

United Kingdom: Evaluation of the Global Student Forum

FINAL REPORT

By Professor Alan J Penny, for Coffey International Development

On Behalf of the Department for International Development

October 2009

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CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| | FINAL REPORT | |
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 2 | THE EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) | 1 |
| 3 | REVIEW METHODOLOGY | 2 |
| | Phase One | 2 |
| | Phase Two | 3 |
| 4 | PHASE ONE FINDINGS – ADDRESSING THE TOR | 3 |
| 5 | PHASE TWO | 8 |
| 5.1 | The 2009 Conference | 8 |
| 5.2 | Impact of the 2009 Conference | 8 |
| 6 | RECOMMENDATIONS | 9 |
| 6.1 | Financial Support to Schools | 9 |
| 6.2 | Duplication of effort | 9 |
| 6.3 | Publicity | 9 |
| 6.4 | Dissemination | 9 |
| 7 | POSTSCRIPT | 10 |
| | | 11 |
| | TABLES IN THE TEXT | |
| 1 | Numbers of Schools, Delegates and Teachers attending the GSF Conference | |
| 2 | Estimated School costs | |
| 3 | Global School Partnerships Good Practice Network Conferences costs | |
| | APPENDIX 8 | |
| 8.1 | Stratton Upper School, Extract from a letter to the School Governors | 12 |

FINAL REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Global Student Forum (GSF) was launched in London in July 2005 by Damaris Trust in collaboration with Christian Aid and World Vision. The aim was to provide a forum for 16 to 19 year old students to explore the issues of Global Citizenship. In particular, the forum aimed at developing a critical awareness of the development issues facing the world and encouraging and inspiring participants to spread this awareness amongst their peers. The 2005 conference took place in the context of the international *Make Poverty History* campaign and the G8 conference. These aims have continued to shape subsequent conferences which have had the following themes:

- 2006 – HIV and AIDS
- 2007 – Climate Change
- 2008 – Effects of Conflict on Poor Countries - *Everybody wants a Peace*
- 2009 – Child Mortality – When I grow up I want to be...

1.2 Although the format of the conferences has been modified with experience, each includes awareness raising sessions with inputs from leaders in the field, including meeting and speaking with current political leaders; exposure to relevant multimedia materials; debate; workshops; training in peer teaching and the use of materials developed by Damaris Trust and its partners.

1.3 The 2009 conference was entitled *When I grow up I want to be...* . It explored health and safety issues in the lives of millions of children in the developing world. Amongst the topics that were addressed were food security and climate change, family and community care, water and sanitation, and HIV and AIDS.

1.4 A unique feature of GSF is its emphasis on Peer Teaching¹ which is, as the term implies, teaching by peers. Leadership in and responsibility for the delivery of activities aimed at raising awareness of development issues rests firmly with students themselves. These include responsibility for planning and resourcing these activities. Partner schools are provided with Peer Educator Packs containing integral DVDs and other materials which can be photocopied to enable delegates to lead school assemblies and lessons in their schools and local primary schools, a teacher's briefing pack containing further materials, a GFS Press Kit to assist school teams to make the most of local newspaper, radio and TV opportunities, and details of sources of additional materials. Also unique is the use made of the popular media in disseminating ideas and messages. Added support is provided through the Damaris Trust website.

1.5 Schools prepare reports on their activities, copies of which are sent to Damaris Trust. These reports are incorporated into School reports to the School Governors, which are shared either in part or fully with the local parent community and student body.

1.6 In January 2008 the UK Department for International Development (DFID) became a sponsorship partner in GSF and this led to a decision to separate out the 2009 conference for independent evaluation.

2 THE EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

2.1 In summary, the ToR split the assignment into two phases. Phase one is a retrospective evaluation of the impact of GSF 2008 based on a review of the post-conference evaluation returns and on findings from discussions with a small sample of students and visits to their schools. Phase two is an evaluation of the conference itself and its immediate impact.

2.2 The evaluation is intended to answer the following questions:

- Does the GSF meet its declared goal and target:

¹ Google cites over 1200 articles in scholarly works on the value of Peer Teaching

- Goal: to deliver a national conference in London in June/July each year which leads to effective Peer Education in GSF partner schools and in their feeder primary schools in the rest of the summer term and some of the autumn term?
- Target: at least 50 schools become GSF partner schools sending students to the national conference who return to their school and carry out effective Peer Education in their school and in their feeder Primary Schools.
- Does GSF add significant value to those students who are 'peer educated' in:
 - knowledge of development education issues (recall, understanding and attitudes),
 - level of reasoned and appropriate engagement and action around development issues,
 - general educational engagement and key skills development.
- Does GSF add significant value to those students who are 'peer educated' in terms of knowledge of development education issues (recall, understanding and attitudes).
- When compared with other educational initiatives delivering development education in and through schools, does GSF represent value for money?
- Are there any recommendations for improving the effectiveness and/or value for money of GSF?

3 REVIEW METHODOLOGY

3.1 Phase One

3.1 Given the limited time made available for phase one, and the fact that at the time of the commencement of the evaluation 6th formers were about to go on pre-A level study leave, only two schools were willing to host the evaluator. These were The Elizabethan High School in Retford, Nottinghamshire, and Stratton Upper School in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. In addition, two of their feeder schools were visited but no primary schools as SATs examinations had begun.

3.2 As acknowledged in the ToR, the two schools are a self-selected group and are not a representative sample. Consequently, it is difficult to generalise findings from so small a group, or indeed to regard any findings as a representative baseline. The generalisability of the findings is further weakened by the fact that both these schools are regarded as GSF show case schools by Damaris Trust. The visits to the schools confirmed this view and provided evidence as to the reasons why Stratton Upper School in particular has received commendations from other informed organisations, most notably the Diana Award Scheme and Anglia Television. The visits to these schools, the discussions held with students and teachers, the review of materials and observations made, provided two useful case studies of GSF in both the mother and feeder schools.

3.3 At each school visited:

- GSF teams, key staff members and head teachers were interviewed.
- GSF materials were reviewed.
- General observations were made of the school's teaching and learning environment to ascertain the extent to which the school is engaged in 'development' related activities.

School visits took around 4 hours each with the exception of the visit to Gamlingay Village College in Cambridgeshire which took just over an hour. Gamlingay Village College is a feeder school to Stratton Upper School.

3.4 In addition, a morning visit was made to Damaris Trust where issues related to the development of GSF were discussed and materials and copies of post-conference evaluation returns were shared with the evaluator. A total of 408 evaluation returns were received following the 2008

conference, and a summary of responses from the 2009 self-evaluation. These have been analysed as part of the evaluation.

3.2 Phase Two

3.5 In preparation for Phase Two, an open-ended pre-conference survey questionnaire was devised and sent to three schools (Stantonbury Campus in Milton Keynes, Lord Wandsworth College in Hook, and John Leggott College in Scunthorpe) with the request to conference delegates to complete them and return them to the evaluator before the conference. This questionnaire focuses specifically upon the expectations of delegates for the 2009 conference. Unfortunately neither Stantonbury Campus nor Lord Wandsworth College were able to receive an evaluation visit after the conference so two other GSF member schools were visited. These were Sir John Lawes School in Harpenden and Shaftesbury School in Shaftesbury. Both proved very useful substitutes.

3.6 Following the June 2009 conference, evaluation visits were made to John Leggott College, Sir John Lawes School and Shaftesbury School. Discussions were held with delegates about the work they are planning for the 2009-10 academic year and how they intend to implement these plans.

4 PHASE ONE FINDINGS – ADDRESSING THE TOR

4.1 Has the GSF met its declared goal and target to date (mid June, 2009):

Goal: to deliver a national conference in London in June/July each year which leads to effective Peer Education in GSF partner schools and in their feeder primary schools in the rest of the summer term and some of the autumn term?

Findings:

i) As stated in the introduction, a conference has been held in 2006 (HIV and AIDS), 2007 (Climate Change) and 2008 (Effects of Conflict on Poor Countries - Everybody wants a Peace). A highly successful conference was held at the end of June, 2009 under the theme If I grow up ... I want to be ...

ii) Evidence from visits to the two sample schools and their feeder schools prior to the 2009 conference and to three further schools after it showed effective peer education has occurred in both the feeder middle schools and associated primary schools (see pt 2 below for comments on the impact of this).

Target: at least 50 schools become GSF partner schools sending students to the national conference who return to their school and carry out effective Peer Education in their school and in their feeder Primary Schools.

Findings:

i) **Basic statistics: Numbers of Schools, Delegates and Teachers attending the GSF Conference**

| Year | Total No. of Schools | No. of new schools | No. of returning schools | No. of Delegates | No. of Teachers |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 2006 | 59 | | | 619 | 119 |
| 2007 | 61 | 28 | 33 | 607 | 122 |
| 2008 | 49 | 19 | 30 | 496 | 96 |
| 2009 | 57 | 23 | 34 | 649 | 116 |
| Total | 226 | | | 2371 | 453 |
| | Mean: 57 | | | Average: 592 | Average: 113 |

ii) The mean target of 50 schools attending the GSF conference annually has been met, with an average of 592 delegates per year having been registered over the three years of the project. In addition, an average of 112 teachers has attended each year. Between 2007 and 2008 a decline in the number of schools, and therefore teachers, occurred. In 2006, however, the target was more than achieved and it was necessary to run the conference into a second day. In 2009 the number of schools attending returned to over 50. The number of 'new' schools attending is on average around 42% each year which suggests strongly that the GSF initiative is being successfully taken to scale. Three schools attended in 2006 and then again in 2008, whilst on average 58% of schools have returned each year. No data is available on why some schools have discontinued their membership of GSF. It should be pointed out, however, that this does not mean that they have discontinued a peer teaching programme using materials available from the Damaris Trust and other websites.

iii) No specific reason can be attributed for the fluctuations in the number of schools seeking membership of GSF and attending the conference, except that, from discussions at the four schools visited, funding of GSF activities is an issue. As the headteachers of each institution visited stated, funds for this kind of activity have to be spread over a number of school activities, not just GSF activities, which means that difficult decisions have to be taken annually when deciding which to support. At Stratton Upper School, for example, engaging in the Peer Teaching activities in their three feeder schools has incurred additional transport costs amounting to over £600.00 this year, whilst the school is currently spending around £700.00 on GSF related teacher cover costs for teachers to accompany students to the feeder schools or on GSF related activities outside the school. Similar resource pressures are being experienced at the Elizabethan High School. Printing GSF related materials is a further additional cost at all four schools visited.

iv) Another possible reason for fluctuations in GSF membership could be that certain issues come into and then go out of 'fashion'. Over the 2005/2006 school year, international development received considerable media attention with the G8 conference and the international End Poverty Campaign whereas in 2008 this was not the case. The current recession could also force schools to rethink the expenditure involved over the next academic year. However, from 2009 onwards curriculum changes at secondary school level will probably increase the likelihood that schools will take more interest in the GSF with its focus on local and global citizenship.

4.2 Does GSF add significant value to those students who are 'peer educated' in:

- knowledge of development education issues (recall, understanding and attitudes),
- level of reasoned and appropriate engagement and action around development issues,
- general educational engagement and key skills development.

Given the size of the sample, the timing of the evaluation and the time available, the evaluator was unable to observe the delivery of Peer Teaching sessions and had to rely on answers to standard questions posed and impressions gained from discussions with teachers (5 in phase 1 and 3 in phase 2), head teachers (3 in phase 1) and students (28 in phase 1 and 21 in phase 2). These included those who had been delegates and those who had been 'peer- taught'. Conclusions made in this evaluation were also derived from observations made from a reading of the written evaluation returns from the 2008 and 2009 delegates, an assessment of the quality of the materials seen during school visits, and an assessment of the quality of materials held on the Damaris Trust website.

Findings:

i) There is no doubt that GSF has added significant value to the students met during the visits, especially in terms of the values, attitudes and skills it has developed. Feedback from students and teachers on the conference was extremely positive, especially as it had provided the catalyst for a range of activities undertaken over the autumn and spring terms following it. In addition, activities in the summer term were being used as an induction for newly elected GSF teams in how to develop and manage activities over the forthcoming year.

ii) Discussions over 'what was done'² revealed the richness of activities devised. Generally, these were grouped into four areas; Peer Education, External Relations, Personal Development and Practical Action, with the latter also leading to the generation of income for distribution to relevant charities. As a former teacher educator, the evaluator was particularly impressed by the maturity of discussions on peer education. Clearly peer education gave rise to many opportunities for individuals to realise skills and attributes they did not know they had. The process facilitated a great deal of personal growth, something noted by the teachers and head teachers met who had had the opportunity to observe these students over a long period. Indeed, the maturity of the young people met during the visits was most impressive.

iii) A wide range of activities has been undertaken, including supporting the building of classrooms at a school in the Gambia (The Elizabethan High School) and in Lesotho (Gamlingay Village College, one of Stratton Upper School's feeder schools.) Shaftesbury's association with the Msaada charity and its work in Rwanda, and its other charitable activities are being enriched by the GSF. Fund raising for various charities is taking various forms, including a marathon Dance for Life in one school, a fashion show in another, and in another, a 'Red Day' where students were encouraged to wear red clothing to raise funds for HIV AIDs charities. There is clearly no shortage of ideas. What is important, however, is that GSF is facilitating and creating opportunities for accountable individual and group learning. In this, the quality of leadership and the willingness of teachers to create 'space' for students, and to support them and the activities undertaken, are commendable. Asked how this had been negotiated, students believe that much was due to the effectiveness of peer teaching and learning, and to the wisdom of their teachers in facilitating it. John Leggott College and Shaftesbury School have both engaged in a wide range of community based fund raising activities, thereby bringing development issues to their respective community's attention.

iv) How 'things were done' revealed considerable ingenuity and the opportunities created have clearly taught participants much about lobbying, negotiating, and the importance of detailed planning and effective communication. Local radio and press and, in one school, regional television, have raised the profile of GSF. As one student said, making contact with the media and following up what was reported 'was quite scary'. No less 'scary' was engaging with local and national politicians, and it was pleasing to note that students appreciated the reciprocal benefits of ensuring that local Members of Parliament secured successful photo opportunities. In all this, what is important is that school GSF groups have learnt to initiate and exploit these opportunities.

v) The evaluator was told that learning how to work in groups and how to pitch activities to the cognitive and interest level of those with whom they were working were 'learnt the hard way'. For example, they found that, having raised peer expectations, it was not always easy to deliver on them afterwards. Notable, too, was how things hitherto taken for granted and unquestioned had become 'issues' to be addressed as a result of raised awareness of them. Nearly all students interviewed over the course of the visits (49 in all over phase 1 and 2) confirmed that before the conference, issues in international development had not been uppermost in their minds, and even if they had some knowledge of them, they had felt that as an individual they could not do much about them, apart from, perhaps, making a donation occasionally when 'tins were rattled'.

vi) Without exception, students spoke of the impact that the ideas and information presented at the conference and/or during school assemblies, and/ or other peer led activities had on them; how they had returned home and begun talking about the issues involved with friends, parents and guardians, and how they 'vowed to do something about it'. Indeed, without exception, those interviewed believe that it was the 'shock' of realising what they had hitherto 'taken for granted' in their own lives which had had the most profound impact on them.

vii) Discussions were impressively frank and open, and in the experience of the evaluator, the students met were mature beyond their years. Discussions revealed a refreshing sense of realism,

² See Appendix 1 for the list of activities from one of the schools visited.

especially with regard to how fickle student opinion, and indeed their own, can be. In one set of interviews discussants reported how they had initially encountered quite a lot of 'yobbish' and 'laddish' behaviour in their peer teaching sessions, but how this had changed as the impact of the material seeped in. The need to be well prepared and able to deal with the unexpected was seen to have helped individuals to articulate much that they formerly assumed or took for granted. Above all, the growth in their self-awareness was especially applauded even though it made them 'uncomfortable' at times.

viii) Asked how GSF might influence their career choice, most discussants mentioned the perspective it had given them, as well as the change of mindset it had engendered. More generally, as far as their own personal development was concerned, it is clear that exposure to the GSF process and the information provided raised their level of awareness, especially as ways and means of addressing issues in international development often seemed to become so complex.

Observation:

It is possible to argue that much of this could have occurred in any stimulating sixth form environment. This may be so but, from the discussions held, what appears to have made GSF distinctive was the coming together of a number of factors.

First, and perhaps surprising to some, these young people are concerned about the world in which they are growing up. They are not the hedonists so frequently portrayed in the popular media. Second, their teachers and schools recognise both this and also the energy that young people have to engage effectively with the world, and they step back and give their students 'space' and authority.

Third, the Damaris focus on popular media as a vehicle for transmitting ideas and values clearly allowed these young people to identify with the issues presented to them, whilst the GSF process provided an opportunity for them to respond maturely and to do so in an organised manner. Indeed, it was taken for granted.

Fourth, Peer Teaching is a crucial element in this process as it legitimated and privileged student self-expression and development whilst at the same time holding those involved to account. Echoing many of the interviewees, one young lady said that she had always felt that as an individual she could do very little when faced with the enormity of the distress she witnessed on TV or read about in the serious press, yet now as she looked back on the past year, she knew she could do something, because she had done something. She now appreciates that her privileged lifestyle in the UK comes at a cost, and that her skills can be shared for a common good. As she said, her increased ability to argue effectively means that she can use it to challenge injustice and inequality and to influence people.

4.3 Does GSF add significant value to those students who are peer educated in terms of knowledge of development education issues?

The only qualification that has to be made in addressing this question is that the evaluator met relatively few students who had been peer-taught.

i) In the view of the teachers of these students, GSF is adding significant value to the students concerned in terms of knowledge of development education issues. From talking to students this certainly appears to be the case. The primary impact of the inputs made is believed to lie in the level of awareness raised in the area of international development.

ii) In the five Sixth Forms visited there is evidence on display that engaging with international development issues forms an important part of the schools' work. Clearly, too, the GSF inputs have been timely; coinciding in the two feeder schools visited with individual staff members having visited The Gambia and Lesotho. This has led to student visits to both countries and a range of activities that have flowed from that.

iii) For Gamlingay Village College, John Leggott College and Stratton Upper School especially, GSF is also proving to be a valuable support vehicle when students transfer from the middle school to the sixth form as the activities involved in GSF flow naturally from one institution into the other.

4.4 When compared with other educational initiatives delivering development education in and through schools, does GSF represent value for money?

4.4.1 This is difficult to assess for three main reasons.

First, there is no common baseline upon which to make such a judgement. Schools are largely 'funding' GSF activities on the basis of goodwill. At present, teachers' time is not fully costed into the schools' GSF budget. Furthermore, schools are using existing equipment and resources for GSF activities, all funded under different budget heads. As these expand through demand, so the schools visited have come to the point where GSF annual action plans need to be fully costed. None of the schools wish to give up these activities for the reasons mentioned earlier, but the funding of GSF activities is clearly an issue that will need to be addressed.

Second, it is difficult to make an assessment of other educational initiatives delivering development education through schools as the particular form in which GSF has been conceived and implemented is unique to GSF itself. One would not be comparing like with like.

Third, whilst it is known that many NGOs and DFID itself have programmes designed to raise awareness of development issues, without a detailed analysis of these involving visits to schools using these programmes or materials, which would be beyond the scope of this evaluation, it is impossible to make the kind of judgement implied in the ToR.

4.4.2 There are two cost elements to consider; those incurred by Damaris Trust and those incurred down the line by the schools themselves. In this analysis an attempt is made to provide a Unit Cost for each.

Estimated Damaris Trust cost:

i) Damaris Trust is a faith-based charity and as part of its mission it has developed a repertoire of school and adult education programmes. GSF is not faith based but currently it is 'hosted' within Damaris Trust. The intention is that GSF will become a separate limited charitable entity. At present GSF benefits considerably from the current arrangement through the access it has to the skills, expertise and capacity of Damaris Trust. This makes it difficult separating out the 'capital' an independent GSF will carry from its present association with Damaris Trust, and therefore, to arrive at the GSF's current unit cost. Nonetheless, Damaris Trust believes it is around £3.00 per student.

ii) The solution proposed is to base the unit cost analysis on the budget included in the proposal presented to DFID as part of the request for DFID sponsorship of GSF. That budget includes items for management costs, staffing and administration, the production of audio-visual resources and the Peer Educator Pack, Publicity and Promotion, Conference costs and a Bursary Fund. It is beyond the scope of the evaluation to assess the overall budget proposal and the amounts allotted to each category, and to make the assumption that GSF is starting afresh but with the advantage of having no start-up costs.

The total budgeted amount for 1 year is £155,770.00. Not indicated in the budget summary is a projected income of £17250.00 from an estimated GSF membership of 50 schools.

On the basis of the past three years, Damaris Trust estimates a unit cost of approximately £3.00 per student to deliver the GSF conference, including conference and post conference materials and on-going back-up to schools. If this unit cost is to be achieved then around 52000 persons will need to be influenced by GSF in any single year, or around 1000 persons per school. As will be seen below in the example from Stratton Upper School (Appendix 1), and at John Leggott College in Scunthorpe with a student enrolment of around 2500, this is highly likely to be achieved.

Estimated School costs:

iii) What can be confirmed is that in the schools visited, awareness-raising through GSF activities is widespread. For example, on the basis of a discussion held with the head teacher of Stratton Upper School, the evaluator estimates that to attend the conference, to cover all allied travel and teacher cover costs and programme implementation costs, it will cost the school an estimated £5000.00 per annum. The following table breaks these costs down:

| ITEM | Estimated COST |
|---|-----------------|
| Conference fees | £350.00 |
| Travel costs for 10 students and 2 teachers | £480.00 |
| Teacher cover (conference) Two teacher days | £320.00 |
| Programme implementation costs (teacher cover , transport, materials, printing) | £3700.00 |
| TOTAL | £4850.00 |

iv) The school has 1300 students on the roll and around 1000 students in their feeder schools which provide a direct unit cost of just over £2.00 per student. If one also includes the fact that awareness raising and influencing went beyond these students, then the unit cost becomes considerably lower.

v) What did Stratton Upper School get from this investment? It is understood that the Stratton GSF team (itself enlarged after the conference) has made three presentations to the upper and lower 6th form (around 120 students in each) and conducted between 6 and 12 year group and school assemblies over the autumn and spring terms. In addition, about 1000 students in Stratton's feeder schools were brought into contact with development issues through GSF activities to students in their schools. The school has also set up a website and has recorded over 1000 'hits' on U-tube, apart from coverage of their activities in the local and regional media. Add to this coverage in the local media and the regional TV network excluding word of mouth, and the real unit cost is considerably less.

vi) A similar picture emerged from a review of the impact at all the other institutions visited. At The Elizabethan High School, for example, it was estimated that the cost to the school was between £1500.00 and £2000.00 per annum, excluding teacher costs, with slightly smaller numbers of students involved. However, at present none of the schools have a separate GSF budget line so accurate costs could not be obtained.

Comparative Costs:

4.4.3 These are difficult to obtain and one is not comparing like for like. Approximate costs of the DFID Global School Partnerships Good Practice Network Conferences held in 2004, 2006 and 2007 reveal that the approximate unit cost for these earlier conferences is much higher than the unit costs of the GSF conferences. The earlier Global School Partnerships Good Practice Network Conferences costs are listed below:

| Date | Number of Attendees | Approximate Total Cost | Approximate Unit Cost |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| November 2004 | 74 | £2500.00 | £33.78 |
| February 2006 | 98 | £5100.00 | £52.04 |
| June 2007 | 163 | £9.600.00 | £58.89 |

It was not possible to assess the impact of these conferences as no details of the follow-up work is available, but simply on conference costs alone, one can conclude that the GSF conferences represent good value for money.

5 PHASE TWO

Two specific activities were built into Phase Two of the evaluation:

- To attend the 2009 GSF conference and to assess its value.
- To visit three schools which had attended the conference and to assess the delegates' views of the conference and their plans and activities arising out of it.

5.1 The 2009 Conference

i) 649 student and 57 teacher delegates from 57 schools attended the 2009 conference. This was a 16% increase in attendance over the 2008 figures. It signals the ongoing popularity of GSF, even at a time when schools and students are finding it necessary to exercise spending constraint. The conference was held in the Emmanuel Centre in central London. As a venue the central hall provides ample seating in a semi-horseshoe arrangement. It has very good acoustics and an unimpeded view of the stage from anywhere in the hall. Suitable break-out facilities exist.

Two concerns were expressed about the venue; that wheelchair access to some parts of the venue was inadequate, and that drop-off space outside of the venue is inadequate.

Delegate receiving arrangements were excellent, and the movement of delegates throughout the day was very well managed. The very full programme was expertly managed and throughout the conference the timing of each item was maintained. The entire programme was expertly choreographed and hosted. One of the co-hosts was the Sixth Former Irene Carter who had recently won the BBC's Britain's Best Young Speaker competition. All delegates interviewed made mention of the impact of having someone their own age playing this role. Presentations and activities flowed seamlessly into each other, and no 'dead time' occurred.

Of particular note was the manner in which the stimulus was changed and how participants were kept engaged. Subsequent feedback confirmed this. Very effective use was made of the media, including music, performed both live and on screen, and the use of video and film. Delegates interviewed referred to the effectiveness of the 'shock tactics' used.

ii) A rich programme of presentations and activities was presented through the medium of short discussions, expert information giving, personal testimonies and the use of carefully directed question time. The presence and testimony of Kenyan Perry Njeri, an HIV AIDs sufferer, was particularly powerful whilst Irene Carter's film on her visit to Malawi had a profound immediacy about it. The conference was framed by the question: How many children under the age of five die each year of preventable causes? A frequency chart representing the number of children who would die during the conference was begun at the start of the conference, and it was to have a stunning impact on delegates at the end of the conference as the numbers were tallied up. The interview with the UK Development Secretary by two of the delegates and the opportunity to present questions to the Under Secretary of State for International Development sparked a very lively discussion. The introduction to the Peer Education DVD and the other resources in the Resource Pack provided an effective framework for the activities undertaken during the afternoon, and as this evaluation has found, has been invaluable to delegates once back in their schools.

iii) The conference also provided an opportunity for key charities and UNICEF to inform delegates of their work and how schools and individuals can become involved with them. It was remarked by some delegates to the evaluator how poorly these organisations appear to harmonise their work, an observation which shows the ability to assess critically while responding positively.

5.2 Impact of the 2009 Conference

i) A total of 21 students and three teachers were interviewed at their schools during late September. In addition, conference delegates all completed a post-conference evaluation sheet. They were asked to provide the reviewer with an assessment of the conference in terms of the conference programme's coverage, specific areas which had made a marked impression upon them, the usefulness of the activities undertaken, and more generally, the planning and delivery of the conference. Having expressed overall satisfaction with the conference, they were asked to explain what factors had made the conference a success, and what factors in their school environment needed to be addressed and/or were facilitating a positive roll-out of their proposed post-conference programme. They were also asked about the impact on them as people, and how their own understanding and attitudes had changed as a result of the exposure to the substance of the conference and supportive materials.

ii) Characteristic of all interviews was the fact that these young people believe they have been affected significantly by their exposure to what was presented in the conference. They openly acknowledge that the 'harsh reality' of the lives of many children around the world deeply moved them.

"Before it was something 'out there', something one might encounter on the TV. Now I see it differently and I also see that I can do something about it".

"My mum said that I have come back a changed person, and she continues to say so".

"We had had a very early start (from Scunthorpe) and after a packed and exciting programme we got into our coach very tired, but we talked all the way home!"

"I am going to be able to make a difference".

"We did a video on 'before' and 'after' the conference with reference to what we thought about issues in the developing world. We are not the same people".

The post-conference evaluation responses collected by Damaris Trust, reveal very much the same sentiments; shock, outrage and the realisation that individuals can make a difference.

"I was already aware of the problems we were introduced to, but seeing the tally on the huge piece of paper at the end almost brought me to tears. It really brought home the scale and the reality of the problem."

"I learnt that one person, however insignificant, can make a difference. I will do everything in my power to help as many people as I can"

"I learnt that small things can add up to a large change. To simply raise awareness of issues in a creative way can spark off creativity in others and give them the confidence to make a difference in themselves".

"I learnt that everyone can stand up and do something about this outrage".

iii) An analysis of activities already begun and those planned for the 2009/10 school year clearly reveal that the conference has had a significant impact on the delegates. Schools know that they cannot replicate the conference in full, but a variety of strategies are being adopted including; spreading the message via school and year group assemblies, teaching lessons as part of the school's PSHE and General Studies programmes, using the school's internet to raise awareness, and supporting the school's enrichment programme. Taking the message out into the wider community via local radio, through formal arrangements with local feeder primary schools and through specific fundraising activities, all point to a creative response to what was encountered in the conference. Very important in all this is the usefulness seen in the materials provided, and the links suggested by Damaris Trust. These materials are attractive, pertinent and very accessible.

Some schools are thinking about launching a local and or regional mini conference and they are interested in how, if at all, Damaris Trust might support this kind of initiative. None saw the local or

regional conference replacing the need for a national conference. However, means should be sought to enable schools to share their lesson learning.

As mentioned above (1.4) the use of peer teaching strategies is recognised as a most effective means of attracting the interest and commitment of young people. One of the pleasures of undertaking this evaluation has been the opportunity to meet and listen to groups of highly committed young people discussing issues in development which matter to them.

iv) What was significant in all schools visited, including the feeder schools, is that each has one or more international link. These are variously developed and include an exchange of students and teachers, support to the non-UK school with the provision of teaching and materials, materials to build classrooms and in some cases actually participating in that construction. Examples of assisting in the development of teaching staff were also shared with the evaluator. The work at Shaftesbury School in this regard is particularly impressive. They have formally aligned themselves with the Msaada Trust which is undertaking significant work in Rwanda. As a result they feel they are benefitting significantly from the economies of scale this association is bringing. John Leggott College in Scunthorpe has a student population of 2500 students, all of whom are being brought into contact with the GSF programme. A particularly interesting feature of the management of the GSF programme there is that the roll-out of the programme is the total responsibility of the Student Council. Peer teaching is supported by peer management.

v) It is evident that a number of transferrable skills are being acquired by students involved in the GSF programme; most notably management and organisational skills, teaching and communication skills, as well as learning to take responsibility and being publicly accountable for their actions. Learning how to deal with the media is creating a generation of media savvy young people.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

As indicated at the start of this report, the findings are not based on a representative sample of schools. With this qualification, the following recommendations are made:

6.1 Financial Support to Schools

An issue raised by the seven schools visited concerned funding support for GSF activities. None questioned the value of the programme but all pointed to the ever increasing curricular demands on the resources provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This review recommends that the matter of funding for GSF type activities be taken up with the DCSF, and consideration be given by DFID to providing either a direct GSF grant to schools or funding for school based activities as part of funding provided to Damaris Trust for the GSF. Indeed it is likely that transaction costs would be lower if Damaris Trust were to be mandated to review school activities annually and to make grants to schools on the basis of this review. At a current total student unit cost of around £6.00, the qualitative gains outlined in this review, it is clear that the programme is providing value for money.

6.2 Duplication of Effort

This review further recommends that DFID develop a strategy to reduce the duplication of effort and resources presently occurring in the area of global citizenship. For example, Oxfam's Education for Global Citizenship addresses much that GSF addresses in its materials, whilst the DEA's³ latest brochure for teachers and schools entitled Exploring together – a global dimension to the secondary curriculum (2009), attractive as it is, fails to add very much to what already exists in the market place, and indeed, lacks the pedagogical thrust of both the Damaris Trust's GSF and Oxfam materials.

³ DEA is an educational charity.

6.3 Publicity

From the small sample of schools visited it is clear that a 'good story' exists. DFID should consider publicising more widely its support for this work.

6.4 Dissemination

Whilst the dissemination of materials and activities is occurring locally, if GSF with its unique feature of mobilising students and using peer teaching as its major implementation strategy is to have national and international impact, then existing materials and activity clearinghouse arrangements need to be brought together on a single website. Knowledge of what is going on needs to be more easily accessible, but funding for this will be needed.

7 POSTSCRIPT

Three concluding observations:

7.1 Visits to schools, discussions with delegates and teachers and a review of activities arising out of the GSF programme left the evaluator highly impressed with the programme itself and the quality and richness of the response of students. The GSF programme is cost-effective, extremely well conceived and intelligently delivered. The use of peer teaching makes it sustainable.

7.2 The GSF programme may not necessarily have been the catalyst for charitable engagement by schools, but it certainly has provided the impetus to students to engage with global issues in a real way. Those schools that already had charitable links have found new ways of enriching and sustaining them. Those that didn't have them, now do so. Student exchanges, especially with Africa, are becoming major events in school calendars.

7.3 His holiness, the Dalai Lama has said:

'If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito'

The students in the schools visited all said that prior to GSF they had felt unable to make a difference. As this report has found, the GSF mosquito has certainly encouraged a considerable amount of change.

8 APPENDIX 1

8.1 Stratton Upper School, Extract from a Letter to the School Governors

We are writing to you as members of Stratton Upper Schools Sixth form who have been fortunate enough to have been involved in the Global Students Forum. In July we attended the conference for the Global Students Forum entitled "Everybody wants a Peace". The same day we attended the Global Student Forum conference we visited Alastair Burt, our local MP. He expressed great interest and consented to giving us his full support for the issue and the work we planned to do. The same week we put together a presentation and interactive session for both years of the Sixth Form and the upcoming year 12's, in total covering approximately 400 students.

Our next job was to alter the presentation and activities to make them age appropriate for year 8's without losing their powerful message, and the presentation was then taken round our three local middle schools, presenting to over 250 students. We passed on both our enthusiasm as well as the crucial information about child soldiers' plight. After our visit one group of year 8 students then became peer educators themselves by presenting to the schools lower years, another school even fundraised for the charity War Child, giving half the school's fund raising from their Children in Need day.. Each time we made our presentation we took along a huge roll of paper as a petition, for everyone to sign by drawing round their hands, this is currently nearly 50 metres long!

As well as this we have also:

- Made a display board within school to raise awareness in the school as a whole.
- Remembrance Day assemblies within School. For this we changed the traditional approach to remembrance to look at child soldiers both in the past and to remember children involved or affected by conflict in the world today.
- Prepared a slideshow for the digital notice board at the front of school.
- Articles were made for our school paper, Linx, after the conference and then the Christmas edition. The distribution of this school paper totals about 3000 people and is read by students, staff and parents.
- We plan to hold an interview with our school radio, Linx FM, similar to the 'Just War?' debate.
- We have made contact with Biggles FM our local radio station, East Anglia news, the Biggleswade Chronicle and local Gazette in the hope to further publicise Child Soldierly through the local press.
- A short film was made using the resources on the disc supplied which has proven hugely influential and is available on YouTube and has already received over 250 hits
- A cartoon story board was made to help the younger audiences visualise the realities for Child Soldiers.
- An Interactive workshop that consisted of 6 activities.
- Interactive debate was created for our presentations with the younger audiences.
- We propose to continue fundraising throughout the year for charities involved with child soldiers and an orphanage in Africa. Charities we will help include World Vision, War Child, Damaris, and Christian Aid. We estimate our presentations reached over 1500 students and this figure does not include the middle schools passing on their information to younger year groups or parents and those within the wider local community reading our articles.