

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Eveline High School

**Giving girls entrepreneurial
skills in an ever-changing
world**



**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL**
Innovation

FUNDAÇÃO
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**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL
PRIZES**

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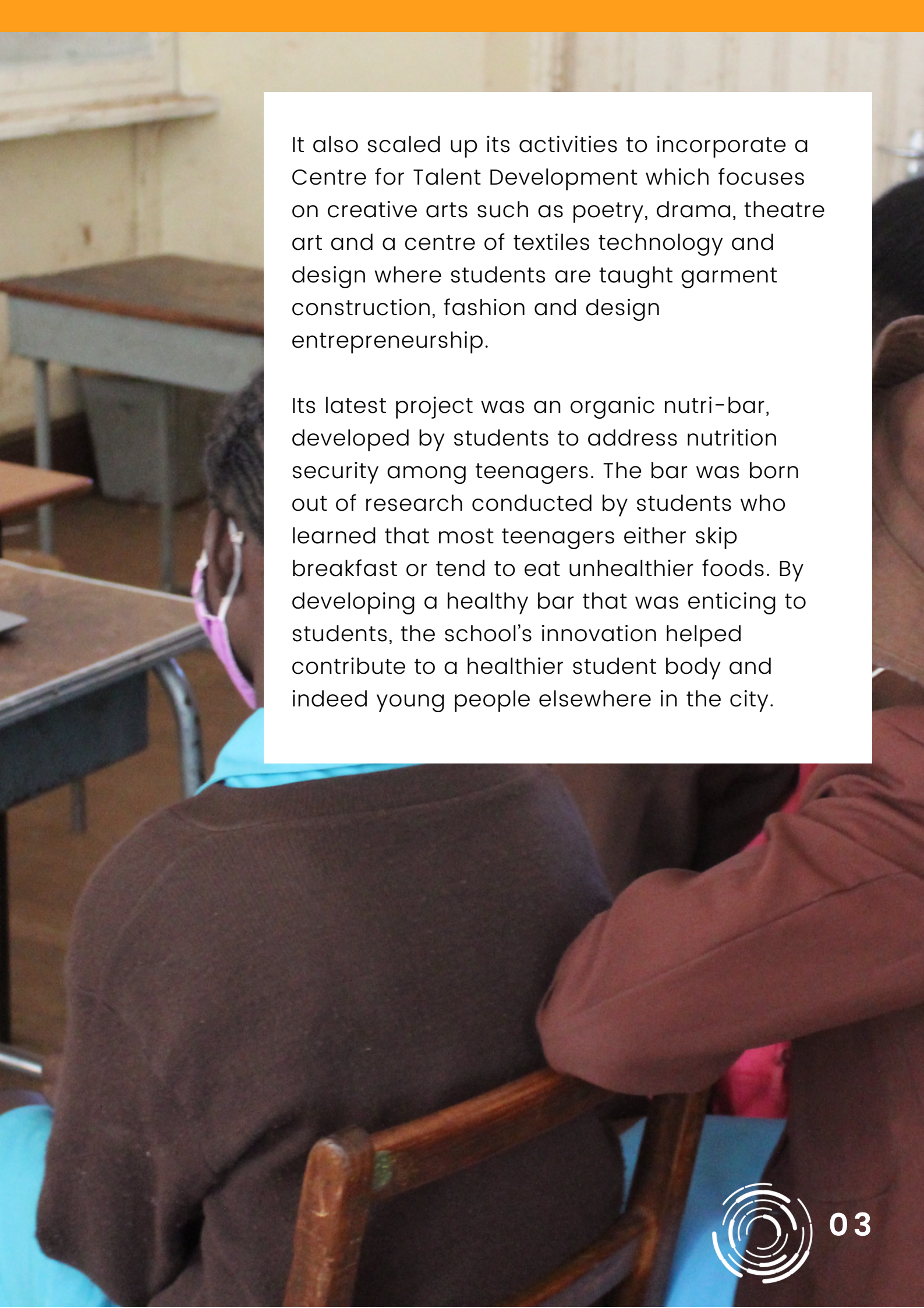
A background image showing a close-up of a young girl with a joyful expression, wearing a dark green school uniform. She is holding a silver microphone. The image is partially obscured by a white text box in the center.

Introduction

Eveline High School in Zimbabwe caters for girls from all corners of the metropolitan city of Bulawayo, mostly coming from low-income households. Despite limited resources, it has launched an array of often student-led entrepreneurial programmes to prepare its students for the modern world.

The school has been recognised as one of the most progressive girls' schools in the city, working with a number of local partners and organisations to help expand the experiences of its pupils. Its ethos is to “develop a lady to stand up for themselves in an ever-changing world.” It emphasises a strong entrepreneurial mindset within its students and hopes to produce learners who become leaders in their own right. Seeking to deviate from traditional forms of teaching, the school has worked to ensure that its students are exposed to a range of different opportunities and challenge-based learning and that they develop vital soft skills.



The background image shows a classroom setting. In the foreground, the back of a student's head and shoulders are visible; they are wearing a brown sweater over a light blue shirt and have a pink face mask hanging from their ear. They are sitting in a wooden chair. In the background, other students are seated at wooden desks, and the walls are a light, neutral color.

It also scaled up its activities to incorporate a Centre for Talent Development which focuses on creative arts such as poetry, drama, theatre art and a centre of textiles technology and design where students are taught garment construction, fashion and design entrepreneurship.

Its latest project was an organic nutri-bar, developed by students to address nutrition security among teenagers. The bar was born out of research conducted by students who learned that most teenagers either skip breakfast or tend to eat healthier foods. By developing a healthy bar that was enticing to students, the school's innovation helped contribute to a healthier student body and indeed young people elsewhere in the city.



Profile:



Country:
Zimbabwe



Region:
Bulawayo



School type:
Public school



Location area:
Urban



Student population:
1001 to 1500



Prize Category:
Innovation



“Eveline High School is built on the culture and values of inclusivity, which is why we encourage our learners to be responsible and to stand for themselves. As such, we always put them at the centre of their education.”

– Sithabile Moyo,
Principal of Eveline High
School



In-depth look

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

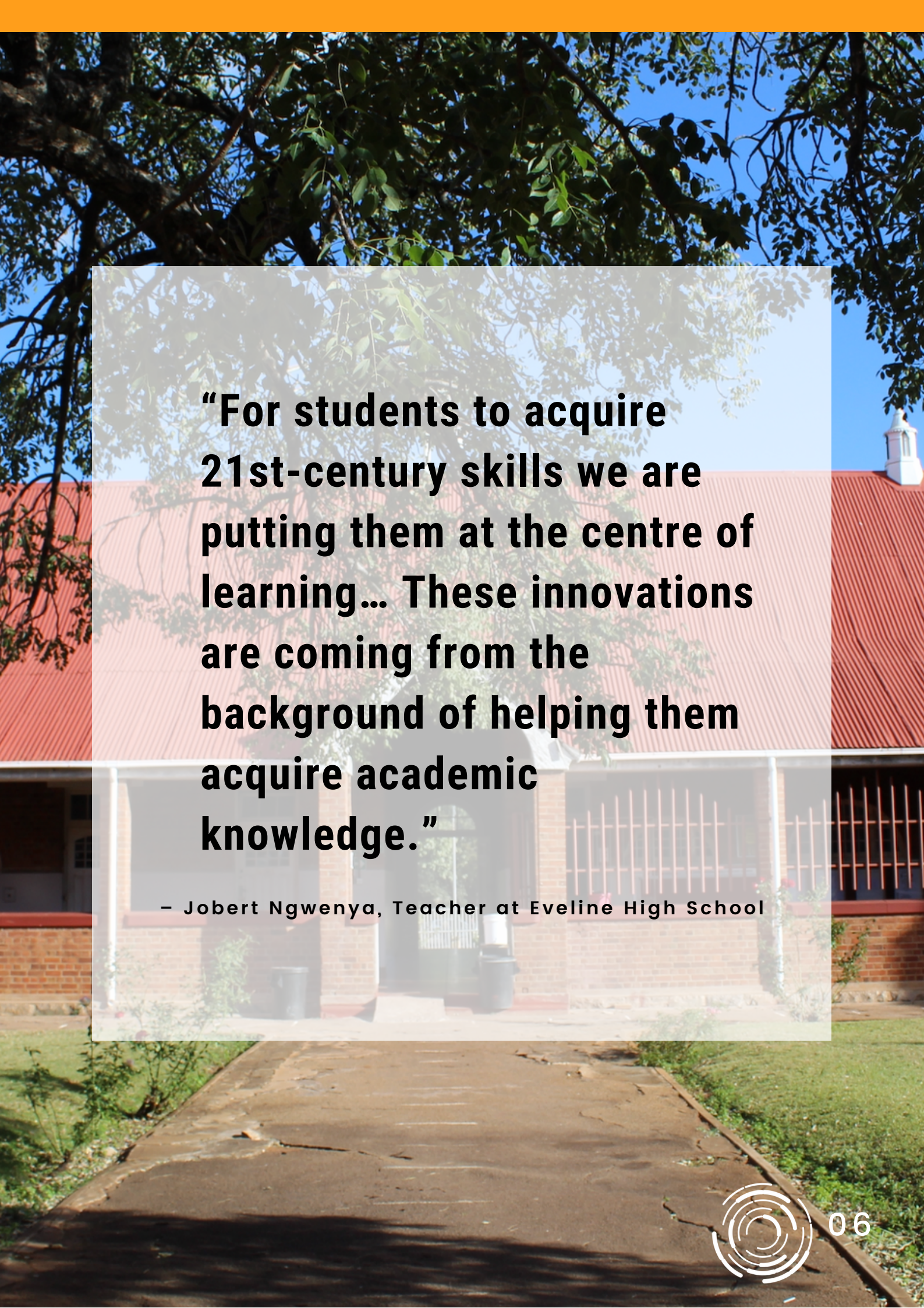
Eveline High School, a government school established in 1910, is the oldest modern girls' high school in the City of Bulawayo. Located in the Central Business District, the school has learners from low-income households. In recent years, the school has faced the challenge of adapting to the changing educational demands of the 21st century, in large part due to limited financial resources.

The school has also struggled with providing its students with food and nutrition security, in addition to retaining teachers with a high skill set. In order to address some of these issues, the school innovated to inspire students to take a more active interest in their learning and developed a range of

products and initiatives to meet their dietary needs.

Traditionally, methodologies around education have often centred on the role of the teacher, with the main goal of the instructor to help learners absorb the necessary information to do well in their end-of-year examinations. Eveline High School noticed this form of teaching did not cater for students who processed their studies at a different pace from their peers and that this educational model did not equip students with the skills needed to thrive in the 21st century.





“For students to acquire 21st-century skills we are putting them at the centre of learning... These innovations are coming from the background of helping them acquire academic knowledge.”

– Jobert Ngwenya, Teacher at Eveline High School



EXPERTISE AND APPROACH

The solution to the school's more deeply rooted problems was the development of challenge-based, experiential learning where students identify a problem within their space or the community and develop a solution to address it. This process pushed students to acquire the knowledge needed in various subject areas depending on the problem identified.

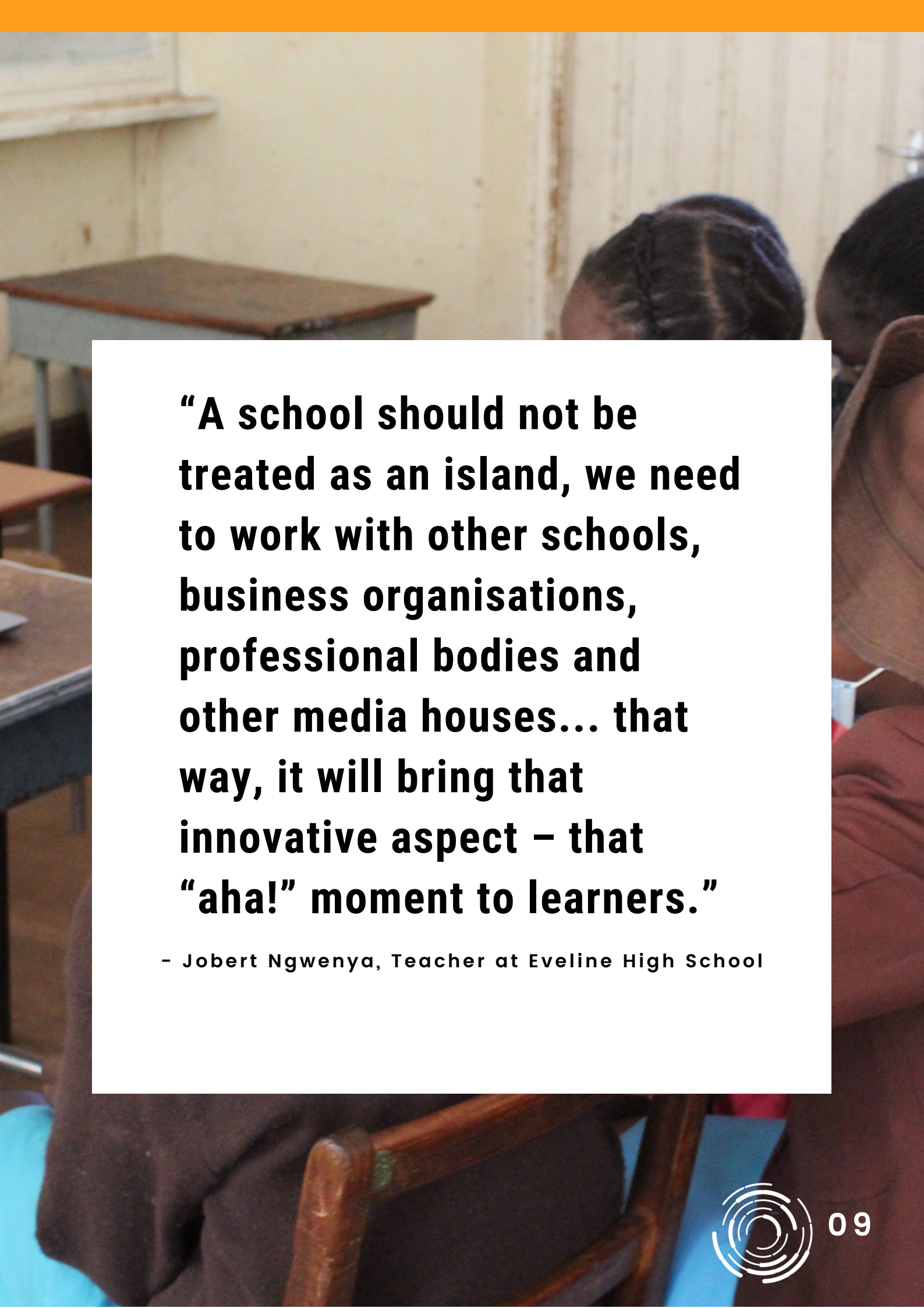
This learning process also helps the learners to acquire different 21st-century skills such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and digital literacy. Instead of being the centre of knowledge, teachers' roles expanded into becoming facilitators, assisting students to discover more than the traditional school syllabus. Ultimately, the school wanted to succeed in making "learning fun" and "to make learning relevant to the learners".



One of the school's projects saw students take an indigenous crop called Bambara nut and tap into its high nutritional value by grinding it down into flour as this was easier to consume. The flour was then made to be the base for soups, beverages and even cookies. Learners also carry out community research using their phones and other digital devices to create social media talk shows, audio drama, plays and podcasts, once again teaching 21st-century skills under the auspices of heritage studies and history.

By experimenting with different educational models that enable students to take the lead in their own thinking and learning, the school has also been able to create inventions that help the wider community. In 2020, students developed a local hydroponic system that utilised liquid manure from chicken droppings for people in the city. The system aimed at helping address supply chain disruptions of fresh vegetables caused by the COVID-19 lockdowns in the inner city region.





“A school should not be treated as an island, we need to work with other schools, business organisations, professional bodies and other media houses... that way, it will bring that innovative aspect – that “aha!” moment to learners.”

- Jobert Ngwenya, Teacher at Eveline High School



OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Challenge-based learning has produced tangible products useful to the learners, teachers and the wider community. For example, working on the hydroponics project in 2020 allowed students to acquire knowledge and develop their skills in Maths, Accounting, Biology, Agriculture, and the English Language. The history and heritage studies project launched at the height of the pandemic has been instrumental in heritage preservation, propagation of cultural heritage to a global audience through the digital depository and indeed 21st-century skills acquisition by the learners.

The initiatives and gadgets brought about as a result of the school's expertise led to widespread recognition. The success of the projects allowed the school to understand the ways in which students could, if given the

opportunity, take learning into their own hands. It found that students were more motivated because of the hands-on, non-linear educational model and attendance increased as a result. The girls tended to participate more in class, come up with their own projects of interest, and were more inquisitive in their learning.

Most recently, the nutri-bar innovation has seen the learners take part in two national conferences of Youth Food Action, taking part in the premier Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, organising nutrition and food workshops in neighbouring schools and publishing various media products (blogs, podcasts, infographics) promoting healthy eating among young people.



Through challenge-based learning that stimulated innovation, the school learnt that learners are not simply empty vessels waiting to be fed with information but possess a great deal of knowledge themselves. What was of real importance was that students had advanced tools and knowledge of how to utilise them in order to progress in their studies and expand their skill set. Because students could use digital devices to their advantage there were instances where they ended up educating their teachers, thereby encouraging teachers to consider pupils as partners in the educational process, as expressed by teacher Jobert Ngwenya: “The very fact that the teacher is coming in as a facilitator has brought us to where we are as school”.



Key Steps



STUDENT RESEARCH

The school has developed a wide variety of initiatives as part of its challenge-based learning. One example is its online heritage depository. The first step was exploring SDG 4 (Quality Education) in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The learners explored issues of access and quality of education in Economic History and Heritage Studies subject areas. The learners were given a prompt on how the pandemic had affected their learning of the two subjects. This led to the discussion on essential questions such as the availability of textbooks, (both subjects were introduced in 2017), the shortage of, and high cost of private tutors for homeschooling in the subject areas and the lack of availability of online resources.



The learners then came up with the challenge question: “What can we do to provide access to study material and improve the quality of education in Economic History and Heritage Studies in the Bulawayo community?”



INVESTIGATIONS INTO ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

The next step taken was to investigate various possible solutions and evaluate which solution would work best within the context of Bulawayo in particular and Zimbabwe in general. In carrying out these investigations online engagement among peers and some community stakeholders on the possible solutions to answer the question raised in the first step. The challenge question was broken down into various essential questions such as: What are the resources available in the community? Who are the willing stakeholders who can assist in the development of the solution? What is the best solution that can work within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic? What could be the cost of the solution and who will pay for it?



How many learners will have access to the solution and how? The investigative phase also involved online searches for possible solutions. From the investigations, it was discovered that setting up a digital depository (website) for the subject areas was the best solution that would answer most of the essential questions and advertently the challenge question.



IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION

The solution was to use oral information from community members that include the elderly, community leaders, academics, traditionalists and historians. These are knowledgeable of the country's economic history, traditions, values, local medicine, taboos, and indigenous knowledge systems among other critical information needed in the building of the digital depository. Learners then divided amongst themselves topics they will research and assigned some of the tasks to the educator. Learners were encouraged to choose various ways of communicating their findings. This led to the production of works that were presented by way of



poems, podcasts, plays, and talk shows using their cellphones and tablets. This way learners acquired knowledge in the subject area as well as developed various skills such as collaboration, communication, research and digital literacy among others. These works were presented in class and learners gave each other feedback. The teacher also gave an assessment. Areas that needed to be reworked were pointed out.



PUBLICATION

The website was developed by a private web developer while the uploading of files was left to the school faculty. In order to make the website fun and engaging, learners also encouraged other young people and the elderly to share poetry, and urban and indigenous folklore. Substantial contributions from both the young and old creatives were submitted to the entertainment category. The school also engaged with a freelance videographer who specialises in documenting indigenous food culture to share the link to his videos through the website. The website then went live and the links were shared through WhatsApp to people in the wider community.



Advice and Guidance

Students should be at the heart of everything. Schools are encouraged to engage deeply with their students and try to understand the needs of their learners and what goals they want to achieve through education. There should also be an openness for teachers to see students as potential partners and to act as facilitators for their learning.

More information

Watch the [Mystery Munch Co Nutri-Bar Documentary](#)

