

Request for proposals

QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS

Location	Kenya
Start date	December 2025
Application deadline	8 December 2025

About the Freedom Fund

The Freedom Fund is a collaborative fund that invests in frontline organisations and movements to drive a measurable reduction of modern slavery in high-prevalence countries and industries.

We fund, support and convene community and survivor-led organisations working to end modern slavery and human trafficking.

The Freedom Fund:

- Identifies and funds local organisations in countries with a high prevalence of modern slavery, and funds many survivor-led organisations.
- Convenes organisations to exchange best practices and build a collaborative ecosystem
- Leads efforts to establish the robust evidence base that underpins global anti-trafficking work
- Fills a critical gap by bringing donors together and mobilising resources that would otherwise be out of reach for community and survivor-led partners.

Summary

The Freedom Fund invites qualified individuals, research organisations or consortia to submit proposals to design and implement a quantitative study on child domestic workers (CDWs) in Kenya, specifically in the counties of Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega and Busia. Conducted within the framework of the Freedom Fund's NIA (Not Invisible Anymore) program, the study will generate robust evidence on the scale, characteristics, risks and protection needs of CDWs, providing actionable insights to inform programming, advocacy and impact measurement. The anticipated budget for this work is approximately USD 250,000, with contracting expected in 2025, research activities beginning in early 2026, and initial findings available by September 2026.

Eligibility

Individuals and organisations with relevant research experience are invited to submit proposals for this study. The lead applicant must be a legally registered entity according to the laws of the country in which it operates. The Freedom Fund strongly prefers applicants that are based in Kenya, have strong prior experience on conducting research on child

domestic work, and possess a strong track record of completing similar quantitative studies of this scale using robust household sampling methodologies.

Budget

A fee of approximately USD 250,000 has been made available for this study. Budgets will be reviewed with respect to the strength of the proposal in meeting the research objectives in a cost-effective manner - we do not simply prioritise the lowest budget.

Proposal deadline

Proposals should be submitted via email to Brittany Quy with "Proposal for quantitative study on child domestic workers in Kenya" as the email subject line at bquy@freedomfund.org no later than **Monday, 8 Dec 2025**, 10am UK time. Proposals should be submitted in English and in Word or PDF format. Proposals should be no more than 3 pages, plus CVs and annexes.

Introduction to the Freedom Fund and its work in Kenya

The Freedom Fund is a global fund with the sole aim of helping end modern slavery. We are a catalyst in the global effort to end modern slavery, working in the countries and sectors where it is highly prevalent. We invest in and partner with organisations and communities on the frontlines of ending slavery and exploitation.

By partnering with survivors and those at risk of slavery as well as visionary investors, governments and anti-slavery organisations, we bring together the knowledge, capital and will needed to dismantle the systems that allow slavery to exist and thrive. Through our investments and support, we aim to shift power, so that frontline organisations and communities can shape and drive the change required to bring modern slavery to an end.

Child domestic work is estimated to be the second largest contributor to child labour in Kenya after agriculture. Its prevalence is driven by the hidden nature of the work, which takes place in private households, and by gaps in policy and enforcement around harmful forms of child domestic labour. Children in domestic service often endure long hours, isolation, and exposure to physical, emotional or sexual exploitation.

The Freedom Fund's NIA (Not Invisible Anymore) program, meaning 'purpose' or 'intention' in Kiswahili, was launched in December 2022. It is implemented in partnership with 12 local frontline organisations across four counties: Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega and Busia.

The NIA Program works to:

- Promote child-centred advocacy by empowering children and survivors to lead efforts against exploitation.
- Expand child and survivor services through better-coordinated legal, social, and protection support.
- Build economic resilience among at-risk households to reduce drivers of child labour.
- Strengthen policy and implementation of child protection systems and data collection tools.

Purpose of the study

The Freedom Fund seeks a research partner to implement a quantitative study that will provide evidence on the situation of CDWs in Kenya, particularly in the four counties of Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega and Busia. The study will draw from the methods and data collection tools used in similar Freedom Fund studies in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Liberia.

The study is expected to:

1. Estimate the proportion of households in the sampling areas that are home to one or more CDWs, as well as the characteristics of CDWs across the four NIA counties, including demographic characteristics, employment patterns and living arrangements. This will include a door-to-door household sampling technique with adults followed by surveys with CDWs in the households where they are identified.
2. Assess the nature and extent of risks and harms faced by CDWs including abuse, exploitation and poor living and working conditions, including those that amount to human trafficking under Kenyan law and international standards including the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labor.
3. Examine CDWs' stated priorities for supports that will reduce their exposure to harm, including access to protection mechanisms such as education, legal services and social support, as well as identify barriers to service uptake.
4. Generate recommendations following at least one validation session with stakeholders identified by the Freedom Fund that can be used to inform programming, advocacy and future measurement of the NIA initiative's impact.

Main research questions

As part of the contracting process, these questions will be refined with the selected research team. Indicative questions are outlined below to guide proposal design.

1. What is the demographic profile of CDWs across the four NIA counties?

[This question aims to establish a reliable estimate of the number of CDWs and describe their age, gender, schooling and living arrangements; the selected applicant will work with the Freedom Fund to determine the appropriate population denominator and geographic range that is appropriate to the budget and research questions.]
2. What are the main pathways and employment patterns through which children enter and remain in domestic work; what are the family dynamics that result in children entering domestic work?
[This question explores recruitment processes, relationships with employers, migration patterns and duration of employment.]
3. What are the characteristics and family histories of the households where CDWs are working and living in the study areas, and what factors predict if a CDW is exploited?

[This question explores familial bonds that some CDWs have with host households, as well as the reasons that households have for taking in a CDW, how many CDWs have worked in that household, and where previous CDWs have gone after working with the family.]

4. What types and levels of risks, harms or exploitation do CDWs experience in their work and living environments; what are the characteristics of child domestic work that are exploitative in the Kenyan context?

[This question investigates abuse, working hours, conditions, remuneration, control over movement and contact with family.]

5. To what extent do CDWs have access to social protection, legal assistance, education, and other child protection services, and what barriers limit their access?

[This question examines service awareness, accessibility and gaps in support from community organisations, government or employers.]

6. How do CDWs perceive their safety, wellbeing and future opportunities within and beyond domestic work?

[This question provides insights into children's own experiences, resilience and aspirations, and how the NIA partners can organise efforts and resources to support this.]

Research approach and methodology

The Freedom Fund primarily seeks quantitative findings from this study to provide reliable, generalisable estimates of CDWs and the level of exploitation, risks and access to services for the CDWs in the four NIA counties. Proposals should outline the survey design based on previously published Freedom Fund studies in Ethiopia, Liberia and Nigeria, including sampling strategy, sample size calculation and data collection instruments.

If there are any other elements considered to be crucial to a successful review, please include them in the proposal. Applicants may also propose limited qualitative or validation components (e.g., interviews or focus groups) to contextualise survey results or triangulate key findings.

Stakeholder participation

Proposals should specify how CDWs will be accessed and recruited safely and ethically informed by the context of Kenyan urban and rural neighbourhoods. Approaches that draw from previous experience with CDWs and collaboration with local gatekeepers will be viewed favourably. Applicants should also describe if they will engage other stakeholders at different stages of the study. This may include Freedom Fund's local implementing partners, local government offices and community leaders. The proposal should include at minimum one validation workshop or exercise (online or in person) with stakeholders identified by the Freedom Fund.

Operational and ethical considerations

Proposals should consider the budgetary considerations for appropriately training enumerators, conducting interviews safely, privately and without employer interference, referring participants who may disclose abuse or distress and highlight measures to protect confidentiality, ensuring data security, and following a strict Do No Harm principle. Applicants must provide details on their plan to seek approval from a Kenyan ethical review body; applicants should plan to cover any review-related costs in their budgets.

The research will be contracted by the Freedom Fund's US entity and supervised by our Research & Evaluation Manager based in London.

Budget

The FF has budgeted approximately USD 250,000 for this study. Budgets will be reviewed with respect to the strength of the proposal in meeting the project objectives in a cost-effective manner, we do not simply prioritise the lowest budget.

As part of the proposal, please prepare a brief budget with the following breakdown:

- Personnel costs
- Fees to local research partners or subcontractors, if applicable
- Other direct costs – e.g. travel, software licenses, devices for data collection
- Overheads
- Value Added Tax or Goods and Services Tax, if applicable

High-level timeline and deliverables

Main deliverables	Proposed timeline
• Kick-off meeting with the FF team	Dec 2025
• Detailed research protocol including detailed methodology, sampling plan, research tools, work plan and ethical procedures.	Feb 2026
• Submit the research protocol and tools to IRB for approval	Apr 2026
• Primary data collection completed	July 2026
• Data cleaning and analysis	Aug 2026
• Presentation of preliminary findings for internal review and discussion	Sep 2026
• Draft report shared for review and discussion, along with cleaned dataset	Oct 2026
• Finalise report, based on a structure pre-agreed with the Freedom Fund	Nov 2026

Proposal format

Interested parties should prepare a proposal of no more than 3 pages, plus CVs and annexes. Proposals should contain the following sections:

1. Short biography of principal investigator(s) and key team members, outlining relevant subject matter expertise and experience leading similar research projects, particularly in Kenya. CV of the principal investigator should be included in the annex. Past report(s) from similar projects could be included as links or in a separate annex.

2. Research approach, addressing the topics listed in the 'Research approach and methodology' section of this RFP. Proposals should clearly outline a data quality plan (including enumerator training, field supervision and data verification procedures) and a data analysis plan that builds on the approach from previous, parallel Freedom Fund studies.
3. Team structure, defining the role and time commitment of key project team members.
4. Proposed budget in USD, containing the details listed in the 'Budget' section of this RFP.

The proposal must be written in English and sent electronically in Microsoft Office or PDF format.

Proposal criteria & scoring

In reviewing proposals, the Freedom Fund will use the following criteria:

Technical criteria	Weighting
a. Technical capacity of the team (including local partner and subcontractors if relevant), including: - Proposed method is consistent with the outlined approach and is feasible for generating meaningful insights to answer the research questions. - Experience of conducting similar research projects with vulnerable children, with demonstrable understanding of relevant quantitative (and qualitative, if relevant) research techniques.	50%
b. Contextual knowledge of the team, including on: - Expert knowledge of child domestic work in sub-Saharan Africa, ideally specific to Kenya. - Ability to gain access into and work collaboratively with communities affected to carry out the research. - Knowledge of economic, socio-cultural and political environment in Kenya.	20%
c. Team structure, including: - Adequate staffing levels to deliver quality research outputs within the desired timeframe. - Contribution of Kenyan and/or Kenya-based researchers, ideally in key roles such as Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator where they are recognised as authors of the research. - Gender diversity among the team members. - Team members with fluency in English and Swahili are essential. Proficiency in other local languages would be advantageous.	20%
d. Costs are proportionate to the scale of work being proposed, and consideration of all potential expenses.	10%
Total	100%

Payment and Jurisdiction

Applicants should observe that the Freedom Fund is a United States 501(c)(3) public charity. The awarded contract will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, United States of America, without regard to principles relating to conflicts of law. All payments to the consultant under the awarded contract shall be agreed upon therein, in compensation for the services provided, and directly related to the approved costs of the required services when/if applicable. Contracts will always be drafted in United States Dollars.

Confidentiality

This Request for Proposal and associated documents are the property of Freedom Fund and confidential. Apart from using FF documents to respond to the request, you shall not disclose any details, to any other person or organisation, and shall treat this RFP and your response with complete confidentiality.