



May 2019



In a country where parents have to choose between living expenses and affording to send more than one child to school, Zonta is helping girls in Madagascar obtain their right to education.

Dear friends,

The girls of Madagascar will not be left behind.

Since 2016, Zonta International has been present alongside UNICEF to give new hope for furthering the education and lives of the girls of Madagascar through the [Let Us Learn](#) program.

This initiative addresses barriers to education for at-risk and out-of-school children by building new classrooms and latrines and providing cash transfers to the families to free up household income to support education costs and reduce malnutrition. It also focuses on catch-up classes for girls, information on menstrual hygiene management, and medical, legal and social support for children who are victims of violence or exploitation.

The results are remarkable.

In April, Zonta participated in a field visit where four Zonta leaders were able to immerse themselves into a day in the life of a girl in Madagascar. Representing Zonta were

International Vice President Ute Scholz accompanied by Past International Director Judy Kautz, 2018 Convention Chairman Sadako Miyake and Past District 6 Governor Tamara Hagen.

I invite you to read their first-hand impressions of the youth they met and the achievements that have been made possible thanks to the Let Us Learn program.

Cordially,



Dr. Susanne von Bassewitz, President

If you would like to continue to support initiatives like the Let Us Learn Madagascar program, please click the button below to donate.

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Gaining access to resources

Together with our UNICEF USA partners, the Zonta team traveled to Amboasary in the south of the country. There, they got their first glimpses of the Let Us Learn program in a village where new school classrooms and a WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) facility were built with the support of Zonta International. Tamara shares her impressions of the site:

"The school building was well-constructed, open and airy, and light... There was plenty of desk space, but we learned they had to use the schoolroom in shifts. The students related how much better this school was than their old school: more room, better instruction, closer to home so safer (no crossing the river during flood season and avoiding highway bandits).

[Read more.](#)

Seeing results

The team also traveled to Tanandava where they met with cash transfer recipients and mother leaders in the community. Ute witnessed the direct result of this initiative:

"Cash transfers enable families to build up their own existence, to be independent and send their children to



school. One family bought a sheep from the cash transfer money to have their own milk and cheese; when we visited the village, this sheep had just born two baby lambs."

[Read more.](#)



Learning lessons

On the next day in Fort Dauphin, Zontians were introduced to members of the Junior Reporter Club who meet twice a week to plan, write and record their shows to be broadcast that week.

Topics have included:

- The environment
- The measles outbreak
- Importance of education
- Child marriage
- Sexual violence
- Other community-related topics.

[Read more.](#)



Sharing experiences

On the final day, during the youth-led discussion of the child protection club, Zontians heard first-hand from participants who shared that sexual violence, rape and child prostitution are common, while two girls shared their own experiences with their parents wanting them to marry early.

Both boys and girls related that they shared what they had learned with others, including classmates who were not in the club, siblings and friends.

[Read more.](#)

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