local authorities and community advocates.



After collecting data, a national report will be created to highlight the challenges that women at risk and women living with HIV face in accessing services to prevent vertical transmission of HIV. The report will be shared with community leaders and national stakeholders during a roundtable discussion in Cairo. The assigned consultant will use the report to cross-reference the collected data.

This activity will be implemented in close collaboration with the National AIDS Program in Egypt and the UNAIDS country office. Focus group discussions will be held in Cairo, Alexandria, and Minya in partnership with Freedom Association, Caritas, and Friends Association, respectively.

Furthermore, MENA Rosa and the assigned consultant will have regular coordination meetings with the global research consultant of the Last Mile Grant in the five countries mentioned above. The global consultant will assist in developing the data collection tools and gathering data from each country into a global report.

4- Objectives

The main objectives of the data collection are:

- Raise awareness of the community of women in their diversity and WLHIV on HIV (transmission, prevention and care).
- Identify the barriers preventing vertical transmission during pregnancy and breastfeeding in Egypt.
- Analyse collected data and develop a baseline assessment of Vertical Transmission of HIV in Egypt, highlighting the challenges faced by women living and at risk of HIV and the key asks of the community to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV.

5- Target Population

The target population for the Focus Group Discussion includes:

- Women Living with HIV
- Sex workers
- Women who Use Drugs
- Community leaders and advocaters
- Civil Society Organizations, Service Providers.



6- Timeline



According to the timeline, the contract agreement has been scheduled to be signed in May 2024. Following this, the Focus Group Discussions, which will provide a forum for in-depth discussions centered around specific topics, will be implemented between June and July. The aim is to gather valuable insights and opinions from various stakeholders to aid in the successful execution of the project. The national report, which will include an analysis of the data collected from the Focus Group Discussions, will be finalized in September 2024. This report will provide valuable insights that will guide the project moving forward.