



PRESERVING HUMAN DIGNITY MINISTRIES

Rachel's Refuge

MENTORING YOUTH FOR LIFE & LEADERSHIP REPORT

**GOAL: USE OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN
SIAYA COUNTY**

**PROJECT: CONSTRUCTION OF BASKETBALL COURT AND COMMUNITY
CENTER IN SIAYA COUNTY**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rachel's Refuge is a youth empowerment initiative established by Preserving Human Dignity Ministry Inc. (PHD Ministry Inc.), in partnership with PHD Africa, through its Life on Life (LOL) program. The initiative honors the legacy of Rachel Odima, a promising Kenyan-American basketball player whose life was tragically cut short in 2019. Rachel's vision was to use sports and mentorship to inspire and uplift young girls in Kenya—a mission that this initiative now carries forward.

Siaya County, home to over one million residents, faces acute social and economic challenges, particularly among its youth. Teenage pregnancy remains a critical issue, with a current prevalence rate of 21%, significantly higher than the national average. This crisis is driven by poverty, limited access to education, cultural practices, and a lack of support systems, leaving many young girls vulnerable to school dropout, gender-based violence, and long-term health risks.

Rachel's Refuge offers a strategic intervention by leveraging the power of sports—specifically basketball—as a tool for empowerment, education, and opportunity. The initiative will establish twin basketball courts in Siaya County to serve as safe spaces for structured athletic programs, life skills workshops, and leadership development activities.



Through partnerships with local and international organizations, the program will also create pathways for talent – based scholarships and career opportunities in sports and beyond.

The initiative targets adolescents aged 13–18, with a special focus on empowering young girls and educating young boys to foster a more supportive and equitable community environment. An annual basketball tournament will further engage the community and celebrate the positive impact of the program, all while honoring Rachel’s enduring legacy.

We invite funders and partners to join us in transforming the lives of vulnerable youth in Siaya County. Your support will help provide access to safe spaces, education, mentorship, and life-changing opportunities—breaking cycles of poverty and creating a new generation of empowered, resilient leaders.

Problem Statement

Siaya County, with a population exceeding one million residents, faces significant challenges related to limited access to essential social amenities. PHD Ministry Inc. recognizes that these challenges, particularly those impacting youth and adolescent girls, contribute to a range of adverse social and health outcomes.

One of the most pressing issues in the region is the high rate of teenage pregnancy. Data from the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (2014) indicates that 17% of adolescent girls in Siaya County had already begun childbearing. Between July 2017 and June 2018, the county recorded 12,503 cases of teenage pregnancy, a statistic that prompted concern among local leaders and community stakeholders.

More recent findings published in the International Journal of Development Research (Vol. 14, Issue 02, pp. 64938–64953, February 2024) place the current prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Siaya County at 21%, significantly higher than the national average. Contributing factors include poverty, peer pressure, unstable family environments, harmful cultural practices, and limited access to comprehensive sexuality education.



The consequences of early pregnancy are far-reaching. Many affected girls are forced to leave school, effectively ending their formal education and limiting future economic opportunities. They are also at heightened risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, early and forced marriage, sexual and gender-based violence, and maternal health complications.

In response, PHD Ministry Inc. proposes a targeted intervention that addresses the root causes of teenage pregnancy while promoting mentorship, education, and life skills development. This initiative seeks to empower adolescent girls, reduce vulnerability, and restore pathways to opportunity and long-term wellbeing.

Community Impact

Rachel's Refuge – Beyond the Game: Siaya

Program Summary with Measurable Outcomes

Rachel's Refuge, founded in honor of Rachel Odima, continues to serve as a platform for empowering youth through sports, education, and leadership in Siaya County. In 2025, the Beyond the Game: Siaya initiative delivered tangible community impact, aligning with PHD Ministry Inc.'s commitment to youth development and resilience building.



Program Highlights and Outcomes:

- **Youth Engagement:**
 - a. 200 students from 18 schools across Siaya County participated in a two-day empowerment camp.
 - b. Age range: 13–18 years, with a balanced representation of both boys and girls.
- **Holistic Learning and Empowerment:**
 - a. 5 key thematic workshops conducted:
 - a. Mental Wellness
 - b. Human Rights & Gender Equality
 - c. Resilience & Leadership
 - d. Academic Success Strategies
 - e. Environmental Responsibility
 - i. 100% of participants received a Reach for Life Teens Bible, promoting values-based personal development, courtesy of Biblica Africa.
- **Community and Government Support:**
 - a. Endorsement and participation from the County Government of Siaya, including the Office of the First Lady and Hon. Angeline Atieno, CECM for Sports.
 - b. Ongoing partnerships established with local and international organizations.
- **Global Connectivity and Inspiration:**
 - a. Donations of basketball jerseys from Rachel's former high schools in Arkansas and Utah provided symbolic links to Rachel's legacy and reinforced global solidarity.
 - b. Jerseys donated by Coaches Van and Jill Price, Sandy Wright, Josh Tarver, and Jerrell Stewart.
- **Community Impact and Testimonials:**
 - a. Participants reported an increase in self-confidence, leadership aspirations, and motivation to stay in school.
 - b. Feedback from parents and local leaders highlighted the program as a critical intervention in addressing youth vulnerabilities, particularly for girls at risk of early pregnancy and school dropout.



Next Steps and Sustainability

Building on the success of this edition, Rachel’s Refuge will:

- a. Continue to host annual empowerment camps.
- b. Expand its reach to more schools and underserved communities.
- c. Establish long-term mentorship programs and curriculum.
- d. Develop scholarship pathways in partnership with local and international institutions.
- e. Build integrated guest houses to provide a sustainable funding source for the center.
- f. Teach subsistence living with available materials within the community.

Conclusion

Rachel’s Refuge is not only preserving Rachel Odima’s legacy but is actively shaping the lives of hundreds of young people in Siaya County. The program has demonstrated measurable impact in fostering resilience, leadership, and opportunity. With continued support from donors and partners, it will remain a vital catalyst for positive change in the community.

Project Costs / Budget (USD)

PHD Ministry Inc. proposes the implementation of the project according to the following resource plan:

No.	Item	Estimates (USD)
1.	Acquisition of land	\$ 95,000.00
2.	Fencing and Security	\$ 10,000.00
3.	Construction of twin court	\$ 125,000.00
4.	Setting up administrative office space	\$ 30,000.00
5.	Annual Admin and operations	\$ 10,000.00
6.	Kitting and basketball equipment	\$ 7,000.00
7.	Transport and mobilization logistics-Van	\$ 30,000.00
8.	Pickup or operation vehicle	\$ 30,000.00
9.	Community Borehole for water supply	\$ 12,000.00
TOTAL		\$ 349,000.00

Monitoring and Evaluation

PHD Africa will perform the monitoring and evaluation of the project as well as quarterly reporting to PHD Ministry Inc. partners, and other key stakeholders.







Contact Info

Program Lead: Dr. Mary Machira

US Program Director

Phone: +1 (479) 263-0905

Email: info@phdmini.org

Website: www.phdmini.org



@phdmini