

Donate a pad, keep a girl in school

CONTEXT

Menstrual hygiene is a problem for many young girls in Uganda, especially for those who live in the countryside, where the families have a very low household income.

In Uganda, there is free primary and secondary education, yet it is shocking that the dropout rate is high, especially among girls who come from poor families with many children.

The girls drop out of school because they cannot afford the very basic needs such as books, school uniform, socks and shoes. To this comes that girls have a mandatory basic need, which is to use menstrual pads. For most young girls, sanitary pads are unheard of.

As an alternative, the girls use unhygienic craps of rags and banana leaves or other herbs for their period. These items cannot absorb blood, resulting in staining their dressed - causing them a lot of embarrassment.

A young girl often misses 3 - 4 days of classes per month due to menstruation. During a school year, they lose between 36 and 48 days of studies, which cause them to perform poorly in class and they lose their self-esteem - and drop out of school.

MANAGING MENSTRUAL PERIODS

Very few retail stores have sanitary napkins in stock due to low sales.

Parents in rural areas prioritize the little cash they have and therefore rarely buy sanitary pads for their girls. When the choice is between buying food or sanitary pads, it is the food that has the 1st priority. The price of a pack of sanitary pad corresponds to a kilo of cornmeal. The cornmeal is

beneficial for the whole family, while sanitary napkins are only beneficial for the girls in the family and therefore the young girl is asked to find a solution herself, even if it involves the use of unhygienic materials.

Some young girls try to raise money to be able to buy menstrual pads during school holidays, when they work on farms or in small businesses in markets and as wages only receive board and lodging, since in return they provide sexual services and thereby earn some money, so they can buy sanitary pads so they can complete their schooling. For some young girls, it is too hard and they choose to drop out of school. It is not uncommon for them to be impregnated and thereby be forced to leave their school and have a number of new challenges to contend with.

MTOTO W'AFRIKA INTERVENTION

Mtoto W'afrika Child Care Ministries wants to help these girls complete their schooling by distributing washable reusable sanitary pads in collaboration with Mirembe Safepads Uganda, which produces quality reusable pads that can be used for 2-3 years.

Mtoto W'afrika works among young girls living in refugee camps in northern Uganda.

Mtoto W'afrika has been asked to extend its work to Namisindwa - district, in eastern Uganda, on the border with Kenya.

Mtoto W'afrika is handing out a pack of 4 reusable Safepad, three small and one big, 2 panties, a bottle of jik and a pack of laundry soap. Each set costs \$15 only. This package means that a young girl is able to complete her school education.

Skip a single café visit and donate \$15 to Mtoto W'afrika's work and change a young girl's life.



Mtoto W'afrika aims to give hope, inspire and develop the talents of young vulnerable African girls by offering them support and resources



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