



The Dignity Project – May/June 2022 update

Wonderkid's School Khajuraho

This year we have funded and overseen several trial programs at Wonderkid's school, in addition to our ongoing sponsorship of the school.

Meal program findings

The first trial was a daily lunch program. The students and teachers greatly enjoyed lunch being provided. However based on the feedback of parents and students it was decided that this was not the most effective use of resources for two reasons – 1) Parents are in the habit of providing lunch for their kids and in most cases had the financial means to do so and 2) the feedback offered through a community consultation process was that, given limited resources, the parents would prefer more resources be allocated to computer and spoken English skills. This is addressed below in Teaching Resources

However further enquiries revealed that approx 20% of students do not eat breakfast and a majority of the remaining 80% do not eat a nutritious breakfast (commonly bread and tea). There is considerable study-based evidence that eating a breakfast of sufficient macro and micro nutrients leads to improved academic results. Based on this we trialled a breakfast program and the feedback from parents and students has been positive – it fills a gap in the children's nutritional intake and readies the students for a day of study.

Meal program outcome

Evidently breakfast provision is valuable for the students' well-being and ongoing academic performance and has been budgeted for 3 whole-school breakfasts per week at a total cost of \$12,204 for 12 months.

Teaching resources

Based on these findings we plan to shift funding towards establishing a computer lab, engaging a computer skills tutor and a spoken English tutor. (Most of the teachers have limited spoken English and no computer skills whatsoever).

A larger, unused room in the building will be converted into a computer lab, and the library and office will be shifted into the same room to save rent. (As a secondary benefit, on Sundays the lab will open to families and assistance provided for them to apply for government schemes and grants which they are entitled to but often do not have the necessary skills or internet connected devices to access.

The lab fit out will cost \$1750 and the computers approximately \$4,200 (7 required at \$600 each). (We are attempting to source second hand laptops but currently there is a shortage in India!).

The breakfast program and the computer lab will require use of two additional rooms; we have negotiated with the owner of the building to use two more rooms at a small increase to the overall rent (\$25 per month). Both rooms require renovation and fit-out.

Overall these program changes do not add to the total amount of funding we are seeking.

Sanitary pad distribution

We have been funding and overseeing a sanitary pad distribution program based out of Wonderkid's school. This has been a productive approach because it has allowed us monitor and evaluate the program and the products by recording data such as distribution as well as monitoring feedback about product quality.

Over the last 6 months the program has provided disposable pads to all students, teachers and their families – around 50 families per month. The program is managed by a teacher and is open to all students and families in the school community. Feedback about the program has been exceptionally positive. A majority of the girls and women are using proper sanitary products for the first time and thanks to information sessions now understand the importance of sanitary hygiene.

During Lincoln's visit to the school in March the idea of distributing reusable pads instead of disposable pads was floated. This had long been part of the plan but we expected it would take some time for the idea to gain acceptance (due to cultural taboos), however happily there was enthusiasm for it immediately. We then undertook extensive research to identify suitable products and consequently identified and purchased 5 different products that met our criteria (comfort/convenience, pricing, material/quality and longevity). In April and May we ran a trial using the 5 products. Based on the results we have selected a reusable cloth pad called Eco Femme which is made by a women-led social enterprise based in south India. (Once we have established a relationship with Eco Femme, we aim to discuss the idea of employing their technology and production process in order to produce the pads locally in Khajuraho.)

The plan is to distribute a pack of four reusable pads to every girl student, teacher and mother of a student at the school, totalling approximately 200 women. Allowing for two to three months of further feedback we will then look to purchase a further 350 packs for distribution to the wider school community (firstly family members of students and teachers followed by other families connected to the school and ideally a village outreach program). We may look to develop a purchase model in order to gain user buy-in however we are wary of implementing anything that would discourage use of quality products.

By switching to reusables the initial cost increases however over the life of the reusable pad (minimum 3 years) the total cost is 20% lower and we will reach 25% more women. Importantly we eliminate use of more than 130,000 disposable pads over the course of 3 years. There is scope to increase distribution in the surrounding towns and villages depending on the response from early adopters and availability of funding.

Budget - 12 months

	12 months	INR	AUD
Office cum Computer lab			
Laptops 7 x Rs 30000	210000	\$4200	
Room renovation	47500	\$950	
Computer desks/associated fit out	40000	\$800	
Computer teacher - Rs 7000 pm	84000	\$1,680	
Spoken English teacher - Rs 5000 pm	60000	\$1,200	
Sanitary pad distribution - Reuseables			
1st phase - Students & families - 200 packs of 4 pads at Rs 915 pp (inc pouch)	183000	\$3,660	
2nd phase - Community pad bank - 350 packs of 4 at Rs 915 pp	320250	\$6,405	
Meal Program -			
Kitchen set up (as above)	41400	\$828	
Breakfast at \$948 per month x 12	568800	\$11,376	
Total 12 months	1554950	\$31,099	

Our preference is to receive funding for one off costs for the computer lab, 1st phase of pad distribution and kitchen set up, along with funding for ongoing costs for 6 months. This would total \$17,566 for the first 6 months and \$13,533 for the second 6 months, as per the following breakdown:

1st 6 months	INR	AUD
Office cum Computer lab		
Laptops 7 x Rs 30000	210000	\$4,200
Room renovation	47500	\$950
Computer desks/associated fit out	40000	\$800
Computer teacher - Rs 7000 pm	42000	\$840
Spoken English teacher - Rs 5000 pm	30000	\$600
Sanitary pad distribution - Reuseables		
1st phase - Students & families - 200 packs of 4 pads at Rs 915 pp (inc pouch)	183000	\$3,660
2nd phase - Community pad bank - 350 packs of 4 at Rs 915 pp	0	\$0
Meal Program -		
Kitchen set up	41400	\$828
Breakfast \$948 per month x 6	284400	\$5,688
Total 6 moths	878300	\$17,566

2nd 6 months	INR	AUD
Office cum Computer lab		
Laptops 7 x Rs 30000	0	\$0
Room renovation	0	\$0
Computer desks/associated fit out	0	\$0
Computer teacher - Rs 7000 pm	42000	\$840
Spoken English teacher - Rs 5000 pm	30000	\$600
Sanitary pad distribution - Reuseables		
1st phase - Students & families - 200 packs of 4 pads at Rs 915 pp (inc pouch)	0	\$0
2nd phase - Community pad bank - 350 packs of 4 at Rs 915 pp	320250	\$6,405
Meal Program -		
Kitchen set up	0	\$0
Breakfast \$948 per month x 6	284400	\$5,688
Total 6 moths	676650	\$13,533

It's also our preference that payment for the purchase of pads and laptops be made directly to vendors in India. The remaining funding would be sent to our Indian Limited Liability Partnership and from there disbursed to Grassroutes, the NGO which runs Wonderkids. Grassroutes will provide receipts as evidence of receipt of the funds.



Kanwal facilitating community consultation



Students receiving educational materials



Students & Staff



Reusable pad trial



Teacher forum



Renovated classroom



Khichdi breakfast



One extra for lunch



Yoga class for teachers