

# DOWN to EARTH

Emmanuel International UK News  
Forum House, Stirling Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7DN Phone: 01243 931094

Registered Charity No 289036 www.eiuk.org.uk info@eiuk.org.uk

## FEBRUARY 2024

### What about the boys?



*Laura Kelly, an EI missionary who partners with Theopister Shoo and Igombe Church in leading a girls' health project, writes to update us about the next exciting phase of the project.*

"Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths."  
(Proverbs 4:10-11)

"What about the boys?!"

Theopister, Esther, and I have been asked this question countless times since launching the "Strength & Dignity"



Future recipients of our boys' project

Proverbs 31:25 - She is clothed with strength and dignity

### Nguvu na Hadhi

Nguvu na hadhi ndiyo mavazi yake - Mithali 31:25

The girls' health project in Tanzania is called "Nguvu na Hadhi", which means "Strength and Dignity" based on Proverbs 31:25. Since November 2019, we've partnered with a local church (Igombe Christian Centre) to educate and empower girls to take care of their changing bodies. Studies show that every year of school increases a girl's future earning power by 10 to 20 percent and can reduce the risk of HIV and delay teenage pregnancy, keeping girls in school is a must. But, unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) make that impossible. So the project was expanded in 2021 to also provide safe and hygienic spaces for girls to take care of their menstrual needs by upgrading existing facilities and building new latrine blocks where required.



project. We've been focused on the girls for obvious reasons, but now we're ready to start that conversation with the boys!

The past 5 years have taught us a lot, including how social norms and stigma prevent many girls and boys from asking questions, due to secrecy or fear of punishment. The onset of puberty introduces many physical, emotional, and social changes for girls and boys, yet many adolescents don't know about these changes before they happen. Lack of information can negatively impact girls' and boys' confidence, self-esteem, and well-being. Not only that, but shame, anxiety, and embarrassment can impact their participation in school, community, and church.

### Story 3

I completed my primary education with a good performance in class and good friends. But after being selected to go to secondary school, the situation was not the same. I began to spend time with new friends who had bad advice. Now my situation in class is not satisfying compared to the situation when I was in primary school.

All of this is because of my friends who have bad manners which are not accepted in the society. Bad friends are not only those who are stealing, smoking cigarettes, drunkards or those who have many girlfriends and are preferring sex. Bad friends can come in different shapes and forms. They can lead you away from your studying.

Now I regret because my situation in class has dropped because of my friends. A friend can have a good aim or a bad aim for you. So you have to take care in choosing your friends. Sometimes they can cause you to start having bad behavior which is not acceptable in the society and can lead you to lose your life chances.



### Hadithi 3

Nilimaliza darasa la saba nikiwa nimefaulu vizuri sana na marafiki wazuri sana. Ila baada ya kuwa nimehaguliwa kuingia sekondari, hali ilibadilika. Nilianza kupoteza muda mwingi na marafiki wapya ambao walikuwa na ushauri mbaya. Sasa hali yangu darasani hairidhishi ukilinganisha na nilivyokuwa shule ya msingi.

Hii yote ni kwa sababu ya marafiki zangu ambao walikuwa na tabia mbaya ambazo hazikubaliki ndani ya jamii. Marafiki wabaya si wale tu wanaoiba, kuvuta sigara, kulewa ama wale wenye wasichana wengi na kupenda ngono. Marafiki wabaya wanaweza kuja katika hali na njia tofauti. Wanaweza kukupotosha na masomo yako.

Na kwa sasa ninajutia kwani hali yangu darasani imeanguka kwa sababu ya marafiki zangu. Rafiki anaweza kuwa na nia mbaya ama nia njema kwako. Kwa hiyo inabidi kuwa mwangalifu sana kwenye kuchagua marafiki. Wakati mwingine wanaweza kukusababisha kuanza kuwa na tabia mbaya ambayo haikubaliki na jamii na kupelekea kupoteza fursa za maisha.

### Testimony from the boys' puberty book

The Grow & Know Foundation has been a wonderful resource to us, developing puberty books with context appropriate puberty guidance to empower girls and boys around the world. These books encourage adolescents to reach their potential through improved health education and preparation for life.

Each boy will receive 3 hours of health education, along with a puberty book. We've designed the seminars to be interactive, but most importantly, to be a safe space to explore questions like:

- What is puberty?
- What is sperm?
- How do boys' bodies change?
- What is an erection?
- How should boys and girls respect each other?

Theopister, who has been instrumental in the girls' health project from its inception, will be leading the boys' project with her son, Joshua. We have been planning for months!



**Theopister and her son, Joshua**

We know there's a need and we know the boys are eager to learn, so that's a great way to start a new project!

**Please pray for the success of this project as we reach out to the boys alongside the girls.**



## New wheels for Sue

EIUK has been fortunate to have Sue lead our office and teams over many years, which often requires quite a bit of driving to churches and airports supporting EI missionaries, teams and speaking about the work of EI to churches around the UK.

We have set up a special fund and we are asking our EI family and friends to contribute to a replacement vehicle for Sue so that she can continue to support this work as her current vehicle will very soon no longer be a viable option.

We are thankful for Sue's many years of support and service to EI, and as such we want to support her by making this appeal.

Donations would be greatly appreciated.

Ways to contribute include:

- Online transfer to our CAF bank account:  
Account holder: Emmanuel International Ltd  
Bank: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME 19 4JQ  
Sort code: 40-52-40  
Account no: 00033722  
Payment line: Sue car
- Enthuse: Visit [emmanuelinternational.enthuse.com/SueCar](http://emmanuelinternational.enthuse.com/SueCar) or scan the QR code. Enthuse will charge a processing fee.
- Contact us for information on other ways to help.



**We thank God for your continued support of the work of EI.**



Samson (not his real name) is a 17-year-old residing in Ndamela, Nsanje district, living with HIV. Prior to his involvement in the Teen Club, he faced significant challenges accessing medical services. Overwhelmed by shyness and fear of stigma, Samson hesitated to collect his ARV medicine at the clinic and engage in other medical services. His concerns about potential discrimination led him to avoid the anti-retroviral therapy room, either accessing services in a separate building or sending a guardian. In some instances, he would visit the facility late in the afternoon or approach staff through the ART room windows. Unfortunately, this behavior resulted in missed ARV drug appointments and poor drug adherence.

In 2022, Emmanuel International Malawi, with funding from the Global Fund through World Vision Malawi, established a Teen Club Clinic at Ndamela Health Center. Health care workers underwent

training in Teen Club programming, psychosocial counseling, adherence support techniques, and a youth-friendly approach to health service delivery. The Teen Club clinic, exclusively for adolescents aged 10 to 19 living with HIV, convenes on weekends. Initially hesitant, Samson was encouraged by trained health care workers to join the club tailored for adolescents like him.

Since becoming a part of the Teen Club, Samson's life has undergone a remarkable transformation. He now regularly attends the clinic, exhibits improved adherence, has a suppressed viral load, and actively engages with friends during club activities. Notably, he voluntarily joins his peers at the ART building during all club-related events. Samson expresses gratitude for the Teen Club program, citing its role in helping him cope with his diagnosis, learn about various health topics, and connect with peers in the community who share similar experiences.