

The Beatrice Project

‘Restoring dignity and opportunity
to
young women in Zimbabwe’

Trustees’ Annual Report
for the period October 2017- October 2018



Registered charity number: 1175299

Principal address: 23, Rockleigh Road, Southampton, SO16 7AQ

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Introduction

General Overview of the Year

It's been an exciting first year for The Beatrice Project. Promising new possibilities have opened up in Zimbabwe in terms of sanitary protection, but an unstable political situation has brought challenges to our partners, Ntombi Nto, along with very real struggles and economic uncertainty for its people.

We are optimistic about the cautious but positive cultural accommodations being made by the young women and their local leaders to recent developments in sanitary protection.

The economic situation in Zimbabwe has become increasingly challenging for our partners with soaring prices, a lack of basic commodities in the shops and even, for a time, a complete lockdown of the internet. Through it all, Ntombi Nto, under the inspiring leadership of Joy Khumalo, has risen to all of these challenges and continues to deliver the project with enthusiasm and dedication.

Our ambition to enable underprivileged girls from these rural communities to maximise their potential for finding work and contributing to their communities, remains as strong as ever.

Background

The Beatrice Project (TBP) is a small UK based charity supporting the work of Ntombi Nto (NN), a Zimbabwean registered trust. Ntombi Nto means 'a wholesome young woman'. TBP began life when it was formally launched by Mrs Joy Khumalo in Zimbabwe in 2015 in partnership with Susan Hutchinson in UK. This was in response to the concerns of local community and church leaders in the rural areas south of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, about girls dropping out of school because of a lack of affordable sanitary protection.

The purpose of the report is to provide information on the background to TBP, its current state and its plans for the future.

Objectives and activities

The objectives of the CIO are:

To advance in life and relieve the needs of girls and young women by providing help, advice and resources as a means of:

- a) developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
- b) enabling them to continue in their education;
- c) providing education on reproductive health and psychosocial issues;
- d) supporting locally led child protection measures.

A specific group defined by age and gender (menstruating girls) and geographical area (the Gwanda region, some 100km outside Bulawayo) was selected by local elders, school and church leaders and was based on past school attendance and positive attitude towards education. The girl beneficiaries

in the pilot group typically walk 5-10 kilometres to attend the distributions of sanitary pads and the workshops where they are also given some food and drink.

Structure, Governance and Management

Names of Trustees: Susan Beatrice Hutchinson
Dr. Karen Rosemary Trewinnard
Adrian John Thomas

Governing document Constitution 23.10.18

Looking Back Over the Last Year

Sanitary Pads

During the year, TBP has continued to fund the distribution of sanitary pads at three separate sites. The pads are bought in Harare, the capital, at a reduced price made available to us through the negotiations of Neil Brown (a TBP supporter and British national currently resident in Zimbabwe) and transported the 400+ kms to Bulawayo by Onsdale Enterprises, the producers of the Farai pads. These are then taken to the sites by Mrs Khumalo (NN)



TBP / NN Meeting 2018

The Aug 2018 trip (Susan Hutchinson, Karen Trewinnard, Barry Trewinnard) gave opportunity for the Trustees to meet with interested parties in Harare and to build on relationships with key people on the ground. It also allowed the Trustees of both TBP and NN to engage in vital lengthy discussions, spanning several days, regarding the delivery of the project and the funding of the activities. The focus of the trip was then the residential 'camp' for the leaders and peer educators which was led by Dr Karen Trewinnard (Sexual Health trainer) with particular input from Nobuhle Shumba, representing The Butterfly Company based in Harare.

Menstrual Cups

The weekend featured further exploration of various means of sanitary protection but looked in particular at the use of the menstrual cup, imported and supplied by The Butterfly Company. This is a very new concept to the rural communities and its introduction has needed careful and sensitive

handling. With the potential to change radically the girls' experience of menstruation, the cup is seen by TBP as a very realistic and more sustainable alternative to the current means of sanitary protection. Although initially expensive (around \$10 per cup) it can give a girl provision for menstruation for as much as 10 years, representing a huge saving over that time compared with disposable pads. The cups are also relatively easy to use and look after. Following the delivery of training and information sessions in August, some of the local leaders in the Gwanda district went back to their communities to discuss introducing menstrual cups to the girls of TBP/NN. Some of these ladies also took cups to try for themselves. Now, a few months later, there are growing numbers of parents and guardians willing to attend information meetings and to give consent for their daughters to choose to use a menstrual cup. Further training of the project beneficiaries with supply of more cups is therefore being planned.



Training

The residential weekend gave some time for the exploring of child protection issues, through teaching and drama, and the support of Childline, as well as the training of peer educators in facilitative discussion skills. Materials used have included the tried and tested Auntie Stella course materials produced by TARSC (The Training and Resource Support Centre) and developed in Zimbabwe. The materials are in English and Ndebele, the local language of the delegates, and sessions were delivered in collaboration with the local cultural leaders, with training in their use. Dr Trewinnard was assisted in the delivery of the weekend by her husband, Barry Trewinnard and by Susan Hutchinson, the co-founder of the original project.



Reusable and Disposable Pads

TBP is continuing to provide disposable sanitary protection for the youngest of the target group. 200 reusable sanitary towel packs (donated in August 2017 by the charity Days for Girls) were also taken on the Sept 2017 trip for the older girls to trial. Locally made washable pads are also being trialled by some girls and there has been a request for us to consider supplying sewing machines and start-up materials for those who wish to begin making them, in a move towards greater self-sufficiency. Other gifts taken to the girls by the Trustees have included up to 200 pairs of pants, made and donated by students of Solent University, which were given to the girls still using the disposable pads.



Looking Forward

Plans for the coming year include the continuing of regular Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) workshops conducted in the local areas by health professionals and other qualified or semi-qualified adults. Younger girls will continue to be provided with sanitary towels whilst, it is hoped, growing numbers of girls will be successful in their use of the cup. Education and training for this will continue to be delivered by local professionals from an established in-country supplier and disseminated by the adult teams on the ground. We are currently seeking funding to add, year on year, to the numbers using cups which will improve the sustainability of the project. The Project continues to explore all available methods of sanitary protection and seek sustainable solutions to issues of hygiene, disposal and affordability.

Financial review

Income and Fund Raising

All funds have so far been donated by friends and families of the Trustees or raised through specific fundraising events. Two of the UK Trustees make annual visits to the project. Historically, these have been funded entirely by the individuals until the Aug.18 trip. Following the project's change in status to a CIO, it was deemed right, and agreed by the Trustees of TBP, that air fares and some subsistence be funded by the charity.

As a charity, we are very fortunate to be supported by a number of regular donors, on whose committed giving we rely for a known amount each month. Regular newsletters, particularly following a trip or at notable times of the year (eg Christmas) give information on the activities, needs and plans of the Trustees and the charity, and these often provoke generous giving. We have been very grateful for some large one-off donations from individuals who have, for example, received an inheritance which they wish to share with us, or on a smaller scale, a family who chose to donate to TBP instead of giving Christmas presents.

Other fundraising activities have also been undertaken by individuals. These have included:

- January 2018: Susan Hutchinson gave a presentation to the students of Solent University where Kathryn Sanders has, over the last three years, inspired her fashion students to contribute to TBP by making, packaging and donating pairs of pants. Approximately 150 pairs of pants were made and donated.
- February 2018: Susan Hutchinson made a school visit and gave a presentation to a group of students representing the whole school. Over £700 was then raised by the school in their Lent appeal.
- April 2018: Neil Anscomb-Gates and Kathryn Sanders completed the Southampton 10km run raising over £300 to pay for the materials used in the making of the pants.
- April 2018: Emma Howard successfully ran the Brighton marathon raising over £300.

With this money we have given grants to NN for the provision and distribution of sanitary protection to 300 girls, as well as the delivery of the monthly workshops. Along with this, funding has been used to facilitate the annual training 'camp' for the girls and their leaders.

Risk Mitigation Reserves policy

As funders of this work, TBP recognises the risk of NN being unable to access funds in country because of the prevailing political and economic instability of Zimbabwe.

In mitigation of this risk the charity has a reserve of more than £3,000 in the UK account from which NN could be sent funds within 7 days if required.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the initial period from 23 October 2017 to 31 October 2018

Receipts and Payments				
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Last
	funds	funds	funds	year
Receipts				
Donations	8,991	-	8,991	-
Gift aid	567	-	567	-
Funds raised prior to incorporation	1,757	-	1,757	-
Fund raising	1,260	-	1,260	-
Sub total	12,575	-	12,575	-
Asset/Investment sales				
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	12,575	-	12,575	-
Payments				
Grants made	3,835	-	3,835	-
Conference & training	3,645	-	3,645	-
Sanitary protection supplies	1,452	-	1,452	-
Bank charges	51	-	51	-
Sub total	8,984	-	8,984	-
Asset/Investment purchases				
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total payments	8,984	-	8,984	-
Net receipts/payments	3,592	-	3,592	-
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	3,592	-	3,592	-

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
Cash funds			
Bank accounts	3,592	-	3,592
Total cash funds	3,592	-	3,592
Liabilities			
	-	-	-
Total liabilities	-	-	-
Signed by two trustees:			
Date of approval:			

Testimonials

1. The residential training weekend for the adult leaders and peer educators was organised practically by Mrs Joy Khumalo (NN) and the programme created collaboratively; it was financed solely by TBP.

At the close of the weekend, one of the beneficiaries asked to deliver a speech she had written. She began: 'The change that has taken place in my community has forced me to take a pen and a paper {to} write down this speech expressing my gratitude to the Beatrice Ntombi Nto Project'. She went on to speak of the transition that is taking place in her community and finished with these words: 'I would like to thank you, Beatrice Ntombi Nto, for the provision of sanitary wear and delivering menstrual education to our girls, imbokodo zakusasa (mothers of tomorrow). With this I would like to commend our donors: we are really grateful as a community. To our mentors, peer educators, our dear mother Mrs Khumalo (Joy) and the entire Beatrice group...siyabonga, iNkosi yezulu ilenzele kahle (thank you, may the good Lord bless you).

2. A report written by Nobuhle Shumba (trainer from The Butterfly Company supplying menstrual cups in Zimbabwe) cited evidence of the positive impact of the project. The head teachers of the schools being targeted, all of them male, admitted 'girls do not come to school when they are menstruating and it affects their academic performancethe issue of menstrual health management is a challenge to the girl child and most times the headmaster feels helpless since the schools have no means and ways of helping the girls on menstrual management issues.... things are tough and they cannot afford to buy pads because they are expensive and life is tough for them.

Most of the parents or guardians have no source of income. The areas they live in are dry and crops don't do well so every cent that comes their way is channelled to food and other basic commodities. Some parents said they consider sanitary wear a luxury hence they will rather..... buy a packet sugar for the whole family to benefit than just one girl.'

He thanked The Beatrice Project for all the support and assistance they have rendered to the young girls at their school.



Declaration:

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report.

Signed: S.B Hutchinson

Signed: K.R.Trewinnard

Signed: A.J.Thomas.....