

## Learning Resources for Zara's Center

A fundraiser to mitigate educational gaps worsened by COVID-19

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Zara's Center is an after-school safe haven for over 125 orphaned and vulnerable youth in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. With a vision to expand academic enrichment programming, **The Center is raising funds on [GlobalGiving](#) to purchase laptops, books, and solar lights for the children.** These resources will help mitigate the significant learning losses brought by the coronavirus pandemic. The Center is fiscally sponsored in the USA by the [PG Family Foundation](#). Any support is greatly appreciated. Read on to learn more.



### Background



The Center was founded in 2007 in response to an increasing number of children losing their parents to AIDS and the country's deteriorating economic and political situation. Zara's Center provides **daily meals, academic enrichment, medical care, work training, recreation, and artistic development** in Emganwini Township. By providing a supportive environment where children feel safe, valued, and cared for, the Center ensures that Zara's kids can focus on academics, health, and enjoying childhood.



Zimbabwe's year-long public school shutdown has exacerbated the country's existing inequalities and made academic achievement even more difficult for at-risk children. The public schools offered no practical options to children who lack internet access. Despite this, Zimbabwean students have been moved to the next grade level. **Since only 4% of the poorest children in Zimbabwe have access to the internet at home** [UNICEF], the country's neediest children will suffer disproportionately. Zara's kids will struggle academically in 2021 unless the Center undertakes a robust intervention.

## Solar Lights

Rolling blackouts are routine in Zimbabwe and have been for some time. In early 2021, some areas of Bulawayo only had electricity one day per week. The lack of electricity means children are unable to study or complete homework after dark. The purchase of solar lights—at a discount through [LuminAid](#)—will help with this problem by providing Zara's kids with a reliable light source that is ecologically and economically sustainable.



Courtesy: LuminAid

## Chromebooks



Zara's Center has offered computer access and instruction since 2014 through a 15-computer lab. Since then, many of our kids have become computer experts and love to use the computers for school work. Until the pandemic, the modest lab was sufficient to provide each child with computer instruction each week and access for the older kids as needed—but the closure changed everything.

During the closure, Zara's Center was not allowed to operate programs outside of our daily provision of daily food and water. This means that children without internet at home—all of Zara's kids—were unable to attend their lessons. The purchase of 50 Chromebooks will allow Zara's kids to catch up on the work they missed during the year-long school closure. The additional computers will **grow our technology program by 85%**, allowing 65 children to work at one time. Zara's staff is working to develop a schedule for remediation and tutoring. Children will use the computers to complete the country's digital education curriculum.

## Library Books

Zara's Center already has a sizable library (approx. 1500 titles) but lacks enough copies of specific books with which to conduct a formal reading groups for each age cohort. We plan to purchase 10 copies of 25 books. Specific titles to be determined.



## Project Budget

Item	Cost	Qty	Total
Solar Light	\$ 10.00	125	\$ 1,250.00
Chromebook	\$ 200.00	50	\$ 10,000.00
Books	\$ 5.00	250	\$ 1,250.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 12,500.00</b>

## Contribute

To support to our fundraiser, please click below.

All amounts are greatly appreciated and donations are tax-deductible.



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