

Year of the Girl Brainstorm January 19th 2022

Suggested projects:

Literacy

Discussion covered the language in which literacy is taught. Initially this needs to be in the first language and later in English. It was stated that phonics and then the joining up / blending together of phonics are key stages in the learning.

Literacy levels are lower for girls than boys

Some children have missed school due to covid.

There is a national standard for literacy in Ethiopia which could be used to identify children needing additional support.

Mark and Murti are currently running a pilot project where teachers are paid to provide additional support to students. This pilot project will be assessed in March and then EEL can discuss the possibility of funding an extension of the project.

Key decisions at that stage would be:

- How to identify poor readers AND illiterate girls
- Which schools to target
- How to implement the training of teachers to deliver the project
- Method of recording of interventions and outcomes
- Costs

Literacy among deaf students

We currently run deaf tutorials.

To expand this scheme we would like to employ one female deaf librarian (£110).

We would also like to employ a deaf librarian for grade 9-12 children in the deaf café.

Mark will provide more precise costs.

We note that the transition from primary to secondary school is a key moment when girls are lost from education. This transition may not be until a student is 16. We should consider what is causing this and how we can improve student retention at this point. Do sanitary facilities have an impact? We discussed a wish to understand what private facilities girls have in which to manage their personal needs, particularly during menstruation.

We would like to discuss this with Murti. Some members are keen to help to improve privacy and, if budget allowed, to support the provision and maintenance of toilet facilities.

Information needed:

- an opinion how facilities and their privacy at primary schools impact girls and their education;
- do some schools have an urgent need for improvement of these facilities and if so which ones?

If there was deemed to be a need we could move forward to obtain quotes.

Spring capping

We discussed the impact that collection of water can have on a girl's ability to attend school and that this was an issue only in rural areas. Should access to rural areas be improved we

would be interested in knowing if any communities are some distance from water. **To discuss with Murti/ team**

Days for girls sanitary protection

We have access to reusable sanitary protection and we intend to order a supply and take it out to Ethiopia on our next visit. It is too risky and expensive to use a carrier. **Annie is taking this forward**

Developing girls' self esteem and supporting their wellbeing

Bike project

Murtti has advised that the bikes are a boost to the girls' confidence and she recommends that this be continued /expanded. We need to

- request a plan for how the scheme could continue/expand
- assess running costs.

The bikes are currently used only within the school grounds. The initial concept mentioned using the bikes to improve girls' safety during commute to school.

- What are the obstacles to this and is it this still an objective?
- Could we include health and safety training within the structure of the club?

We need to discuss all of above with Murtti.

Girls clubs/gender clubs

Girls clubs could potentially be run by librarians at a time when the library is not open to others. Potential topics for discussion could be:

- Personal health, hygiene and coping with menstruation
- Sexual health/education
- Social media and the risks
- Self esteem
- Any topic which is playing on a girl's mind

All of the above would require the librarian or tutor to be trained. Potentially this is a "safe space" for girls and young women where they could receive support as well as gaining inspiration and empowerment from shared experiences and conversations.

Gender clubs involve both sexes.

Girls and boys meet and talk about the gender differences within their culture. By open discussion develop an improved level of understanding and respect for one another.

For both the girls clubs and the gender clubs we would need:

- to determine which of the above topics would be discussed
- a plan for training of the person delivering the service
- a plan for advertising the clubs and recruiting young people to them (from both within and outside the school to capture non-attenders). Would we provide funding for food or snacks to encourage attendance?
- a plan for delivery of the service and recording of outcomes

- costs

We need to ask Mark and Murti if there is a template for training and if so the approximate costs of providing the training and running the service. Ideally we would like to select 2 female librarians with a suitable aptitude and personality for this kind of conversation. We would like to ask DASC if they offer a programme of leadership training (we understand that this is commonly available with the church development and training structure).

Fundraising

Sue Errington from DDE (Devon Development Education) was very helpful around fundraising ideas. We discussed:

- Kalkidan has a shop which could host events and share publicity materials
- Respect festival – we could have a stall. Annie is taking this forward
- Approach libraries for poster space/a table to promote our charity
- Car boot sales
- Jazz evening – we have the offer from Sue Rainger to sing
- Revive the Ethiopian banquet (Taste of Ethiopia)
- Hire the Ethiopian café for an evening and invite a speaker
- Use Acoustic Café again as an event
- Raise awareness by inviting local dignitaries
- Designate a week to specifically target Year of the Girl for fundraising activities
- Designate a tab on our website for donations directly to Year of the Girl and have these funds coded for accounting purposes
- Usual social media / website promotion

DDE will help us to publicise events and we also asked Sue if she would advertise for volunteers.

We need volunteers to:

- Support, as part of a rota, a stall at the Respect Festival 30th April – 1st May
- help with project management to take one or more of the ideas above forward
- help with fundraising, ideally to own a specific idea or project
- help with presenting and chairing our link up meetings
- take responsibility for Year of the Girl
- take a seat on the board of trustees to oversee fundraising

Present were

George Dexter, Peter von Lany, Hilary, Simon Marchant, Penny Pullen, Dawn Swettenham, Annie Bainbridge, Mark Smith, David Scarbrough, Sue Errington, Claire Fereday
Apologies from Gordon and Val Read and Cathy Kiddle

Further news

Since the meeting we have been made aware of girls who have disabilities which are not receiving adequate management. We have shown an example of this on our website. We will discuss with Murti how we can support her to identify girls with healthcare needs.

David Scarbrough has created a dedicated donation tab on our website for The Year of the Girl.

Next steps

The trustees will take forward all of the action points highlighted and ask our members to consider if they can help in any way.