

# Annual report

2020



## LETTER FROM OUR

# Director

Dear Project Soar friends + supporters,

As the world continues to white knuckle the COVID-19 roller coaster ride, we can't underestimate the pandemic's impact on adolescent girls. In addition to economic and health consequences for families, many teen girls have faced terrible learning losses, as well as increased exposure to violence and early marriage. Indeed, the UNFPA estimates that **13 million MORE child marriages could take place by 2030 than would have occurred prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Oh No.

As a teen girl organization, we know the potential impact that the virus can have on so many Project Soar Girls, especially given the closure of schools and youth centers where we typically conduct our activities. Globally, **an additional 20 million secondary school girls are estimated to NEVER go back to school.** Without decisive action to stop this trend, there will be dramatic implications on the lives of girls and society as a whole for generations to come. Project Soar provides many protective elements for girls, including concrete skills to increase their agency through improved self-esteem, techniques to speak up, increased health knowledge, greater understanding of their rights, and executive skills that help them plan for productive futures. As the pandemic hit Morocco in the Spring of 2020, we knew that lockdowns would invariably limit the girls' mobility and voice. Additionally, we were concerned that the Project Soar Girls would miss the emotional support and sense of sisterhood from the facilitators and other girls in their Project Soar "squads." And beyond our own programming, we were worried about the impact of the virus on girls passing their final exams and - for older girls -- passing the international baccalaureate exams that are critical if they want to go to university.

We had no choice but to kick into high gear! As girls were mid-programming when the pandemic hit, we **shifted our curriculum online in a new condensed format** and provided virtual training to scores of our Empowerment Facilitators. As the average Project Soar Girl lives on less than \$1 a day, internet is a luxury. We reached out to phone companies and donors for emergency relief. **Hundreds of Project Soar girls were provided internet across Morocco, and we created dozens of WhatsApp study groups.** And our gamble paid off! Girls at 36 of our sites were able to graduate online. **97% passed the school year,** and the vast majority of Project Soar girls aced their baccalaureate exams -- at far greater numbers than the national average. And even though Project Soar girls are among the most underserved in Morocco, **99.9% avoided child marriage.** The fact is **Project Soar works.** The data proves it, and so do the living, breathing girls themselves.

We ended 2020 with open doors at 22 locations across Morocco, and many hundreds of new teen girls enrolled in Project Soar! Masked and with abundant sanitizer in reach, we aren't letting the pandemic stop us. The world needs more empowered teen girls - ready to become the scientists, doctors, engineers (and every other profession) of the future! But none of this work would be possible without the tireless efforts of the Project Soar staff and volunteers, the nearly 100 Project Soar Facilitators, our board, our donors, and our supporters. **Thank you all for helping make the world a little better for teen girls.** I am so very grateful.

With warmest regards,

Maryam Montague

Project Soar Founder & Executive Director



ESSENTIAL

# Facts

## WHAT

Nonprofit 501(c)3 organization,  
registered in the US and Morocco

## WHEN

Established in 2013

## WHERE

Morocco & Uganda  
Headquartered in Marrakech

## WHO

Marginalized teen girls in school

## HOW

Signature empowerment curriculum  
helping girls understand their:

VALUE  
VOICE  
BODY  
RIGHTS  
PATH

The Project  
Soar pledge:

All girls must  
stay in school.



OUR  
Mission

To empower teen girls to be *Leaders*

of today and tomorrow

# 2020 Snapshot

Empowering girls  
in Morocco  
and Uganda



**1,589**  
teen girls  
served



**38**  
Girl Leader  
Clubs



**22**  
squads in  
Morocco



**5**  
squads in  
Uganda

**767** of hours  
of empowerment  
workshops



**38,639** hours  
of empowerment  
received by girls



**10** days  
training  
Empowerment  
Facilitators

**97**  
Empowerment  
Facilitators



**14**  
volunteers

**859**  
volunteer  
hours  
donated



**454** PS Girls  
provided internet for  
exam support

**12,097** study  
hours logged



**585** BeGirl  
menstruation  
kits distributed



**1** With and For Girls  
Award

**7** Grants

**“I am not keeping my eyes cast down on the ground anymore. I look at people in the eyes and I keep my head up. Even my mother has noticed this and now, my relationship with my mother has changed...**



**...I used to not be very close to my mom, did not share my feelings with her, discuss things with her, or have fun with her. But now we are friends, she is my soulmate, and I share everything with her.”**



*-Meryem*

14 years old from  
Sidi Youssef



## SIGNATURE *Programs*

### Empowerment Workshops

Project Soar girls across Morocco and Uganda join Empowerment workshops in their communities led by trained Project Soar facilitators. Workshops are rooted in the Project Soar Empowerment Pillars:

- Know your Value
- Know your Voice
- Know your Body
- Know your Rights
- Know your Path

Each workshop helps develop teen girl confidence and skills through a combination of:

- Affirmations
- Dialogue
- Art or Movement
- Meditation/Visualization
- Journaling

### Girl Leader Clubs

Project Soar Girl Leaders Clubs (GLCs) help Girls put into action their leadership skills in their local communities. Led by girls, for girls, GLCs receive continued Project Soar support and are equipped with a toolkit that help them effectively manage their Clubs through:

- Club governance
- Activity planning
- Advocacy skills

**38** GLCs in Morocco + Uganda  
**729** GLC members



## Community Dialogues

In 2020, Project Soar launched Community Dialogues as a pilot initiative, with the support of Crossing Borders and CISU - Civil Society in development. Community Dialogues help foster the leadership skills of Project Soar Girls, supporting them to mobilize and advocate around teen girl rights in their local neighborhoods. Girls learn to map and engage with community allies, and plan and lead the dialogues themselves with the support of the Project Soar Facilitators. Dialogues address such issues as girls dropping out of school, sexual harassment, child marriage and other issues identified by the girls themselves.

## Teen Girls with Disabilities

With funding from Global Fund for Women, in 2020, we launched a pilot to begin adaptation of the Project Soar in a Box empowerment program to include girls with disabilities. We are working the Association El Khair Pour Les Personnes A Besoins Specifiques in the Province Chichaoua to pilot the program with small groups of girls who have physical and/or mental disabilities. Feedback loops will provide key learnings that will help us to better adapt the curriculum to be more inclusive for all girls.

### Chichaoua pilot

- 4** trained empowerment facilitators
- 4** mini squads of girls
- 20** Project Soar Girls with disabilities

# Exam Support Assistance for Girls

In April 2020, Project Soar launched an Exam Support Assistance for Girls (E-SAG) program to confront the challenges teen girls face while preparing for key exams during the COVID-19 pandemic and being quarantined at home. Many thanks to the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) for its support.



**454**  
PS Girls  
provided  
internet



**83**  
WhatsApp  
study groups  
created



**12,097**  
Study hours  
logged

**100%**

of 11th grade girls  
passed their 1st  
international  
Baccalaureate exam

**90%**

of 12th grade  
girls passed their  
2nd international  
Baccalaureate exam

**“Thank you Project Soar and ICESCO for offering us internet during this challenging situation. I was able to keep up with my lessons online, study mathematics and philosophy, and be in contact with my teachers.”**

*Imane*

18 years old from Massa



# 2020 Resilience

GLOBAL PANDEMIC



Provided masks  
+ sanitizer

SCHOOLS CLOSED



Found alternate locations  
+ PSB Online



**657**  
PS Girls  
provided  
internet



**36**  
squads  
completed  
PSB online

## SCALING Sustainably WITH THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT

In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Project Soar continued its empowerment program in 34 local youth centers (dar chebabs) across Morocco, including its signature workshops and Girl Leader Club activities. Although COVID-19 caused the (temporary) closure of all youth centers nationwide, Project Soar was able to relocate its activities to alternate locations or take programming online. Project Soar plans to continue working in youth centers once they re-open. Support from the Moroccan government has been instrumental in bringing Project Soar to scale across Morocco.

### With Ministry of Youth and Sports Support

**67** Female Facilitators

**774** Girls graduated

**850** workshops completed

# RESEARCH + Impact



DATA COLLECTED FROM 807  
PROJECT SOAR GIRLS IN 45  
LOCATIONS ACROSS MOROCCO  
+ UGANDA

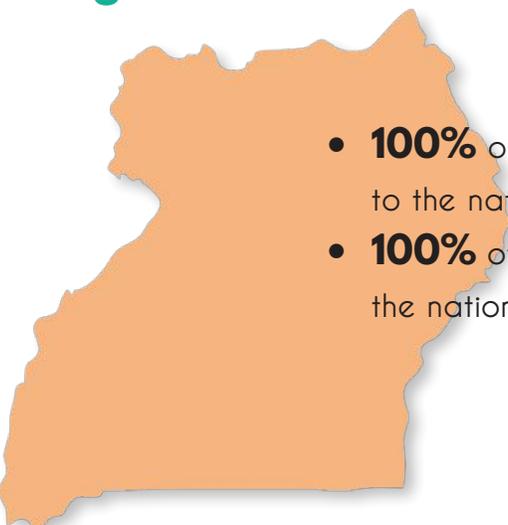
Project Soar is a data-driven organization, and we track our impact, both qualitatively and quantitatively, through our global database. Ongoing survey data and feedback loops from PS Girls and Facilitators guide all of our initiatives.

## In Morocco...



- **0.65%** PS Girls dropped out of school. **96.9%** lower than the national rate of **21%** of girls who drop out of middle and high school
- **87.50%** PS Girls go on to higher education (university or vocational school). **40.69%** higher than national rate **51.9%** of all girls
- **0.11%** PS Girls married underage. **99.21%** lower than national child marriage rate of **14%**
- **97.26%** PS Girls passed the school year

## In Uganda...



- **100%** of Project Soar Girls avoided underage marriage compared to the national average of **40%** of girl child marriages
- **100%** of Project Soar girls avoided teen pregnancy compared to the national average of **25%** of all girls

**Baseline/Endline Survey:** With the help of Untold Research, in the Fall of 2020, Project Soar developed a universal baseline/endline tool to monitor the shift in attitudes and beliefs of girl beneficiaries before and after participating in the Project Soar program. This survey will be piloted and administered 1) after registration and 2) after completing the final workshop.

**“The Project Soar in a Box empowerment program taught me many valuable lessons that changed my life and made me stronger. I am very thankful to have the chance to show the world what I have and to be able to inspire other girls in my village to finish their studies and create their own path in life.”**

*Hanane*

17 years old from Massa



Hanane (left) with Project Soar Coordinator and Facilitator Kaoutar Ait Malek (right)



My name is *Amal Zuhair*

INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF THE GIRL CHILD

**PROTECT  
THE GIRL  
CHILD**

# PROJECT SOAR Uganda



In 2019, Project Soar crossed borders with Ugandan partner, Open Space Centre, to pilot Project Soar in a Box in five schools in Kampala, Uganda, with great success. The program resulted in

- 12 Project Soar Facilitators**
- 5 Project Soar in a Box Squads**
- 132 Project Soar Girls**
- 5 Girl Leaders Clubs**

## Girl Advocacy in 2020

Project Soar Girls and Facilitators didn't let 2020 stop them... While schools remained closed in Uganda throughout 2020 due to COVID-19, the following activities were conducted

- 5 WhatsApp support groups created around Menstrual Hygiene**
- 1 International Day of the Girl Child Campaign with community discussions on child marriage**



# ♀ Grassroots women...



-Leila

PSB Facilitator in Biougra

**“I believe that I am building a new generation with an open minded mentality. It’s a generation where girls believe in themselves -- believe they are able to achieve their dreams and think outside of the box.”**

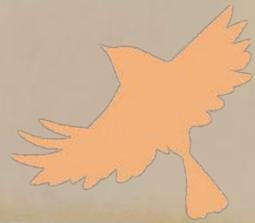


-Khadija

PSB Facilitator in Douar Igoudar

**“We need to face and deal with challenges, especially for girls and women. I am really glad to be a part of Project Soar. It’s because of Project Soar I am who I am now.”**

...inspiring girl leaders



نساء القتيات القائدات:

Girls leader club (GLC)



الرئيسة	نائبة الرئيسة	مجموعة المشاريع
تقيلا	حديجة	سلمات
ياسمين	فايزة	سكينة
فاطمة	أمينة	ليليا
بشرى	سيفاء	صعد
مروى	وفام	زهيرة
	سغام	
	حياة	

# Financials & Donors

**OUR AMAZING**

## Donors and Supporters

Donations received January 1st to December 31st, 2020.

Project Soar has expanded core programming and launched new initiatives in thanks to our supportive partners and generous contributors. Project Soar staff and the Project Soar Girls are grateful for the continued commitment of the United States, Moroccan, and New Zealand governments.

- Ministry of Youth and Sports, Government of Morocco
- Embassy of New Zealand

Project Soar staff and the Project Soar Girls are deeply thankful for the heartfelt gifts from donors of 2020.

### \$50,000+

Bill and Melinda Gates Matching Funds  
GlobalGiving  
With and For Girls

### \$30,000+

New Zealand Embassy

### \$20,000+

Islamic Cultural Educational Scientific (ICESCO)

### \$15,000+

Ernie Gabiati  
Global Fund for Women

### \$5,000+

Anna Beck Designs  
Jamie Leigh  
Jillian Korstrom  
John Longhurst

Kia Guarino  
Marina Fanning  
Mark S. Eckman  
Medtronic Foundation  
MMontague & Peacock Pavilions  
U.S. State Department Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)

### \$1,000 - \$5,000

Altrusa International of Lake City  
American Language Center  
Berard Family Foundation, a Donor Advised Fund of the U.S. Charitable Gift Trust  
Cameron Family Foundation  
Capricorn Investment matching, Henry McLaughlin  
David Labourdette & Jamie Diamond  
Donald Bielinski  
Drift Home Collection  
Eat Pray Move, Erin Lewis  
Frederick & Julia Cefalo  
Housni Chraibi  
Jennifer Harr  
Jolene Slotter  
Karen L. Nuccitelli  
Lisa Moriyama  
Path North  
Phil Rosenthal Family Foundation  
Shea Fontana  
Suanne Salley  
Thierry Marchand  
Tiffany A. Barton  
Villanova University Business School

In 2020 we started a new monthly donor program: Project Soar *Starlings*. By December 2020, we had 33 Starlings.





U.S. Association 501(c)3 Moroccan Association Total 2020

<b>INCOMING REVENUE</b>	<b>\$241,393.30</b>	<b>\$201,185.30</b>	<b>\$442,478.60</b>
<i>Individual Donations</i>	\$160,095.40	\$625.07	
<i>Grants</i>		\$192,153.65	
<i>Foundations</i>	\$63,020.00		
<i>Companies &amp; Organizations</i>	\$9,377.90	\$8,406.58	
<i>PPP Federal Forgivable Loan</i>	\$8,900.00		
<b>OUTGOING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$156,747.53</b>	<b>\$166,030.80</b>	<b>\$360,943.38</b>
<i>Personnel &amp; Professionals</i>	\$43,012.48	\$81,849.78	
<i>Taxes, insurance &amp; Benefits</i>	\$5,944.30	\$16,357.58	
<i>Supplies &amp; Equipment</i>	\$1,085.18	\$15,593.07	
<i>Travel &amp; Transit</i>	\$1,794.19	\$6,601.99	
<i>Contracts &amp; Subgrants</i>	\$82,696.15	\$20,250.88	
<i>Other Direct Costs</i>	\$8,027.33	\$25,377.50	

# THE Team



## Executive Staff

(left to right)

**Maryam Montague**

Founder & Executive Director  
CEO

**Kaydee Dahlin**

Director of Finance and Administration  
CFO

## Board Members

### Morocco Board Members

Chris Redecke, President  
Yasmine Sarhrouny, Vice President  
Aziz Nahas, Treasurer  
Hadia Temli, Secretary  
Caitlin Dowe- Sandes, Advisor  
Patrick Benjaminson, Honorary Advisor

### US Board Members

Marina Fanning, President  
Per Sjödel, Vice President  
Sarita Jha, Treasurer  
Jacqueline Assimwe, Director



## HQ Staff

(left to right)

**Jessica Houari**  
Office Director

**Latifa Boukiri**  
PSB Coordinator

**Fatima Chakir**  
Finance & HR Manager

**Yasmine Moujjane**  
Empowerent Lead

**Noor Boughrad**  
Program Coordinator &  
Academic Manager

**Fatimaezzahra  
Amechnoug**  
Financial  
Coordinator

**Fatima Ait Ouknik**  
Senior PSB Coordinator

**Jenna Lacey**  
Development  
Coordinator

**Kawtar Ait Malek**  
PSB Coordinator



97

## Empowerment

### Facilitators in Morocco

12

## Empowerment

### Facilitators in Uganda

#### Uganda:

Kampala

#### Morocco:

Aghbalou

Ait Bougmaz

Ait IsHaq

Ait Ourir

Akka

Amellago

Aourir

Arouit

Azrou Akchmir

Azrou Atlas

Biougra

Bouyzakarn

Casablanca Hay

Salama

Casablanca Sidi

Othman

Casablanca

Mabrouka

Casablanca Ria

Alandalus

Casablanca Sidi

Moumen

Chichaoua

Douar Igoudar

Douar Laadam

El Jadida

El Kebab

El Khang

Essaouira

Fam Lhissn

Fes

Figuig

Henchane

Kelaa Des Sraghna

Marrakech

Massa

Mdaghra

Mediouna

N'Zalat Bni Amar

Ouled Teima

Ouled Yahyan

Lagrayer

Ourtzagh

Rich

Safi

Sale

Sidi Ismail

Sidi Jaber

Sidi Slimane

Souk El Khmis Dades

Tanger Masnana

Taroudant

Tighoumar

Tinjdad

Tissint

Touama



# Call to Action

Teen girl's *empowerment*  
is challenged in every way.

With over 130 million girls out of school  
around the world, so many girls are  
missing the chance to envision  
their *dreams*.

At Project Soar, we know and believe  
that every Girl is *capable*.

Our signature empowerment program  
enables girls to realize their Value, Voice,  
Body, Rights, and Path  
and *Soar* higher than the hurdles  
placed in front of them.



## Contact Us



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giveback@projectsoar.org

## Follow Us



Facebook: @Projectsoar



Instagram: @projectoar



Twitter: @projectsoar

Did you know that not educating girls costs \$15 to \$30 trillion in lost lifetime productivity and earnings?\* Our world cannot afford to miss out on the economic prospects that girls' education and empowerment entails.

By donating today, *you* contribute to making the world a better place by empowering teenage girls to become

*leaders of today  
and tomorrow.*

\* 2018 World Bank Report