

The Beatrice Project

**‘Restoring dignity and opportunity
to
young women in Zimbabwe’**

**Trustees’ Annual Report
for the period
1 November 2020- 31 October 2021**



Registered charity number: 1175299

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

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1 Introduction

1.1 General Overview of the Year

Despite the pandemic, The Beatrice Project (BP), has continued its fundraising efforts to support the work in Zimbabwe and, against considerable odds, the Ntombi Nto (NN) team continues to deliver with enthusiasm and dedication. It has been another year in which the BP has been subject to UK government restrictions regarding travel and this has meant another year without our visiting Zimbabwe. However, communication has been regular and the NN team has been implementing the programme and progress in some key areas.

The political and economic situation in Zimbabwe continues to bring challenges to NN, and the Covid situation has meant school closures and restrictions on meetings. Despite this, NN is continuing to work with other agencies in Zimbabwe, and is growing both in confidence and in the scope of its work. Since being recognised by the Gwanda District Council, NN has been legally able to access school attendance data, though this has obviously been affected by schools being closed for long periods and is therefore very limited. NN has been approached by several schools for help and the sense of ownership of the project by community elders, both men and women, in the rural settlements, is truly impressive.

Our shared ambition remains to enable underprivileged girls from these rural communities to maximise their potential through completing their education, finding work and contributing to their communities.

1.2 Background

The Beatrice Project (BP) is a small UK based charity supporting the work of Ntombi Nto (NN), a Zimbabwean registered trust. Ntombi Nto means 'a wholesome young woman'. The BP began life when it was formally launched by Mrs Joy Khumalo in Zimbabwe in 2015 in partnership with Susan Hutchinson in the 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 the BP, its current state and its plans for the future.

1.3 Objectives and activities

The objectives of the BP 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 teachers 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 health education workshops and to receive support in the provision of menstrual protection whether re-usable pads, menstrual cups or disposable pads.

1.4 Structure, Governance and Management

Trustees: Susan Beatrice Hutchinson
Dr Karen Trewinnard (identified and appointed as Safeguarding Officer)
Roger John Snowdon
Anthony Andrew Arthur

2 Looking Back Over the Last Year

2.1 BP visit to NN

It has not been possible for the BP team to visit Zimbabwe this year because of the Covid pandemic. However, regular communication, by phone and email, has supported the continued running of the work.

2.2 Training

The UK team appointed Dr Karen Trewinnard as Safeguarding Officer and some Trustee training was undertaken as well as a review of the charity's Safeguarding policy. Since the team has been unable to visit since 2018, no further training has been delivered by BP this year. Work has, however, continued, under Mrs. Joy Khumalo's guidance. This has been with the support and backing not only of TARSC (The Training and Resource Support Centre) but of Bonani Medina (local youth leader working under the auspices of Solon Foundation) as well as some of the cultural leaders in the communities. When possible, smaller group training sessions have been held.



Figure 1: Joy delivering to one of the sites

2.3 Reusable Pads

With funding from BP, NN has been able to set up sewing rooms at the original sites, providing them with manual sewing machines and all the necessary start-up materials. Girls are able to work, under the supervision of qualified adults, to produce high quality re-usable menstrual pad kits. Materials to be transported to one of the sites



Figure 2: Materials to be transported to one of the sites

2.4 Menstrual Cups

The menstrual cup (now sourced from India) was introduced to the girls and their leaders and adult carers in August 2018. This remains a relatively new concept in the rural communities but discussion and education delivered to the girls and their parents/guardians has resulted in an increasing acceptance of this method. With the potential to change radically the girls' experience of menstruation, and solve the three challenges of affordability, hygiene and disposal, the cup is seen by BP as a very realistic alternative to the current means of sanitary protection.

2.5 Disposable Sanitary Pads

BP has continued to fund the distribution of sanitary pads as needed at the three initial sites plus an additional school site. However, the sites were put on notice by Mrs Khumalo, via the Gwanda District Council, that disposable pads would be phased out as soon as possible in 2022. Against all odds, the pads continue to be available for sale in Harare, the capital, at a reduced price made available to NN. However, free transportation of the pads from Harare is no longer available to us, so they have to be collected from Harare and taken to the sites by Mrs Joy Khumalo (NN).



Figure 3: Signing for a delivery

3 Looking Forward

Plans for 2022 include a proposed visit to Zimbabwe by the BP team. This will enable thorough reviews and discussion regarding the project to take place and will provide the team with opportunities to meet the school and cultural heads and to gather some much needed data. Boys have begun to be included in the training programme, using the tried and tested Auntie Stella materials (SRH course materials produced in Zimbabwe by The Training and Resource Support Centre), but this may need resourcing and developing. It is also hoped that increasing numbers of girls will have made re-usable pad kits or will have been successful in their use of the cup, and that numbers using disposable pads will gradually diminish. BP will continue to support NN as it responds to requests from schools to set up and establish similar projects.

4 Financial review

4.1 Income and Fund Raising

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 and updates on our website give information on the activities, needs and plans of the Trustees and the charity, and these often prompt generous giving.

We are grateful for the ongoing input and support of Etch, a digital advisory firm specialising in helping businesses grow through the use of digital platforms and marketing. Their support has enabled us to run virtual fundraising events which have boosted our income considerably.

All money received or raised is used by BP to fund the work of NN.

4.2 Risk Mitigation Reserves

As principal funders of the work undertaken by NN in Zimbabwe, TBP recognises the need to be able to provide the quarterly support grants on a regular and timely basis.

Whilst the trustees wish to see all funds raised by TBP to be transferred to Zimbabwe within as short a time scale as possible, they recognise the need to hold some funds as a reserve to ensure continuity of support.

With quarterly support grants currently around £2,500 the trustees consider that a reserve of £1000 is appropriate at the present time.

4.3 Receipts and Payments Accounts for the period Nov 20 to Oct 21

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Last Year
Receipts				
Donations	10601.95	1,500.00	12101.95	12359.46
Gift Aid	1296.64		1296.64	820.70
Grants Received	0.00	0.00	0.00	18000.00
Fund Raising	1694.55		1694.55	966.60
Sub Total	13593.14	1,500.00	15093.14	32146.76
Assets/Investment sales				
	-	-	-	-
Sub Total	-	-	-	-
Total Receipts	13593.14	1,500.00	15093.14	32146.76
Payments				
Grants Made	14003.82	2,989.01	16992.83	27113.98
SanitaryProtection Supplies	1008.85	-	1008.85	1415.42
Cost of Fundraising	0.00	-	0.00	0.00
Administration	319.53	-	319.53	117.60
Bank Charges	310.94	-	310.94	184.53
Sub Total	15643.14	2,989.01	18632.15	28831.53
Asset/Investment Purchases				
Loan to Ntombi Nto	-	-	-	-
Sub Total	-	-	-	-
Total Payments	15643.14	2989.01	18632.15	28831.53
Net Receipts/Payments	-2050.00	-1,489.01	-3539.01	3315.23
Transfers between Funds	0.00	0		-
Cash Funds last year end	3926.21	3,163.02	7089.23	3774.00
Cash Funds this year end	1876.21	1,674.01	3550.22	7089.23

Figure 4: Income and Expenditure

4.4 Statement of assets and liabilities at 31 October 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
Cash Funds			
Bank Accounts	1,876.21	1,674.01	3,550.22
Total Cash Funds	1,876.21	1,674.01	3,550.22
Other Assets			
Loan to Ntombi Nto	402	-	402
	-	-	-
Total Other Assets	402	-	402
Liabilities			
	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	-	-	-

Signed by Two Trustees




Date of Approval

27.4.22

Figure 5: TBP Assets and Liabilities

5 The Impact of NN/BP Pre-Covid

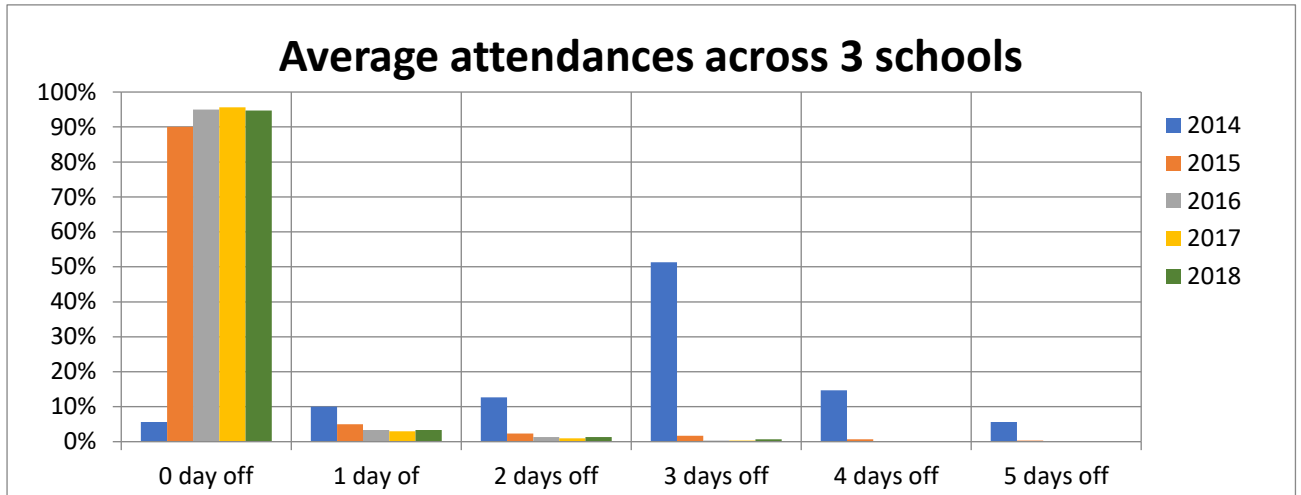



Figure 6: The Impact of NN/BP

This exciting graph indicates the provisional records of attendances across the schools for the years 2014-2018. The attendance figures for girls have improved very dramatically. It has not been possible, largely because of protracted school closures, to gather comparable data for the years affected by the Covid pandemic.

Declaration:

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

Signed: S.B Hutchinson 

Signed: K.R. Trewinard 