

The ZimProject Trustee's Report 2020

Introduction

2020 has been a different year for The ZimProject mainly due to the COVID-19 global pandemic but it has been the start of a few new endeavours. The report below details various aspects of the ZimProject and the successes and challenges we have faced this year.

Students

Two of our students finished school. They are currently in the process of applying for higher education. One is going for a University degree and the other a diploma. We are committed to continue sponsoring them.

Four of our University students finished their undergraduate degrees this year in July. They all passed. One of them wants to continue with a masters next year and the others are currently in the search for job opportunities in their fields. The COVID-19 situation has made it difficult to find employment right now, but they continue to search.

The remaining students are still at school or University and are continuing their education. We are very proud of all our students and what they have accomplished. It has been a tough battle, especially for our university students. There have been challenges with ever changing fees, changing University rules and social implications such as being a girl doing an engineering degree but they have come through and succeeded.

We will start sponsoring new students soon. We are currently awaiting suggested candidates from the school. Schools only came out of lockdown in September. However, the government school teachers are on a national strike, so we are still awaiting information regarding new students.

In other news, one of our previous students has started his own engineering business. It is growing and he is providing sustainable solutions to engineering problems in remote areas such as solar power and borehole water.

FUELED Monthly Event

The monthly FUELED event did not happen this year due to the restrictions from lockdown. In February the team of young people to help run FUELED was established and trained, ready to start in March, which is when lockdown came into effect. At present, the rules allow only groups of 50 to meet, but the nature of FUELED and the space it uses makes it impractical to hold FUELED in person. We are currently working on a plan to run online campaigns to encourage students and improve mental health.

One of our old students is part of a whatsapp meeting to improve mental health in young people. There are about 190 students in this group, mostly University students from around the country as well as from other African countries. We used this platform to speak about mental health issues. We ran two sessions with two speakers over the summer about topics they wanted us to speak about.

The feedback was that it was extremely useful. This was evident by the number of questions that followed each session and the positive comments on the answers. They would like us to carry on being involved in this way and we shall continue to do so.

When large meetings are allowed again, we will carry on with FUELED as usual as well as the new endeavours mentioned above.

Lasting Impressions Leadership Camp

Due to COVID-19, this has been postponed to November. Half of it has been paid for already. The restrictions by the government mean that the group of A'level students must be broken up into two groups as gatherings of more than 50 people are not allowed. The national teachers strike also has an effect on planning this. So we are awaiting news of the camp going ahead.

Zim Trip 2020

Many things were affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown. The Zim trip this year was cancelled as flights were cancelled. However, we are still trying to carry out the Leadership camps that usually take place during the trip.

Finances

In terms of finances, a few things changed due to the changing economy of Zimbabwe and the lockdown situation. The lockdown engulfed the whole of the school's second term, which meant we did not need to send 2nd term fees. Universities carried on with online learning, so fees still had to be paid for the University students. Also, the actual fees and exchange rate changed a few times and the overall result at the end of lockdown meant we had more money in the bank.

The sponsors were emailed with how we planned on using the excess money and they were also given the choice to reduce payment. Everyone kept their sponsorship levels the same except one. Also, sponsors replied that they were happy with the plans and also made a few suggestions which we were happy with. It was assumed that those who didn't reply were happy with the plans we made.

As we couldn't run any fundraising events for the leadership camp, a part of the money was used to pay for camp. One half of camp has been paid for and we are waiting for confirmation to pay the other half. This is due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. See the part on Lasting Impressions camp.

We also used some of the money to purchase textbooks for another school in the same area. We were able to deliver 30% of their textbook requirements (640 books). We aim to deliver the rest as well as some of the other items they have requested such as sports gear, laptops and sanitary pads.

We also want to sponsor the accommodation fees of our University students. As they have been working from home, we haven't had a chance yet. As soon as they return and let us know, we will start sponsoring them for their accommodation fees as well as their education fees.

Lockdown Support

Lockdown in Zimbabwe affected many people in the community of the school area. We decided to raise some money to help with anyone who needed it. We managed to help a number of elderly people for a month, providing food, basic necessities and medicine. We decided to continue supporting the medical needs of 2 of these old people till the end of the year.

We also supported about 14 street kids by providing them with meals during this time. This has evolved into a soup kitchen that we are continuing to do. Whilst feeding them, we also spend time talking to them and trying to help them with their situations. One street kid confided in us that he would like to go to school and get an education. We managed to find him a foster home where he is happily living with a family. The aim is to enroll him in school from the new school year in January. He already has a sponsor willing to sponsor his fees.

Letters and Communication

Despite COVID-19 making it more difficult to get letters to students this year, there has still been a steady stream of communication. It has been easier for the University students as we can send letters directly to their email addresses and they can reply back directly. The students have really loved hearing from their sponsors, especially during lockdown, which has been so difficult for many in Zimbabwe. Looking forward to next year, we hope that communication with school students will become easier now that restrictions are being lifted there.

Thank you

We would like to thank all of you for supporting us this year. It has been a tough year for everyone globally yet you have still been generous to those who have less support and help than we have. Because of your donation and support, people are still alive, people are still studying and making a life for themselves and people's lives have had major turning points, all of which is evident above. You've done so much for so many and we are sure we are echoing their words when we say there are no words to express how grateful we are for you.

INCOMING			OUTGOING	
From	Amount		For	Amount
Sponsorship	£7,492.97		Fees	£2,671.13
Lockdown donation	£1,083.20		Lockdown donation	£698.20
Design Integrity	£1,182.65		Resource	£2,097.60
TOTAL INCOMING	£9,758.82		Camp	£2,969.66
			Soup Kitchen and fostering	£618.41
			TOTAL OUTGOING	£9,055.00