

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS IN ZIMBABWE

### Final Report Summary

This project was implemented in Chipinge District, in six communities, for two and half years and will be remembered for a very long time as one which brought about very positive lasting impact in the lives of young girls and boys in the district.

**Achievement: Construction of 3 boarding facilities for 105 girls including the provision of beds, linen, blankets and electricity for the facilities which would cater for 35 students per boarding house. Desks and chairs for the study rooms at each facility were also procured, to ensure a safe and efficient learning environment for the girls. The boarding houses were built at the communities Beacon, Rimbi and Mtandahwe.**



Foto: Plan International

The project was able to support the provision of safer accommodation facilities for girls through the construction of boarding facilities in three communities in Chipinge. Faced with walking very long distances to school and in some cases forced to resort to bush boarding that posed serious abuse cases, this project has been implemented at the right time for vulnerable girls in search of education in Chipinge. It is very pleasing to note that there has been very high demand for places in the boarding facilities that are affordable to most marginalised girls in rural Chipinge. The model also has attracted other schools to construct similar facilities for girls, which is a great success of the project. Significant changes have been also observed among many key stakeholders, government authorities, communities and the girls themselves. It is very pleasing to note that the government has hailed the concept of the boarding facility as the best model that should be taken as a national model for the country. Even high ranking government officials have visited the boarding facilities and have all been impressed with the model and the impact it has had so far in the lives of the most marginalised girls in rural communities in Chipinge.

**Achievement: Construction of washroom facilities at Emerald and Chisuma Secondary schools for 300 girls and 35 female teachers**

The construction of sanitary facilities also contributed positively in the creation of safe and friendly learning environments for girls. It is without doubt that girls in rural communities in Chipinge District faced a number of impediments in accessing quality education due to non-existing sanitary facilities in most schools. With the construction of washrooms at their schools, absenteeism from school when girls are having their monthly cycles has drastically reduced. This achievement has been confirmed by both schools. Interestingly boys at both schools have also welcomed this development for the girls and they are supportive of the facilities. Also traditional leaders support that washroom facilities are a necessity at schools especially in secondary schools where there are many adolescent girls. Community leaders are now advocating for similar facilities at other schools in their communities. Chisuma further got a borehole, from the project, to support provision of clean and safe water for students.

**Achievement: Construction of classroom block at Chisuma secondary school. Since completion of the classroom block in 2017, over 250 boys and girls have directly benefitted from using the classrooms.**



Classroom block at Chisuma school. Foto: Plan International.

This project was able to advance learning environments for both boys and girls through infrastructure development particularly the construction and furnishing of a 1 by 2 classroom block at Chisuma Secondary.

**Achievement: Empowerment of 400 girls through Girls Empowerment Movement Clubs and 200 boys through Boys Empowerment Movement Clubs**

In order to reduce existing gender inequalities in marginalised rural communities in Chipinge District, the project was able to support the promotion of boy and girl empowerment through promotion of boy and girl empowerment clubs in schools, BEM (Boys Empowerment Movement) and GEM (Girls Empowerment Movement) Clubs. These clubs provided opportunities for boys and girls to amplify their voices on issues that violate their rights and other issues that affect them on daily basis. Boys and young adults were further engaged and trained as gender champions of change for their communities as a means to promoting gender equality in rural communities. Girls are engaged to speak up. We also trained mentors at the schools, so that they continue their work with the Girls and Boys Club in the future, also when the project has ended.

**Achievement: 262 males and 394 females in the communities support girls education**

This project was also able to successfully rally support from various stakeholders which included the traditional leadership structure. Through community engagement sessions and dialogues we emphasized on the importance of education particularly for girls. Communities were mobilized to tackle the gender imbalances that exist between boys and girls which eventually prejudice the girl child. The mobilization strategy incorporated advocacy on resourcing girls' education. This was done through targeting parents, young people and children around Rimbi, Emerald, Chisuma, Mutandahwe and Mabee Secondary Schools. The involvement of the traditional leadership structure was meant to imbed ownership of the project in the communities and to ensure its sustainability after project closure.

Target group planned	Actual (total in whole project period)
Rimbi: 1011 children (543 girls, 468 boys)	Rimbi 1346 (662 girls, 684 boys)
Chisuma: 170 children (92 girls, 78 boys)	Chisuma 257 (134 girls, 123 boys)
Emerald: 275 children (138 girls, 137 boys)	Emerald 430 (210 girls, 220 boys)
Beacon Hill: 263 children (112 girls, 151 boys)	Beacon 292 (124 girls, 168 boys)
Mtandahwe: 485 children (233 girls, 252 boys)	Mtandahwe 683 (336 girls, 347 boys)
Mabee: 153 children (87 girls, 66 boys)	Mabee 257 (127 girls, 130 boys)