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GIRLS SUPPORTING GIRLS

For the “Global Social Leaders Competition”, we named our project “Girls Supporting Girls”. Our team was composed of captain Victoria Romero, team members Rosamary Azpiri, María Fernanda Castellanos, Maria de Jesus Dominguez, and Andrea Castellanos, and our supervisor, Ms. Teremarie Gutierrez. The aim was to raise funds in order to purchase feminine hygiene products for girls with limited resources around the ages 12 to 18. We decided to choose this goal because after attending a conference that was held at our school about the importance of proper hygiene for girls during menstruation, we realized how fortunate we are to be able to buy products like pads and tampons every month when we need them, unlike many young girls in Mexico who don't have the opportunity to do so.

For this project, we chose to address Sustainable Development Goal 3, Good Health and Well-being. We firmly believe that everyone should have the opportunity to lead a healthy life in all areas, whether it is mental, physical, or social. Since menstruation is such an important part of a young girl's life, we believe that this goal is of utmost importance and should be addressed to support girls who are less fortunate.

In order to accomplish this, we decided to start a food sale at our school. We set aside our allowances combined and went to our local grocery store to buy traditional Mexican snacks that are not sold in our school cafeteria, and sold them around 8:30 am every morning. Since many of our classmates don't usually have time to have breakfast early in their houses, it was the perfect way to raise money. We did this for a few weeks and were able to raise quite a lot of money. We would walk around the hallways of our schools holding the posters we made and baskets full of snacks, inviting our community to support the project. The kids and teachers in our school community were invested in purchasing these items because they knew that their money was going to a good cause, in this case to girls who don't have the access to buy feminine hygiene products. Once we had a large amount of money, we chose an association we wanted to help.

One of the most important experiences during this project was traveling to the girl's shelter we had chosen, called “IPODERAC”. The drive was about one hour long from where we live and this experience taught us how far we wanted to go in order to provide our help to girls who live in this situation every month. Once we arrived at the shelter, we had to unpack the feminine products from the car we traveled in and then hand them personally to the girls in the shelter. We were able to meet the head of the association and also get to know the 38 different girls we donated the products to in person. We asked them about their names, background information, and situations using these products, realizing the different experiences they have to go through every time they go through menstruation. We also had the opportunity to interact with them for a while, asking them a set of questions, and even discovered that one of the girls was celebrating her birthday that day so we even got the chance to sing “happy birthday” to her which was very heartwarming.

By doing this project we made an impact in the girls' lives by providing hygiene products. We consider this to be very important because it will allow them to have a more hygienic life and therefore avoid any type of infections or bacteria that they might have gotten if they wouldn't have used these products. The girls and the members of the organization were

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really happy and grateful to us for supplying them with necessary products that every girl needs and that they didn't have access to before.

Thanks to this project we were able to recognize the necessities that young girls in our country do not have access to. This helped us understand the needs of our society and the lifestyle that many girls in our society, unfortunately, have to stick to, in this case, the use of items such as toilet paper or even socks to replace pads and tampons. We were also able to be more emphatic and realized the importance of understanding the lifestyle perspective of young girls in our society, making it easier to acknowledge their needs and therefore make an impact in their lives.



In addition, during the project, we were able to develop and put into practice diverse skills, values, and attitudes such as empathy, solidarity, communication, organization, and time management. Solidarity was one of the main ones as it helped us form mutual support between the team and unite to take action. We were empathetic during the whole process because we understood the girls' backgrounds and provided them with the products they needed. Communication was also always present as it was the way in which we were able to talk to each other and also find out the needs and background of the girls in the shelter. Nevertheless, time management was essential to get each one of our tasks done by the deadline, making sure that we turned everything in with good quality.

In conclusion, we are very proud to have participated in the "Global Social Leaders Competition" as it was definitely an inspiring event. We reflected on the importance of taking action in our local and school communities, realizing that we can all give a small part of our time, help, or even resources to try and help a cause. At the end of the day, a way in which we can help make a difference is by GIRLS SUPPORTING GIRLS! This project was an uplifting experience and something that we are planning to repeat in the near future because it made us feel satisfied with our accomplishments, realizing that small actions can have big impacts.

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