

Wartburg College
Hope for the Namibian Child
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Namibia

Background

Hope for the Namibian Child focuses on constructing an 8m by 7m classroom at an existing primary state school called Ndjukuma Primary School in my home village that has been neglected for decades. Even though primary education is free in Namibia, lack of resources continue to stop some children from attending school to realize their potential. Ndjukuma is the only primary school in a village of more than 20,000 people and it currently employs 11 staff members to educate 269 learners, but has only four permanent classrooms and no pre-primary due to the shortage of space. About 40% of the population at the village are of primary education age, and currently less than 25% go to school. Some class periods are taught under trees and in grass huts due to inadequate buildings. Those that are not enrolled in school stay at home looking after livestock and doing hard labor in the fields. Many are left hopeless and feeling less worthy due to their inability to attend school and as a result the cycle of poverty regenerates.

Purpose

This project serves two purposes by providing a classroom to allow for increased enrollment, as well as increasing the quality of education by providing donated stationeries and books through the Wartburg College's VAC community service organization that I am a part of. Hope for the Namibian Child is intended to meet the global economic and political challenges created by the Government's failure to prioritize funding to help promote global income equality. It will set a standard to the Namibian Government that letting our less privileged groups remain in poverty will continue to hinder world peace. I believe that educating our youth will ensure that the future is bright in the global community because we live in a codependent world.

Effects to Participants

I will be the only student participant in this project; however, I will be working closely with the principal of the school and the Namibian activist Bernadine Johannes with whom I have been doing projects with for two years. She will be assisting me by performing regular checkups of the school while I'm at college and monitoring the progress of the learners and the use of resources. She is highly involved in a lot of community service projects at Namibian schools. She will help me to identify needs at other schools experiencing similar situations so that we may focus on their needs in the future. She explained that being a part of this project will boost her desire to empower Namibian youth who have lost hope in achieving positive change.

The Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and the Wartburg VAC organization showed high interest in being part of the project by donating school items that they may no longer need that would still be valuable to Ndjukuma Primary school. Usually at the end of each semester, tremendous amounts of paper are thrown away; educating and raising awareness that these same resources are highly needed elsewhere will help the donors develop a mindfulness of sustainability and generosity. This mindset will benefit them in both the short and long term by allowing them to actively participate in becoming global citizens through providing possible solutions to global issues.

Commitment to the Project

The implementation of this project requires my dedication and commitment. As a self-driven individual, I believe that anything can be done when effort is fixed in the right direction. I strive to go out of my way to communicate to anyone who will assist in the growth of the project that goes beyond constructing the classroom. This growth ranges from personally educating our youngsters and personally being dedicated in raising donations for the resources needed at the school.

Timeline and Construction

June 10	Arrive in Namibia to complete the planning process, schedule construction, and order building materials and furnishings to reduce the cost of the project.
Late June	Accept delivery of building materials and further prepare for school construction.
Early July	Start construction of building. Oversee process to ensure quality and deal with any unexpected problems.
Late July/Early August	Inspect building quality. Assemble furniture and set up school facility including donated supplies. Celebrate the opening of the school with an assembly that recognizes the role of the Davis Foundation in making the building possible.
September	Complete report on project, promote outcomes through college and Iowa media

Ndjukuma Primary School is 2.5 miles away from my grandparent's homestead in the northern part of Namibia, which gives me the privilege of incurring less costs for accommodations or transportation during the construction period and grand opening of the building. I have confirmation from those who helped with the requirements list that it is feasible to complete the building in 5 weeks with 5-6 workers given its relatively small size. I communicated with the principal of the school during my research who confirmed that the construction will be done by NNH Namibian Construction cc, P O Box 569, Ohangwena. This construction company is located in the region where the school is based. The construction company recruits experienced and skilled local workers, but operates under the Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF). This ensures that they adhere to labor laws and appropriate construction industry standards. The construction company was chosen based on its past work at other schools in the region and its ability to provide transparent quotations due to its commitment towards social responsibility in Ohangwena region. The costs of the materials provided in the budget were taken from the quotation they provided to the school principal in December 2018.

Sustainability

Building the classroom will address sustainability because the opening of this classroom will be published by national media with the intended purpose of setting a standard to the regional government that making such a difference does not always require a lot of funding, but rather just determination and the desire to bring forth change. The project will be sustained by providing resources received through donations and by activists visiting the school to provide awareness and training to children to implement any needed changes. I plan to eventually extend the project to other schools experiencing similar hardships.

Measuring Success

The increase in the number of enrollments at the school will determine whether we have really provided an educational opportunity for those who previously could not attend due to the lack of classrooms. This criteria will be measured in the following academic year which starts in January 2020. We will survey a sample from the student population to ask how they feel about the new classroom and what it means to their education. Questions regarding the donated resources will also be asked. Their responses will help us infer on their development as individuals and what to focus on next to keep accomplishing our goal. The increased number of individuals assisting the project will also help us evaluate whether our aim of setting a positive standard has been achieved.

Communicating Outcomes

Through the provision of before and after pictures, reports and videos of the school, I can share the results of the project with all organizations involved that can't physically make it to Namibia to witness the dream come true of the Namibian child. This will also help in inspiring other organizations to become involved. After my summer break, I will present pictures of the finished building and videos of the empowered students in the report. I also plan to submit an article to the Wartburg newspaper about my Davis Project for Peace experience and the significant difference it brought not only to the children at the school, but to the Namibian nation as a whole.