



The Equality Effect

Annual Report
2020 - 2021



A Message from our CEO and Board Chair

For survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, accessing justice during the COVID-19 pandemic has been exceptionally challenging. School closures resulted in children isolated at home with potential perpetrators and eliminated crucial pathways for children to seek help through school-based resources. Institutional betrayal, which refers to the re-traumatization of rape survivors by the criminal justice system, compounds fear of reporting and the harm of sexual violence. To address these equality gaps on a systemic level, our team at e2 scaled up every facet of the 160 Girls Project.

Led by a sub-committee of the 160 Girls National Police Service (NPS) faculty, our team updated the 160 Girls Police Training curriculum, which received approval by the Inspector General. This approval allowed us to launch the program, which has been well-received by participating officers. One trained officer shared that the training “has enlightened me on the ignored child defilement and sexual assault cases and the stigma they undergo in silence.” Another officer stressed that “we must investigate defilement cases professionally and efficiently.”



Another significant accomplishment this year was planning for the 160 Girls Police College Instructor Training – a program in which college instructors from all five Kenya NPS colleges receive 160 Girls curriculum training, which they subsequently teach to their students. The institutionalization of this program will ensure its sustainability, fill the gaps in existing education received by new police officers and create greater long-term efficacy in how police address cases of defilement and assault.

The 160 Girls Technology team has also been working to create a user-friendly e-learning system for the 160 Girls Police Training course. This digital version of the 160 Girls Police Training curriculum will be made accessible to all frontline police officers in Kenya.

Last but not least, our team launched the 160 Girls Virtual Justice Club (VJC) program. Initially a response to the pandemic, the VJC has proven such a success that the intention is to continue to expand it beyond the pandemic. The VJC 160 Girls Justice Journal – a print and digital newsletter that features submissions by VJC leaders – has also proven highly effective, empowering young VJC leaders to educate their communities about vital human rights information. VJC leaders have reported that the VJC experience made them “feel like a hero,” and that “160 Girls VJC has helped to save boys and girls in our nation.” Another shared that “I felt like a super girl who is there to help those who need my help.”

This progress would not be possible without our team, partners, donors and funders. We’re deeply grateful for their support, which allows us to bring our projects to life. Thank you for the passionate and enthusiastic commitment to promoting and enforcing girls’ and women’s rights.

Kim S. Bernhardt
Kim Bernhardt, Board Chair

Fiona Sampson
Fiona Sampson, CEO



Our Mission and Vision

Our mission:

The equality effect (e2) develops and implements legal solutions to girls'/women's inequality, including eliminating impunity for rape. Using international, inter-disciplinary teams, e2 creates systemic change that disrupts the existing discriminatory status quo, i.e. suing the state to achieve the enforcement of existing laws so that perpetrators are held accountable for their sexual violence. The equality effect provides international social justice leadership, making girls'/women's rights real.

Our vision:

By using the law to create systemic change, the equality effect envisions a society in which girls/women are treated as persons, not property; a society in which girls/women have equal access to justice; and the impunity for rape is eliminated.

160 Girls is an equality effect project, undertaken with international partners, including rape rescue centres, police, social workers, human rights lawyers and measurement experts (in partnership with the Tumaini Girls' Rescue Centre). The 160 Girls Project is named after the 160 girls between ages three and 17 who in 2012 sued the Kenyan government for failing to protect them from being raped. Their efforts resulted in the groundbreaking 2013 Kenyan High Court Decision that made legal history and secured access to justice and legal protection from rape for all 10,000,000 girls in Kenya and beyond.

"The VJC experience made us feel like heroes"
- VJC Leader

"My eyes are now wide open. I can assure you that things will never be the same again."
- 160 Girls Police Officer Training Participant

Virtual Justice Clubs

The 160 Girls Justice Clubs program finds success during COVID-19



When the COVID-19 pandemic began, our team at e2 immediately began collaborating with web developers and IT support to convert our 160 Girls Justice Clubs – school-based groups that empower girls and boys through increasing awareness of every child’s right to personal safety – into a virtual program and mobile application. The 160 Girls Virtual Justice Club (VJC) program engages youth equality leaders and provides human rights education and empowerment to end impunity for child rape. Intended to be a response to the pandemic, the VJC program has been so successful, our teams are finding new ways to improve and expand it.



The VJC lesson plan incorporates art, music, poetry and videos to teach participants about the 160 Girls story, defilement reporting, community obligations, believing survivors and boys as defilement victims. New lessons are released biweekly, in tandem with the VJC podcast, which features human rights advocates, police and VJC champions, among others. The VJC program also includes a print and digital newsletter, known as the VJC 160 Girls Justice Journal, which features submissions from VJC student leaders. Digital copies of the newsletter are published weekly on the VJC app and on our e2 social media pages, while the print newsletter is distributed biweekly to community members’ homes and outside of places of worship by teams comprised of rape rescue workers, teachers and police officers.



Over the course of the first VJC program offering, VJC leaders completed a 12-week curriculum, in which they watched virtual lessons delivered by University of Nairobi law students, learned about human rights activists, listened to podcasts, responded to questions about program content, submitted poems to the “Community Corner” section of the app and submitted letters to their favourite human rights heroes. Some of these written submissions were featured in Justice Journal issues, which have become a successful community outreach model, empowering young students to share information about sexual and gender-based violence and children’s rights within their communities.

e2 is committed to evaluating the impact of the VJC program. This work includes conducting pre and post-program surveys with VJC leaders upon completion of the curriculum to track changes in VJC leaders’ knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skill-development. To evaluate the success of the Justice Journals, community members who received print copies of the newsletter were surveyed about their experiences reading the journal, as well as their interactions with the journal distribution teams. Key findings and a summary of survey responses can be found on the next page of this report.

Virtual Justice Clubs

Feedback from student leaders

Upon conclusion of the 12-week VJC curriculum, VJC student leaders were asked to complete a survey on their experiences. Here's what some of them said about the program:

"160 Girls VJC has helped to save boys and girls in our nation."

"I felt like a super girl who is there to help those who need my help."

"This club is the best."

Several VJC leaders reported that the VJC experience made them "feel like a hero."

One VJC teacher reported that without the VJC, his school would've become a maternity ward during the pandemic.

VJC Leader Responses - By The Numbers:

96%

Reported that the VJC was a key source of information for community members relating to gender equality and sexual based violence

94%

Reported an increase in comfort using technology

91%

Demonstrated an improvement in reading and writing

90%

Agreed that the newsletter promoted positive interactions with the police

40%

Reported an increase in leadership skills and sense of empowerment

38%

Reported having helped others relating to reporting defilement



Read more about the 160 Girls VJC impact findings in our VJC Impact Report.

Virtual Justice Clubs

Spotlight: Patricia Nelima Simiyu, 160 Girls Program Officer

I joined the equality effect in September 2021 as the 160 Girls Program Officer. In this role, I provide support to our 160 Girls Virtual Justice Clubs program, coordinating activities with our partners on the ground and reviewing questions and feedback from students. I also provide support to the 160 Girls Police Training program, administering surveys and analyzing responses to assess trainees' knowledge of defilement investigations before and after their training.

My favourite part of this work is getting to interact with the children in our VJC. But more broadly, I love getting to help safeguard the rights of women and children in Kenya. I also enjoy reviewing the submissions in our Community Corner – a section of the VJC app where students submit questions and feedback. I read every submission and it feels as if I'm being taken into the minds of the children. Some children leave comments on the VJC subject matter, while others share whatever's on their mind. I look forward to reading the submissions every week.

Sexual and gender-based violence are uncomfortable topics for children but I'm reminded that when you make someone feel uncomfortable, it means you're making an impact. The children tell us that because of this project, they have more confidence, they interact more with others in school and they feel better about themselves. There's something really powerful about making an impact on the future generation.

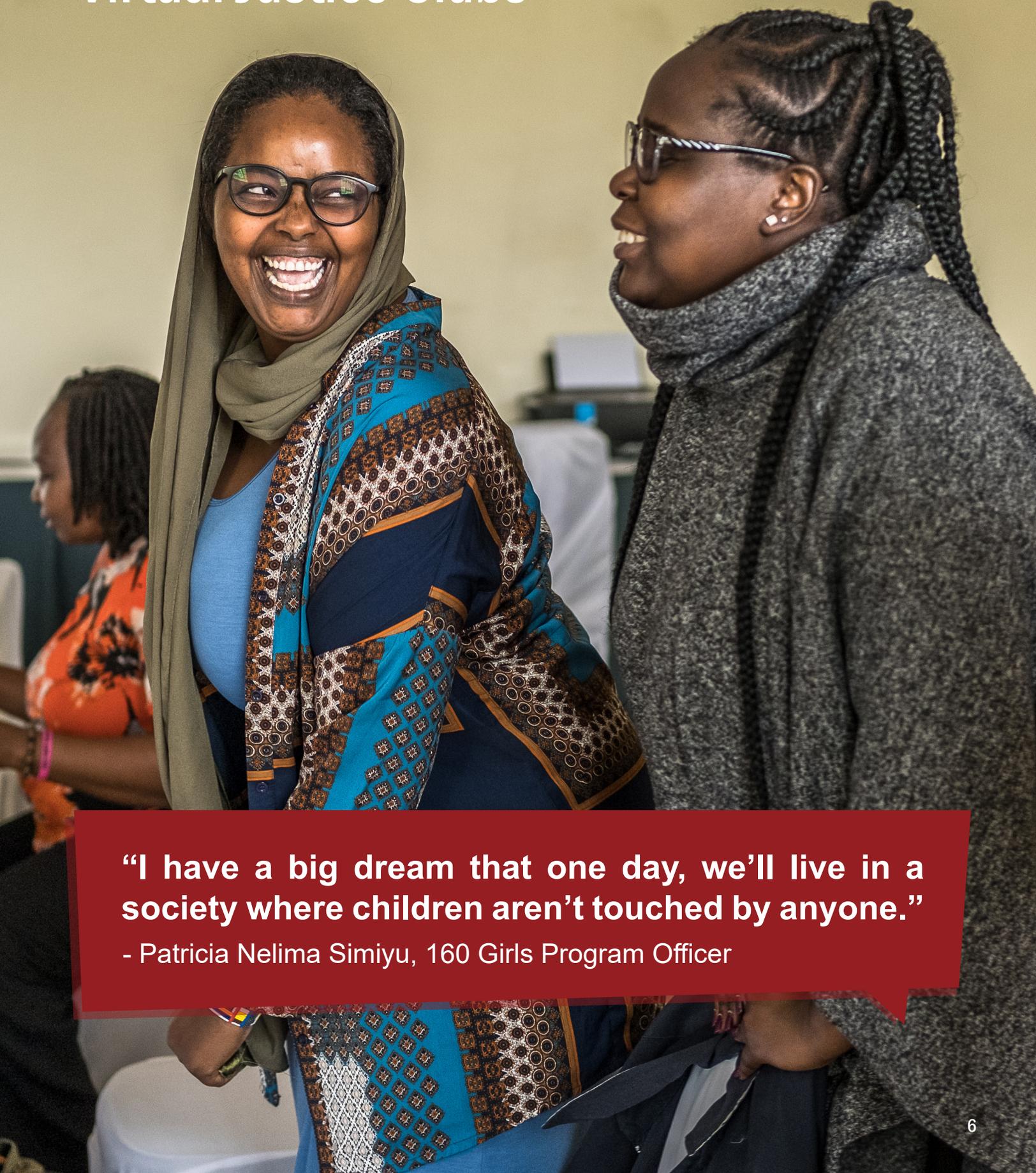
A big part of our efforts this year have been nurturing relationships with police officers. We've come to work closely together, both with the VJC program and the police training program. I think they respect what we do and we respect them too. During COVID-19, the National Police Service set up a unit to respond to gender-based violence. It's really important that the public has somewhere they can report incidences of gender-based violence and child sexual violence.

As we move forward, I hope that we can reach more children and continue to educate the community. I also hope to see a police system that knows how to handle cases of defilement and a reduction in the number of incidences of sexual and gender-based violence. I have a big dream that one day, we'll live in a society where children aren't touched by anyone.

If I could tell the public one thing, particularly those in Kenya, I'd tell them that help is on the way. Help for the community and help for the children. If you're afraid to reach out to the police, our team is here to help. While this work is just beginning, the future looks bright. Sexual violence is a big problem in this country but we're making strides. Help is on the way.



Virtual Justice Clubs



“I have a big dream that one day, we’ll live in a society where children aren’t touched by anyone.”

- Patricia Nelima Simiyu, 160 Girls Program Officer

VIRTUAL JUSTICE CLUBS

Our Virtual Justice Clubs wouldn't be possible without the support of several teachers, student leaders, parent leaders and officers. Here's what some of them had to say about the program:

Elizabeth Kate
Student Leader, Rangwena Primary School

My favourite part of the program is distributing the VJC 160 Girls Justice Journals. Most of the women and girls we see while we're working are impressed by the journals and the work we do. I also like that we get to help others who feel like they can't report if they're defiled.

This program has taught me many things but one lesson that stands out is that even your relatives can defile you. We read a story about a girl who was defiled and thought it was her fault but it's never the abused person's fault. It's always the perpetrator's fault.

This program makes me feel empowered, especially when boys and girls are being helped in their defilement cases. Sometimes, victims are told not to report what happened to them. I used to be afraid of what might happen if I reported but now I'm not.

Carol Treezer
Student Leader, Rangwena Primary School

My favourite part of the program is distributing the VJC 160 Girls Justice Journals. The letters in these journals have taught us how to report defilement or rape cases. I also like that we get to distribute the journals in several different places, which means we can reach more people. My other favourite part of this project is getting to use our tablets to learn and read more about our rights. Before I came to 160 Girls, I didn't know the meaning of defilement, but now I do.

One of the most surprising things I've learned is that boys can be defiled too. I've also learned that there are good touches and bad touches, and if we say no to someone, it means no.

Being involved in this project makes me feel happy and more comfortable. I know that if I'm defiled, I can report the case to my mother or I can go to the police station and report it there.

Esther J. Otieno
Teacher, St. Patrick's Makongeni Primary School, Homabay County

This program has been great for children but it's also empowered teachers and created awareness of gender-based violence in our communities. Before the program launched, many of us teachers weren't familiar with the rights of children or knew how to respond if children's rights were abused. Now, we all know how to handle these cases.

One of the biggest challenges we've faced was a lack of support from parents. When the program first launched, some of the parents were skeptical or refused to let their children participate. But, once we brought them together and explained the program, they understood the importance and agreed to let their children participate.

It can be difficult to respond to defilement cases in a timely manner but this program has brought teachers and students closer together, which makes it easier for us to identify when students' rights have been violated. The process can be slow but we're trying our best.

I'm really grateful for this program. It's helped children, teachers, officers and the community by creating awareness of gender-based violence and empowering victims and bystanders to speak up. I'm inspired to fight for the rights of children and motivated to continue this program.

Jackline Adhiambo
Parent Leader

This project has really helped us as parents. If parents aren't sure what to do with defilement cases, they can take them to the Community Aid Transformation Alliance Group, which has been a great help. The project is also educational for our children.

When the project first began, many members of the community were afraid of the police. But thanks to the project, we've learned that the police are friendly and ready to help. Many community members have shown interest in the project and I've learned that the community plays a vital role in ending gender-based violence in Kenya.

I feel lucky that I've been chosen to participate in this project. As a parent, I'm happy that so many children will grow up empowered and be aware of their own rights.

Joseph Otieno
Children Officer, Homabay County

This project has done a lot of good within our community. The partnerships we've created with teachers, students, parents and community members has resulted in more cases reported. That tells me that our efforts to raise awareness of gender-based violence are working.

We recently launched a hotline that people can call to report defilement cases. This hotline has been really successful but we're also trying to focus our efforts on preventative measures. We talk to children and parents about these issues, what they should look for and how to respond if they suspect an incident has happened.

Justice is important too. These matters are taken to court and we take them seriously.

Moving forward, I hope we'll keep working together to support this program. We interact with so many parents, students and community members and they're starting to understand what we do and why it's so important. We're having an impact and we can see it every day.

Newton Ham
Student Leader,
St. Patrick's Makongeni
Primary School

My favourite part of this program is teaching other students about the problems they'll face if their rights are abused. I also like teaching them the importance of knowing their rights.

This project has taught me how to report cases of defilement and how they're affecting the community. Some inspiring people are helping me reach my dreams for the future.

I've been very happy to join this program. Not only will it help us during these teenage years but also in the future, as many students and partners will be empowered to know their rights. If this program continues, many students and the community at large will be able to stop the defilement and gender-based violence, which is still a problem here in Kenya.

Zahra Hassan

Community Aid Transformation Alliance Group (CATAG), Homabay County

What I admire most about this program is the level of involvement from individuals at the grassroots level all the way up to the top branch. I'm grateful for the support of our local area police chief, village elders, students, parents, staff and our e2 partners in Homabay County.

This past year has been challenging. We were worried about COVID-19 and whether we'd be able to congregate with our students. Fortunately, the pandemic didn't affect us too much. We were able to get masks and hand sanitizer and the project ran smoothly.

When we first started this project, many people in Homabay County didn't understand our goals. Now, they do – and they really appreciate it. Not only are we empowering children and households but we're also helping the community. Every weekend, a group of students distribute the VJC 160 Girls Justice Journals to raise awareness of gender-based violence.

One of the biggest lessons I've learned is that the churches are a valuable support. Many girls and women used to suffer behind the church but religious leaders are learning about these issues and helping us create safer environments. My hope for the future of this program is that it continues to help mitigate myths and misconceptions about reporting defilement cases. This isn't a goal that we can achieve on our own. We need the support of our partners and we're fortunate that we have it.

If children are empowered to speak up, they'll be in a better position to protect themselves. We need to make sure that they know that there are systems and people around to support them.

Police Training

Improving the 160 Girls Police Training curriculum

In 2015, our team at e2 launched a pilot project in collaboration with the Kenya National Police Service (NPS) and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) to develop and deliver training to police officers in Kenya on how to investigate defilement cases. This past year, following completion of the pilot, the curriculum team worked tirelessly to revise the 160 Girls Police Training curriculum based on lessons learned and gaps identified.

The updated curriculum, which was presented to the Inspector General in August 2021, was developed into two defilement investigation training manuals – a theory manual and a practice manual – each of which span several hundred pages. The training manuals include 14 lessons, teaching aids, assessment tools and other various materials.

In addition to the updated curriculum, our team worked with NPS and VPD to develop a field training schedule and five-day police training program. With 23 training sessions planned for 26 participating trainees – otherwise referred to as middle management officers or Officers in Command of Station (OCS) – nearly 600 trainees will be reached by the end of January 2023. Following completion of the five-day police training program, trainees will deliver the training to their junior officers back in the field, who will also complete the 160 Girls Electronic Learning System (ELS) – a mobile application designed to supplement the 160 Girls Police Training Course. The ELS, which is currently in development, is detailed on the next page of this report.

Between the in-person training program and the ELS, our teams are aiming to reach more than 80,000 officers across Kenya. To ensure success for the in-person training program, the first four sessions will be treated as a scale-up pilot, after which a survey will be disseminated to participating trainees. Before the fifth session begins, survey responses will be analyzed and the program modified accordingly. To support trainees throughout the program and once they return to the field, mentor groups of instructors and trainees will be established.



160 Girls Electronic Learning System

Reaching more officers and creating change with defilement investigation training



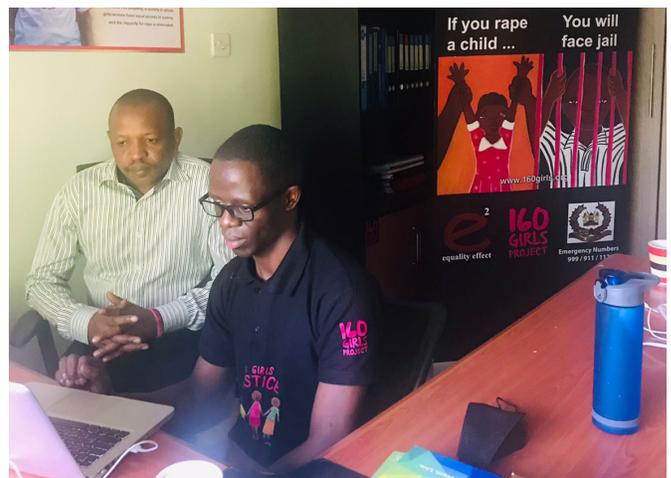
After completing the in-person police training program, graduating officers will be asked to train their junior officers back in the field. To complement this transfer of training, our teams have developed a user-friendly e-learning system (ELS), which serves as an online defilement investigation course for officers. The ELS allows our teams to reach a greater number of officers, recognizing the limitations on the number of officers who can be reached for in-person training.

The ELS, which consists of 12 virtual lessons, includes videos, podcasts, quizzes, documentaries, articles and a “choose your own adventure” style activity that asks officers to identify steps in a defilement investigation. Following the success of the VJC application, the 160 Girls Technology team built the ELS using the same system. By repurposing the VJC app, the NPS curriculum team has been guided by the VJC curriculum, using many of the same formats and resources.

Given the sensitive nature of the ELS content, the Technology team prioritized security on the app, implementing robust privacy policies and terms and conditions that officers must accept to participate in the program. Frontline officers will be equipped with their own unique user accounts, which will allow them to track their progress, store their quiz scores and reference their submitted work. The team has also introduced an administrative monitoring feature that allows e2 staff to track officers’ progress as they complete the course.

Piloting of the ELS has been completed and we’re now in the process of fine tuning. The Technology team is also working to improve accessibility, ensuring that the app is easily accessible on both mobile devices and computers.

The ELS will complement the in-person training for supervising officers and the 160 Girls Police College training. If successful, the ELS will also increase our reach, save time and money, allow for consistency of instruction and will be scalable, allowing for updates to ensure the continued relevance of the training. The impact of the ELS will be measured and shared next year.



160 Girls police faculty and e² staff recording the ELS lesson narrations.

Police Training

Spotlight: Kula Roba Wako, 160 Girls National Coordinator

Before I joined the equality effect, I was working with the International Centre for Reproductive Health Kenya, counselling counties on issues of sexual violence. One of our partners was the equality effect and I became invested in the 160 Girls project. I got to know the team and when I was given the opportunity to join them, I took it.

I've always had a passion for community empowerment. I was brought up in the ghetto in Nairobi, where girls are married off when they're young. I wanted a different life for myself. My father gave up everything so I could go to school and when I finished, I felt a responsibility to help other young girls in the slums.

In 2014, while providing sensitization on HIV/AIDS to children in schools across Kenya, I decided to start teaching about girls' rights too. An organization took note of my work and provided me with transportation and funding to visit more communities. From there, my passion grew and so did my efforts to teach children about the seriousness of defilement.

My favourite part of my job now is getting to interact with so many different people with different kinds of expertise. When I work with children, I love hearing about their dreams. They're so innocent. They tell us the most unique stories.

My job has also changed the way I view the police. Before I joined the equality effect, I was scared of them. From what I'd seen in the news or on social media, I thought that the police could be monsters. Working with them now, I know that's not true. They're soft and they care for humanity. Every profession has a few bad people, unfortunately we rarely see the good.

My perspective on police officers changed most when we rolled out our 160 Girls training program. When we first began the 160 Girls training sessions, many officers told us they'd already learned how to handle defilement cases. But at the end of the program, they asked for more training. They told us that they wanted another week. That change in their attitude makes me happy. I'm proud when I can see that we're making a difference. When the officers we've trained deliver the training to their juniors and go into the field, visiting local community members and sharing what they've learned, those are my favourite moments.

At the start of every training session, I like to tell the officers that I'm there to touch their hearts. When a defilement case comes in, I want them to take it personally, as though the victim were their daughter, or sister. And I think that they do.

My hope for the future is that the number of defilement cases decreases because police are putting perpetrators behind bars. I'm hopeful that these arrests will become a deterrent for others who may have committed the same acts. That's the future that I'm waiting for.

The 160 Girls work is so rewarding but having balance in my life is really important. To keep healthy and happy, I also love to spend time with my family, play football and make TikToks for my more than 100,000 followers!



NPS Lead Faculty Profiles

Eileen Mola

Officer Commanding Police Division in Limuru and Commander of Police Operations, Safety and Security

I joined the 160 Girls faculty in 2014 and became involved in the development of the police training curriculum. Now, I help deliver the training to officers across Kenya. I enjoy the work, especially the 160 Girls training sessions, which allow me to travel and meet officers across the country. It's amazing to see how the program has brought people together.

I'm really proud of the success we've had. When we began this project, I don't think many of us knew how big it would become. I remember preparing for the pilot and thinking it might not even proceed. Since then, it's taken on a life of its own. It's benefitted countless police officers but also members of the public, who now live in safer communities.

Since we introduced this training, there's been a paradigm shift in the way that police officers handle defilement cases in Kenya. Officers are more responsive and sensitive and they're better equipped to work with victims. I want the people in Kenya to know that they can – and should – report these cases if they happen. I also want them to know that if we work together, collectively and collaboratively, we can create a better environment for women and children.



Alex Otieno

Chief Inspector of Police, Mandera County, Kenya

I've been on service for the last 16 years and during this time, I've acquired a wealth of knowledge when it comes to investigating defilement cases. A few years ago, I was wondering how I could share this knowledge with junior officers in the field and was informed of the 160 Girls Project. Over the last few years, it's been a privilege to participate in the 160 Girls police training program and share my knowledge, skills and the experience with my fellow officers.

I'm really proud of the 160 Girls project. I've learned so much and even now, I'm part of a team that's imparting knowledge on other officers to improve our society. The main intent of this project is to teach officers the steps to follow when investigating defilement cases and we're seeing huge improvement in areas where the project has been cascaded.

While this project is meant to help officers investigate defilement cases, the teachings are relevant to general investigations too. I'm hopeful that once our knowledge has been cascaded to officers in all parts of the country, we'll have improved investigations and less crime. I also see a future in which young people understand their rights and how to seek help.



Mwangi Gillon Gitau

Senior Superintendent of Police, Directorate of Criminal Investigations

It's always enjoyable when you can integrate teaching with your practice. When I teach 160 Girls, I'm able to provide practical examples that I come across in the field. I also enjoy meeting police officers from all parts of Kenya, who attend our 160 Girls training sessions with different situations and challenges that they encounter themselves when handling defilement investigations. It's rewarding when we can answer their questions and meet their expectations. That gives me joy.

Defilement is a serious offence and should be reported to the nearest police station in a prompt and timely manner. The police service in Kenya has the knowledge and capacity to investigate these reports, thanks to the support from our stakeholders, like the equality effect. The public should feel confident that the offensive will be investigated efficiently and professionally.

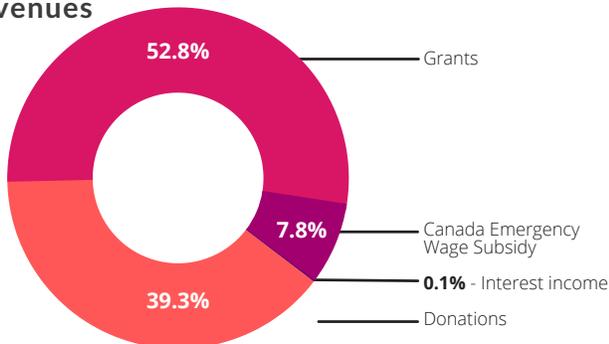
I'm privileged to be part of this 160 Girls program. It hasn't always been a smooth journey but it's been worth it. I'm proud of the ways that we've tackled each challenge. I'm also proud of the ways that I've been able to deliver my training. In the future, I want to see continued success, which means more police officers trained or sensitized on matters of investigations and children made aware of their rights. I'm looking forward to continuing this work at every level.



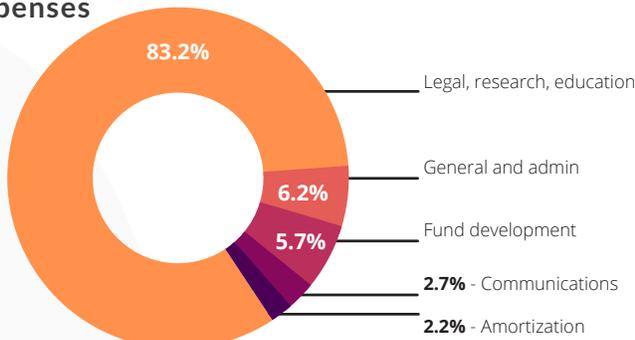
FINANCE UPDATE

For the year ended June 30, 2021

Revenues



Expenses



Revenues

Grants	361,574
Donations	269,197
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	53,499
Interest Income	831
Total revenue	685,101

Expenses

Legal, research and education	434,628
General and administration	32,611
Fund development	29,828
Communications	14,148
Amortization	11,341
Total expenses	522,556

Excess of revenues over expenses 162,545

Net assets, beginning of year 657,169

Net assets, end of year 819,714

* The equality effect's financial statements have been independently audited by Koster, Spinks & Koster, Chartered Professional Accountants, and found to be in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for non-profit organizations.

THANK YOU!

The work we do depends on our incredible team of dedicated volunteers, which is made up of lawyers, legal academics, measurement experts, app developers, artists and many more. Every year, these volunteers donate invaluable pro bono hours to the equality effect, allowing us to continue our work. Thank you to our committed volunteers and to our generous funders, partners and donors. We could not do our critical human rights work without you.

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National Police Service Kenya
The International Center for Reproductive Health (ICRH Kenya)
The Kenya Alliance for Rural Empowerment (KARE)
Ripples International (160 Girls Founding Partner)
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WLSA-Malawi
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