



# The RHD Action Small Grants Programme: Small Investment, Big Return!

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## BACKGROUND

Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) remains endemic in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) despite its virtual elimination in high-income countries. RHD Action was launched to amplify global efforts to control RHD in 2015 by World Heart Federation and Reach, with demonstration projects in Uganda and Tanzania, and support from Medtronic Foundation. The Small Grants Programme focuses on **People and Communities**, **Medicines and Technologies**, and **Systems and Services** and is designed to support patient and community groups in promoting awareness and advocacy, and to build health workers' capacity to prevent and treat RHD in LMICs.

## METHODS

Requests for proposals were issued through RHD Action mailing lists and cross-promoted on websites and twitter. A review panel with representation from Reach, WHF and demonstration projects used structured criteria for scoring based on clear, feasible, measurable objectives. Preference was given to proposals with dissemination plans using local publicity and social platforms, and for garnering support from local MOH officials. Final selections were approved by Medtronic Foundation. Funding increased from \$2,000 to \$2,500 after the first round.

## RESULTS

Initiated in 2017, 13 proposals have been funded from a pool of 60 submissions. Recipient countries include Zambia, Uganda, Namibia, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Cameroon as well as Fiji, the Philippines and Nepal. Project directors are primarily junior doctors and project managers supervised by senior mentors. In most cases, this is their first funding award. These projects have demonstrated tangible impact and have provided content for first manuscript and abstract submissions and presentations at professional conferences. Grant reports are presented as website stories showcasing the achievements of small local efforts with meaningful impact.

## CONCLUSION

For RHD Action, there is large return on a modest monetary investment resulting in a very visible, viable global RHD networking platform for enthusiastic community and provider activists.



**RHD Action**

United to End  
Rheumatic Heart Disease