



Health Education Africa Resource Team

The Pulse

HEART FREEDOM FOR GIRLS (FFG)

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“They will tell you everything that is happening here.”

- Colossians 4:9

\$5 or Kshs. 400 is enough to supply sanitary towels to a girl for a year.



- Health Education Africa Resource Team
- Lions/Rotary Freedom For Girls (FFG) Project.



@Africa_HEART

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“Facilitating FREEDOM!!!!”



From Left, Aubrey Costa, Lydiah Njoroge, Ashlee Negrete, Katelynn Winslow and Brittany Tuscan

As a 2011 HEART Intern, I have loved getting to work with the project staff at HEART and getting involved with the FFG project.

Through the upcountry trips to Upper and Lower Taita, as well as an unexpected trip to Machakos, I have had hands-on experience in an area that I am very passionate about: the empowerment of girls. By interviewing the girls who benefit from the Freedom For Girls project, I received a better picture of the everyday struggles that

they face, such as poverty, lack of food and water, HIV/AIDS, and their lack of freedom compared to the boys.

These girls have dreams, and the FFG project not only shows them that someone has seen their struggle but cares enough to help their dreams come true. To hear the girls speak about the new freedom they have to go to school, and play sports (something I know I often take for granted) has made me see that the FFG project is incredibly important in the lives of these girls.

The more I worked within HEART's FFG project the more proud I became of being apart of such a groundbreaking ministry. Even though the field work was matched with an equal amount of analysis, Excel

inputs, and write ups in the office, I would not trade my time here at HEART (even the many hours in the office) for the world. The strong feeling to be a part of something greater than oneself is a feeling almost every person longs for and looks for in life. I can honestly say that after 6 weeks of doing God's work alongside Kenyan and American staff alike, I obtained such a feeling here at HEART. It may sound cliché to say that my intern project, which focused within HEART's FFG project, changed my life, but in the end, it would be dishonest if I did not say so.

“I want to be free, I want to enjoy life

Don't suffocate me. The world needs me.”





Aubrey Costa, HEART 2011 intern, during an interview session in upper Taita.

Monitoring Progress in Upper and Lower Taita

In any project meaning to make a difference, there exist a crucial need to consistently monitor and evaluate its development. Thus the FFG secretariat and HEART 2011 interns took a trip to Upper and Lower Taita districts to carry out an evaluation of the project in the districts. The exercise involved visiting schools and interviewing the teachers and girls.



Intern Ashlee Negrete conducting an interview during the evaluation exercise in Taita.

In HEART's quest we found that overall, FFG has been very successful where it has been properly facilitated. There were two schools where teachers implementing the project seemed confused on FFG expectations. It was clear that to have a teacher in charge of the FFG project at each school is of key importance; she must have a solid understanding of how the project is expected to be carried out, for the project to achieve its full potential.

the above challenges were addressed, the program is truly a blessing to these girls.

We continue to thank all our partners for supporting the girls in the project.



Above: Girls happily singing at a FFG event in Oldonyonyoki, Kajiado.

Below: Intern Brittany Tuscan interviewing beneficiaries in Taita.

Some of the challenges reported were storage, improper distribution, community pressures, and follow up. Since this was the first year running the FFG project, these challenges were expected. In the schools where

"The most important gift anyone can give a girl is a belief in her own power as an individual, her value without reference to gender, her respect as a person with potential."

-- Emilie Buchwald



Empowering girls; Strengthening Communities.

The girls who received consistent monthly packets, proper education, and lived in a community that supported the implementation of the project stayed in school and even started outperforming the boys in class ranking.

The girls said they had confidence to run and play now that they had a proper way to manage their monthly cycle. The girls can remove themselves from class for just a short time, instead of missing whole days of school, to take care of their cycle and return confident that they will not encounter problems.

Mrs. Dorcas Mwang'ombe of St. Joseph's Primary stated that the girls can now "maintain proper hygiene," because they are not soiling their uniforms like before.

The simple ability to stay clean and comfortable gives the girls confidence they had no access to before the FFG project. Mrs. Baraza of Kitivo Primary in Lower Taita mentioned that the girls' behavior out in the community is improving because they no longer



have to beg for the money to buy sanitary towels.

A powerful comment came from Mrs. Rose Mwanvasi of Kungu Primary when she stated that "If you have something and you share, you set others free." She also said that the towels have "enhanced

morale." This is evident through the relationship between some of the teachers leading the FFG project and the beneficiaries. Mrs. Gladys Mkamba of Kidaya Primary in Upper Taita was excited because the project has caused girls to become more comfortable in speaking freely about their concerns or problems and asking their teachers questions.

FFG project has brought more than just freedom for the girls. It has become an avenue for girls, mothers, and teachers to become closer as a community. With this in mind the FFG project will continue to grow, further changing the lives of young girls across the nation of Kenya.

'If you have something and you share, you set others free.'

Freedom For Girls In Machakos.



The FFG project in Machakos District is setting a standard for proper implementation that can be easily used in other FFG projects. The project is headed by a partnership between a local of Machakos named Joseph and the Hazen Family from Auburn, CA.

The Hazen family entrusts Joseph with the task of distribution, and oversight for the project, and he is

often on the ground checking in on how the teachers implementing the project are handling their responsibilities. When this is combined with the community's extreme involvement in helping the FFG project succeed, the two key elements work together to help the project run smoothly and effectively.

Mrs. Georgina Muli of Kisueni Primary said she "learned a lot. Sharing with others is very important.



When you share with one another you are carrying someone else's burden. God will help you." Mrs. Catherine Muthini of Mulaani Primary talked about how the "girls feel free to express their experiences and worries." She also said that the project has helped the teachers bring up topics such as HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy.



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Asante Sana...

PRESTIGE PACKAGING



Rotary D9200



Lions D411A



Hazen Family

Rtn. STEVE & PAT WERNER



BEVERLY FLOWER FARM

Knowledge=Power=Survival

Closer to my Dreams.....

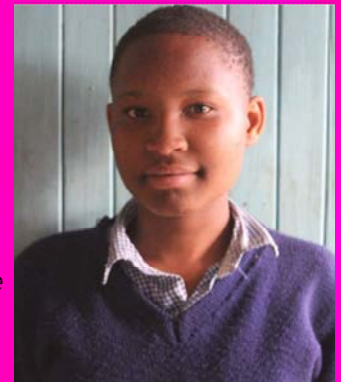


FFG aims to ensure girls are present in school every single school day. This results in better performance in their school work and more chances for them as they pursue their dreams. Below, meet some of the girls as they speak of how the project has been instrumental in their becoming free.

Catherine Wambughu
 Class 8
 Nyolo Primary
 Lower Taita

Wants to be a Broadcaster

"When I would be on my cycle I was not able to come to school. Boys used to laugh but now they don't."



Sabina Kileta
 Class 8
 Mruru Primary
 Lower Taita

Wants to be a Broadcaster

"The Sanitary towels have helped me in many ways. Before the towels I had to use my clothes (There is often a lack of water and soap)."



Nelly Maseghe
 Class 6
 Kungu Primary
 Upper Taita

Wants to be an Engineer

"The sanitary towels have helped me very much because I received them when my mother was broke. She was not having money to buy for me. I went and got them from my teacher then used them very well without any problems."



My Candle shines brighter now that am free.

