



Covid-19 Free Ambassador and Representatives (COFAR) Initiative

[Women's Campaign International](#) is a Philadelphia-based nonprofit with 23 years of experience working with women leaders around the world. As agents of change, women and girls we work with learn to identify community issues, raise awareness, and engage key stakeholders. Since 1998, WCI has worked with more than 500,000 individuals in more than 45 countries to transform their communities.

In times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 global pandemic, women and girls are disproportionately affected¹. To address this, WCI quickly pivoted our international efforts in 2020 to launch a new initiative, [Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy \(RAP\) in the Era of COVID-19](#), to prevent teen pregnancy and the spread of COVID-19 in Kenya. Back home, our [Girls Advocacy and Leadership Series \(GALS\)](#)—our core program that has engaged Philadelphia youth for more than ten years—pivoted to a virtual model, to continue providing girls with support and opportunity through a difficult time. Both GALS and RAP empower girls to understand their own personal power and make a positive impact in their communities.

We realized that this impact strategy is needed now more than ever, as COVID-19 vaccine misinformation and distrust, and difficulty coordinating access continue to inhibit our national efforts to end this pandemic. While racist health experiments in history and ongoing medical racism have led to valid multi-generational skepticism and fear in communities of color, particularly Black communities, distrust in vaccinations is apparent across all demographics. We must come together to reckon with history while providing people of all backgrounds with the accurate information they need to choose to get the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them.

Tapping into our youth engagement framework and building off of our COVID-19 programming in Kenya, WCI is now seeking to co-create a virtual workshop with health professionals focusing on vaccination education. **Through this initiative, WCI seeks to facilitate virtual webinars in partnership with health professionals and the Philadelphia School District to inform Philadelphia youth ambassadors about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine and equip ambassadors with the advocacy skills they need to make a difference in their communities.**

WCI will host weekly webinars facilitated by health professionals to train cohorts of 20-25 high school and college students to be COFAR (Covid-19 Free Ambassadors and Representatives) Ambassadors. These COFAR Ambassadors will be equipped with the knowledge and support they need to share accurate information with their communities as they work together with a COFAR Coach and their cohort to create a community outreach plan. Our goal is to train 500 COFAR Ambassadors who will in turn each reach 10 individuals who will choose to get vaccinated. The effect of the COFAR Ambassadors' outreach will total 5,000 newly vaccinated individuals over the course of four months, who are then able to further share accurate information about COVID-19, vaccines, and access to vaccination sites.

WCI understands the importance of trust, and will ensure that health professionals presenting this information are trusted community leaders who are representative of the individuals we will be engaging. COFAR Ambassadors, COFAR Coaches and health professionals will be paid for their

¹ World Economic Forum, "[Why Do Humanitarian Crises Disproportionately Affect Women?](#)" 2018



time. **At this time, WCI is recruiting COFAR Ambassadors, COFAR Coaches, and health professionals.**

Webinars will provide one-hour worth of educational content, with an additional optional 30 minutes of Q&A afterwards. WCI's curriculum will be based on the CDC's "[COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Toolkit for Community-Based Organizations](#)." Each webinar will cover the following information:

- What is COVID-19? How is COVID-19 spread?
- How can I prevent COVID-19? How do I know if I have COVID-19? What do I do if I think I have COVID-19?
- What are vaccines? How do they work? What is the history of hesitation to get vaccinated? Have vaccines made a positive impact in history?
- What vaccines are there for COVID-19? Who produced them?
- Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe? How can I get a COVID-19 vaccination?

To engage COFAR Ambassadors, WCI will tap into our GALS network in Philadelphia, through which we have trained hundreds of youth to be advocates for their communities. We will provide compensation to COFAR Ambassadors for their time attending the training webinar, with additional incentives for referring more ambassadors to join and for verified vaccinations they attain through their outreach.

In order to assess the impact of our initiative, WCI will use our robust monitoring and evaluation process to measure engagement and information learned through a primary and secondary evidence-based evaluation effort using a participatory mixed methods approach. The main objective will be to assess the outcomes of the program, with reference to how the program operated, whether or not it achieved its goals, and how it can be improved, sustained, and scaled along with allowing WCI to learn about the program's strengths and weaknesses. To achieve this, we will conduct participant and trainer interviews, review secondary data, and analyze qualitative observational data that is collected weekly throughout the program and after the program's conclusion.

During the educational initiative, WCI will use both CDC-provided materials, such as [this informational handout](#), and our own COFAR-specific materials to promote the program through our website, email newsletter, and social media. Additionally, WCI will work with the Philadelphia School District Office of Strategic Partnerships, local Congressional offices, and local press to promote this opportunity and recruit participants city-wide.

We invite you to support this effort by working with WCI to inform Philadelphia youth and their families on the importance of vaccinations, and combat misinformation to stop the spread of this disease. **Together, we can empower the city's youth to be ambassadors for safe practices and vaccinations in their communities and foster a healthier Philadelphia.**