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Creating Homes for Ethiopia's Future

Roxanna M. Dempsay Boise State University

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Roxanna M. Dempsay

Boise State University

Author Note
Interdisciplinary Professional Studies
College of Arts and Sciences

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Abstract

Creating Homes for Ethiopia's Future is a fundraiser project inspired by my travels to Ethiopia and opportunities to work with Maji's Miracle, a nonprofit organization in Meridian, Idaho, advocating for vulnerable youth who have aged out of orphanages in Ethiopia. This capstone project was narrowly focused on one specific portion of the Maji's Miracle intake process identified as a point where having a restricted reserve fund would allow the organization to act more efficiently to get youth into safe, secure housing, reduce delays and pressure on the organization and youth leaving orphanages, and eliminate concerns for potential homelessness while awaiting payment of initial apartment set-up costs by new sponsors. The fundraising outcomes of this capstone project allow for the creation of a restricted reserve fund at Maji's Miracle that can be replenished by fundraising events and/or new sponsor or donor opportunities. Additionally, this capstone project raises issue awareness and introduces prospective new donors to Maji's Miracle.

Keywords: Ethiopia, fundraising, orphanage, nonprofit

Introduction

Creating Homes for Ethiopia's Future is a fundraiser project inspired by my travels to Ethiopia and opportunities to work with Maji's Miracle, a nonprofit organization in Meridian, Idaho, advocating for vulnerable youth who have aged out of orphanages in Ethiopia. This capstone project was narrowly focused on one specific portion of the Maji's Miracle intake process identified as a point where having a restricted reserve fund would allow the organization to act more efficiently to get youth into safe, secure housing, reduce delays and pressure on the organization and youth leaving orphanages, and eliminate concerns for potential homelessness while awaiting payment of initial apartment set-up costs by new sponsors. The fundraising outcomes of this capstone project allow for the creation of a restricted reserve fund at Maji's Miracle that can be replenished by fundraising events and/or new sponsor or donor opportunities. Additionally, this capstone project raises issue awareness and introduces prospective new donors to Maji's Miracle.

Approximately 5 million Ethiopian children are classified as orphans due to poverty, loss of one or both parents, or other reasons. Foster care is not available in Ethiopia and caring for these children falls to nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations with limited capacities.

Some end up living on the streets. Older children age-out of orphanages to make way for younger children. These aged-out youth, as young as fifteen, leave orphanages with nothing. They face challenges procuring housing, food, employment, education, and overcoming social and cultural stigmas (Kassa, et al., 2018; Nayak, 2014; Pryce, et al., 2016; Yosef, et al., 2023). Maji's Miracle steps into this gap, locating an apartment to house three youth, enrolling them in school, and providing a peer-supported environment to learn basic life skills such as budgeting, cooking, home care, etc. Ethiopian apartments are completely unfurnished and it costs about

\$1,800.00 per apartment to purchase everything from floor coverings, bed frames and mattresses, sheets, towels, seating, table(s), storage closet(s), kitchen, cooking, and eating utensils are needed (C. Harrington, Personal Communication, September 23, 2023).

Maji's Miracle authorized the project in September 2023 and two fundraising methods were chosen to attract as many donors as possible: Ethiopian coffee sales and a Facebook direct appeal fundraiser. Both fundraisers launched on November 3, 2023, to run three weeks with goals of \$800.00 in coffee sales and \$2,000.00 in Facebook direct donations. Coffee sales garnered \$1,115.00 (139% of the goal) and the Facebook fundraiser donations totaled \$350.00 (17.5% of the goal). In total, \$1,465.00 was raised to create a restricted reserve fund to set up apartments. This was 52% of the combined goals for the project (\$2,800.00) and 81% of the current cost to furnish one apartment (\$1,800.00). The proceeds were delivered to Maji's Miracle in November 20232 with information about how Facebook fundraiser proceeds are paid.

Elements Coming Together

Innovative Approach

Two types of stakeholder perspectives were identified in this project: 1) those with a need and 2) those with a desire to help. In the need category were the aged-out youth, the orphanages, and Maji's Miracle. For aged-out youth, living on the streets, homeless, is not a safe option.

The need to move quickly from the orphanage environment to a home environment is imperative (West, 2022). For Maji's Miracle, moving youth quickly fulfills an organization goal to help these youth achieve their best outcomes. For orphanages that cared for these youth for years, moving them quickly into a secure environment fulfills their goals. Those in the desire-to-help category are potential new sponsors and donors to Maji's Miracle. The project promotes change, reducing a financial burden on new sponsors who must pay the first month's sponsorship cost

plus one-third of the apartment set-up costs immediately to begin sponsorship, eliminating delays and hinderances to new sponsorships. Final project stakeholders are potential new donors who opt not to sponsor a youth but want to participate in the work done by Maji's Miracle. A review of the perspectives of each group established that the apartment set up funds were a pain point in Maji's Miracle intake process. Using innovative thinking to seek the best outcome for all stakeholders showed that this pain point could be eliminated or at least eased by implementing process changes and a restricted reserve fund. The question of how best to create a reserve fund for apartment set ups was considered and a fundraising project was chosen as the most likely option to produce needed funds.

Emotional Intelligence

Building empathy and curiosity about Maji's Miracle and the project meant being attuned to varied audiences. Providing too much information could overwhelm and lose an audience. Equally important though, was connecting audiences to the fact that the same concerns exist for America's foster youth who are aging out of care. This connection between a first-world and a third-world country demonstrates the global aspect of the issue, raising awareness of the pressing need, motivating donations, and audience action. Awareness of the stakeholders and maintaining their dignity, being attuned to audiences, and being mindful of self throughout the fundraising process required the agile use of emotional intelligence skills to achieve the best outcomes.

Creative Thinking

To maximize the donations and achieve the optimal outcome for this project, potential donors and fundraising options were evaluated. Using the Ethiopia location of stakeholders-in-need produced the idea that sales of coffee, grown and roasted in Ethiopia, would draw attention to Maji's Miracle and help start conversations to raise awareness. Considering non-local

potential donors led to a decision that a Facebook direct donation appeal would be a good second option (Cross, 2021; How do I start a fundraiser on Facebook, n.d.). Evaluation of how best to communicate with potential donors and raise awareness at the same time led to a decision that social media had the highest probability of effectiveness.

The planning and implementation of the project required further creative thinking in establishing a method to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, maintain records, and efficiently deal with communications and donations tracking. An Excel spreadsheet was created for tracking activity and data and creation of charts and graphs.

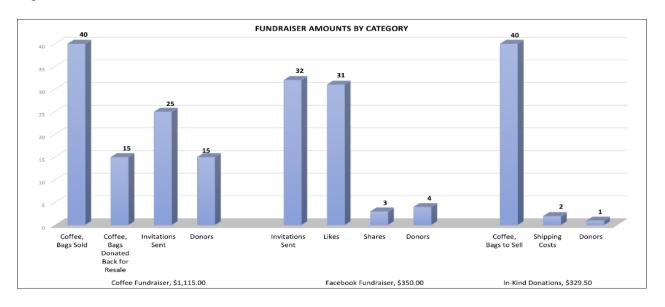
Your Innovative Solution

The key problem identified for this project was the time it takes to obtain funds to set up an apartment for Maji's Miracle youth so they can move in, get re-enrolled in school, and begin transitioning into successful adulthood after leaving an orphanage. Analysis showed that the time issue had two parts: 1) the source of funds and 2) the timing of funds availability. When three aged-out youth are identified by Maji's Miracle, an apartment is located, and sponsors are sought. Each sponsor pays one-third of \$1,800.00 for apartment set up in addition to paying a monthly sponsorship cost of \$200.00. Apartments must be furnished before the youth move in. This financial burden creates issues in 1) obtaining a sponsor who can pay costs immediately and 2) timely payment by all three sponsors. Delays can be reduced or eliminated by 1) changing the intake process for paying apartment set up costs and 2) creating a restricted fund for Maji's Miracle to pay for those costs immediately upon securing an apartment. The monies for this restricted fund had to be sourced and fundraising the seed money for this restricted fund became the purpose of this capstone project. At the close of the fundraisers, \$1,465.00 had been raised and submitted to Maji's Miracle for the specific purpose of turning bare apartments into homes

for sponsored youth with floor covering for concrete floors, a table, seating, bed frames and mattresses, sheets, towels, kitchen equipment and eating utensils, and cleaning supplies.

Results

Figure 1:



The impact of this project was measured through financial donations received, the number of donors, and social media interactions (See Figure 1 above). Overall, the outcomes of this capstone project produced a positive benefit to stakeholders.

Sales of Ethiopian coffee raised \$1,115.00. When compared to the goal of \$800.00, 139% of that goal was met. Forty bags of coffee were sold with 15 donated back for resale, resulting in 55 bags sold. Invitations to donate were sent to 25 potential donors with 15 donors (60%) participating.

Facebook direct appeal fundraising was linked to Instagram to connect with as many followers as possible but was not as effective as expected. Invitations were sent to 32 potential donors with four invitees donating \$350.00. When compared to the goal of \$2,000.00, 17.5% of that goal was met.

Maji's Miracle, youth, and orphanages all benefited from this fundraiser. With a

restricted reserve fund created, apartments can be set up more quickly, reducing or eliminating move-in delays. Future sponsors benefit from changes to payment of apartment set-up costs in sponsorship agreements. Additional benefits for Maji's Miracle include opening sponsorship and donation opportunities to more people. Initial financial burdens are removed, new sponsorship and/or donation opportunities are created, and more donors can participate in the work done by Maji's Miracle.

Conclusion

Throughout the project, I had good expectations for this fundraising project. I chose goals of \$800.00 for coffee sales and \$2,000.00 for the Facebook appeal with the hope that the total raised would be about \$1,800.00 (\$500.00 in coffee sales and \$1,300.00 in Facebook donations). I anticipated that the Facebook fundraiser would generate the highest amount and most donors because any dollar amount could be given whereas the coffee sales had a fixed price and limited quantity. This did not hold true during analysis. Coffee sales exceeded the goal set with \$1,115.00 (139% of the \$800.00 goal) raised and the Facebook fundraiser fell short of the goal set with \$350.00 (17.5% of the \$2,000.00 goal) raised. However, the total amount raised was \$1,465.00, which was 52% of the \$2,800.00 goal and 81% of the hoped for outcome of \$1,800.00, which appears to be a good result for a small fundraiser.

Were this project to be duplicated in the future, I recommend pursuing only one type of fundraiser and actively working with other culturally connected local businesses and organizations. This offers opportunities to build relationships and to increase awareness of Maji's Miracle while gathering valuable input from culturally knowledgeable people about creating greater opportunities for aged-out youth in Ethiopia.

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Section 6: Appendix

A:





Notification from Facebook of fundraiser end.pdf



B:



From: Facebook <notification@facebookmail.com>

Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 11:59 PM

To: Roxanna Dempsay

Subject: Your fundraiser has ended!



Roxanna's fundraiser for Maji's Miracle

Hi Roxanna,

Thanks for raising money for Majis Miracle (Chrisanna Harrington Sole Mbr). Your fundraiser Roxanna's fundraiser for Maji's Miracle has ended. Here's how you did:

\$356 donated.

4 people donated to your fundraiser.

3 people shared your fundraiser.

32 people were invited to your fundraiser.

Go to your fundraiser page so you can thank the people who donated.

Go to fundraiser

This message was sent to h*******@msn.com. If you don't want to receive these emails from Meta in the future, please unsubscribe. Meta Platforms, Inc., Attention: Community Support, 1 Meta Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025

To help keep your account secure, please don't forward this email. Learn more

Hours Worked	Hours	Purpose:	Determination:	Question:
Closeout of fundraisers	0.5	Confirm all data was accurate and fundraisers were closed		
Coffee Fundraiser creation	5	Purpose: raise funds for Maji's Miracle		
Coffee Purchase	1	Sell as fundraising item	Sell at \$20.00 per bag; based on cost from Treasure Valley Roastere about \$1 per ounce.	Get a sponsor to purchase? Only 40 500 gram (1.1 lb) bags. How do I limit so I don't oversell?
Completing financial transactions	4	Payments and deliveries, post office, etc.; PayPal, Venmo		
Create spreadsheet for activity tracking +	2	Single point resource for capstone activity monitoring		
updates to calculations				
Data Analysis	5			
Discussion with C. Harrington about	1	In person; to establish costs to furnish one apartment	Costs have risen; she will get an updated list from Zeke H. and	Do I need this or just a general list of what items need to be purchased?
funding needs for project			provide it to me for goal amt. comparison	
Discussion with Maji's Miracle recipients	2	To gather their perspective on assistance received		
Emails to C. Harrington, Maji's Miracle	1	Emails explaining project and requesting permission to do project	Approval received	
Facebook tracking	2.75	tracking likes/comments/donations		31 likes / 0 comments / 3 donations / 3 share / 32 invited to participate
Fundraising Activity tracking	4.25	emails/texts		
Instagram tracking	0.25	tracking likes/comments/donations		linked to Facebook
Launch (Texts; Facebook; Instagram fundraiser pg)	3.25	Create/build fundraising appeals		32 Facebook invites, 1 Story on Facebook and linked to Instagram
Mailing rates	0.5	Research on costs, determining if coffee should be offered only locally	Rates are too high to include mailing in anticipated donation	Should I offer outside local area but say requester must pay mailing fees? Recalculate target group and contact process? Get sponsor for shipping?
Research Facebook direct appeal fundraising	3	How to do this and what type of fundraising to do. Confirm NPO can receive funds.	I will do this as a direct appeal on Facebook, launching on or about November 1 to run for three weeks.	
Research on Custom Ink fundraising	3	Further research: How to do this, criteria that must be met?		
Shopped for furniture for Maji's Miracle apartments	2	To understand costs in Ethiopia for furnishings and to purchase furniture for one of the newest Maji's Miracle apartments	Furniture is expensive and then there's the consideration of delivery - purchasers must arrange their own delivery, find a vehicle, etc.	How to get the best price when transportation can be prohibitive concern?
Submit funds raised to Maji's Miracle and confirm the amounts	2	Delivered cash donations to C. Harrington/ Maji's Miracle and talked about future plans for organization	Hand-delivered \$1,115.00 cash to C. Harrington; explained additional \$350.00 will be a separate fund distribution from Facebook fundraiser in about 2 months	
Talk to friend and her mother about coffee fundraiser	0.25	Awareness of issues and opportunities to donate		
Talk to RH Church Group	2			
Talk to Wednesday Women's Group	1.5	Awareness of issues and opportunities to donate		
Talked with A. & J. Coleman about Maji's	0.5	Awareness of issues and opportunities to donate		
Miracle Talked with V. Cardenas & L. Cordova/	1	Awareness of issues and opportunities to donate		
Maji's Miracle T-shirt Design	5	design t-shirt through Custom Ink as possible fundraiser	·	Are 3 fundraisers too much? CANCELLED as not viable, not likely to produce positive
			least 10 t-shirts of one design are ordered; means loss of donation and donor dissatisfaction.	result.
Viewed 3 Maji's Miracle apartments	3	To gather insight about apartments and their needs, even beyond the initial furnishings		
Total	55.75	TARGET = 55 HOURS		
Donations:	Dollars	Purchase:	Туре:	
Fili Coffee, up to 40 bags (\$300.00)	\$300.0	0 Coffee to sell as fundraising item	In Kind Donation	
Shipping Costs	\$29.5	0	In Kind Donation	
E. Fleshman	\$40.0	0 2	Cash	
Fiji Group				
H. Abney	\$25.0	0 1	Cash	
Nepal Group				
B. Helms	\$40.0		Cash	
A. & J. Coleman	\$40.0	0 2	Cash	
Woodward Community Group				
S. Benner	\$40.0		Cash	
K. Ebersole	\$60.0		Cash	
A. Job	\$50.0	0 2	Cash	
Wednesday Women's Group				

P. Marshburn	\$100.00	5		Cash / 4 bags donated back to be resold		
L. Cordova	\$100.00	5		Cash / 3 bags donated back to be resold		
M. Humphreys	\$20.00	1		Cash / 1 bag donated back to be resold		
C. Majeske	\$100.00	5		Cash / 5 bags donated back to be resold		
P. Pagano	\$60.00	3		to be paid 11-18-23 / delivered		
V. Cardenas				OPTED OUT		
Friday Card Ladies						
T. Harkness	\$40.00	2		Cash		
B. Dolan	\$40.00	2		Cash / 2 bags donated back to be resold		
A. Dempsay	\$360.00	18		Cash		
Total Coffee Revenue	\$1,444.50		55	Total Bags Sold		
Facebook Direct Appeal						
R. Dempsay	\$ 70.00					
T. Harkless	\$ 50.00		pd add'l. processing fee \$2.00			
J. Greene	\$ 30.00					
A. Dempsay \$ 200.00			pd add'l. processing fee \$4.	pd add'l. processing fee \$4.00		

Total Donation Direct to Maji's Miracle \$ 350.00 4 Total Donors

Expenses:

Fili Coffee, up to 40 bags (\$300.00) \$300.00 Purpose: To Purchase coffee to sell as fundraising item In Kind Donation (\$300.00)
Shipping Costs \$29.50 In Kind Donation (\$14.75 + \$14.75)

Total Expenses \$329.50

Total Funds Raised \$1,465.00 TARGET GOAL = \$2,800.00 PERCENTAGE OF GOAL 52% Thank you notes still to be sent!

Launches: Planned Duration: Final Duration: Total Amount Raised Per Method: Coffee (40 bags) 11/3/23 3 weeks - closed 11/24/23 half coffee gone within 2 hours of launch! \$1,115.00 \$350.00 Direct Appeal on Facebook 11/3/23 3 weeks - closed 11/24/23 3 donors within 24 hrs! Instagram (linked to Facebook) 11/5/23 3 weeks - closed 11/24/23 linked to Facebook T-shirts 3 weeks - CANCELLED Abandoned due to minimum sales requirement \$0.00 Total \$1,465.00

Facebook Likes: Shares: Coffee Invites: A. Dempsay K. Garrett A. Slaten V. Cardenas A. Gladhart C. Majeske B. Neitzell M. Humphreys B. Dolan P. Pagano B. Helms P. Marshburn C. Majeske E. Fleshman C. Lun H. Abney J. Killelea H. Abney H. Spencer Oldenburg J. Martin H. Alem K. Eberwein J. Alsup P. Jae J. Greene B. Helms J. Spencer J. Coleman J. Bishop B. Dolan J. Robnett B. Tellez K. Erlebach B. Montano K. Perez Deb? K. Harrington J. Stewart K. Rose K. Ranger K. Sigston K. Bain L. Snow-Hill Lois? L. Maya L. Goodman Melaku (M. Ye Buna) S. Parsons P. Pagano T. Harkless P. Barrett Hansen 25 R. Leyva R. Dempsay 1

- S. Bothell
- T. Harkless
- Z. Harrington

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New Opportunities:

Invited to help another supporter with 1 Tentatively December 5/6, 2023; they are looking for a site before another fundraiser finalizing activities