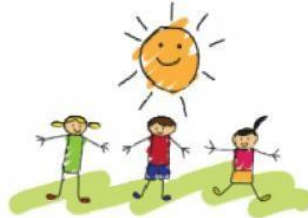


SAVING 3,500+ RURAL SCHOOL GIRLS WITH RE-USABLE SANITARY PADS

BY



NEW HOPE FOR CHILDREN ORG.

NEW HOPE FOR CHILDREN ORGANIZATION

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Restore hope for the Neglected, Isolated and impoverished children of Masaka

CONTACT PERSON: Ssentume Julius

POSITION: Director



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

New Hope For Children Org is an initiative of kind people who have volunteered their lives in assisting those children who are Marginalized, abandoned, neglected mistreated and isolated due to difficult circumstances such as extreme levels of poverty, alcoholism, living with other partners (lovers) of their parents, doubt of biological parenthood, living with HIV and AIDS, and death of parents / caregivers.

Many children also living with HIV and AIDS faced with stigma, depression, lack of self esteem and poor adherence and little has been done to address such issues that seriously impact on their well being. Due to all these factors many children fail to explore their full potentials.

We therefore thought it wise to initiate an organization to strengthen the support for this category of children that are disadvantaged.

New Hope For Children Org is an organization formed to extend wider service to the marginalized children in communities of greater Masaka. Our emphasis is to assist the most needy children especially the abandoned, neglected, isolated ones. orphans and those living in extreme poverty, and those living with HIV and AIDS between the ages of 5-18. By providing them with necessary support; physical and emotional support, to restore the lost hopes in them and help them to be the persons they deserve to be. Education in one of the most important step we want to begin with as the first step to change the lives of these children.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Female students especially those in rural areas face great challenges in terms of hygiene and sanitation. For girls who are menstruating, these problems compound the difficulties posed by the inability to afford sanitary towels/pads as well as cultural taboos around menstruation. As a result, many girls miss on average five days of school every month which is over a month in a year, meaning they fall behind in class and sometimes even drop out of school altogether.

This is an added challenge to the already existing problems that lead to the high dropout rate of female students in primary and secondary schools. The main problems faced by women and girls are:

- The expense of commercial sanitary pads
- Absenteeism where girls stay at home rather than attending school when menstruating;
- Unhygienic ways to dry menstrual materials, this is where they use leaves, papers or rags from garbage
- Inadequate waste disposal facilities;

- Lack of privacy for changing menstrual materials
- Leakage from poor-quality protection materials
- The lack of resources for washing such as soap
- Limited education about the facts and challenges of menstruation
- Limited access to counseling and guidance
- Fear caused by cultural myths
- Embarrassment and low self esteem
- And the unsupportive attitudes of some men/males.

Because most of these girls are impoverished, they end up using **tree leaves, papers** and **rags** which are unhealthy during their monthly days.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SOLUTION

Distribution of reusable sanitary pads has radically proved to create a world where women and girls can step boldly into the promise of their future. The goal of this campaign is to empower the vulnerable rural school girls through provision of reusable pads and capacity building on menstrual hygiene management and reproductive health for improved performance and self esteem. This will be done through distribution of reusable sanitary pads as well as ensuring provision of menstrual hygiene management education and facilities to girls in secondary and primary schools in Masaka District. By acquiring knowledge on menstrual hygiene management, the overall health status of the girls will be enhanced as myths and misconceptions that surround puberty and menstruation will also be demystified.

The vision of distributing the re-usable sanitary pads is to empower Ugandan schoolgirls to achieve their full academic potential, curbing the high rates of menstrual-related absenteeism. This remains a key barrier to the academic performance of the girl-child, her retention in primary school, and her ability to achieve secondary and tertiary education. We fundraise money to provide vulnerable girls, who lack the means to buy Menstrual Kit themselves, with Re-usable pads. We can provide one girl with Menstrual Kit and thus ensure her school attendance for a full year!

New hope for children organization will donate Menstrual Kits to underprivileged impoverished girls in remote areas, accompanied with education about the use of re-usable pads, menstrual hygiene and sexual and reproductive health. This way, we help girls stay in school and improve their circumstances. We believe that Investing in girls means investing in a better future for everyone!

The use of the disposable commercial pads currently on the market is estimated to be 120,000Ugx (33 usd) per girl every year. In rural areas where parents and girls are so poor, transport networks are often poor, ensuring a regular supply of disposable pads at an affordable cost is also challenging.

Ensuring the safe disposal of disposable pads still remains a major challenge as unsafe disposal carries with its attendant environmental and health risks.

One packet of the re-usable pads that will be distributed through this project is sufficient to meet the sanitary needs of a girl for a years at a cost of 13,000 ugx. (\$3.66USD)

Donation and using of re-usable sanitary pads as an entry point for engagement on wider issues related to menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, the project will also demonstrate how opportunities for contact with girls and communities on a specific issue can also be used to promote and develop wider action on issues that affect girls health status, access to quality education and the achievement of better education outcomes and will identify appropriate strategies for doing so. In the meantime, campaigns to demystify menstruation will be rolled out at grassroots school levels. These campaigns will aim to make adolescent girls recognize that they are contributing to the silence and stigma around menstruation and encourage them to use their voices to talk about the topic and themselves, and to demand their rights.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The overriding objective of the project is to ensure that Girls in Masaka District will not have to miss school simply because they are menstruating. Other objectives are to ensure that:

- To improve school attendance among girls between the ages of 10 and 17 years in primary & Secondary schools;
- To increase access to vulnerable rural adolescent girls with sanitary towels and comprehensive menstrual hygiene management knowledge and risk awareness of HIV&AIDS among in-school and out of school girls between the ages 10 to 17 years;
- To increase the self-esteem of needy rural girls between ages 10 to 17 years;

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN:

1. The project aims to purchase re-usable sanitary pads from a good Re-usable pads manufactures here for female primary and secondary (Day) school students in Masaka district.

These sanitary pads are made from natural and chemical free materials and are usable for about one year. We will supply a pack that contains 4 reusable sanitary pads, (and 500gms bar soap to each girl if we are able to

Raise enough funds). Thus, the Initiative will raise money to support the purchase of the necessary sanitary pads. In order to raise the fund for the project the initiative will use different approaches, one of which is soliciting funds from well wishers, this entails creating awareness to the general public and also raise funds. Furthermore, the initiative will approach individual donors and use simple fund raising mechanisms such as pledge forms and promissory requests.

2. New Hope for children Organization will distribute all pads physically to the primary and secondary school girls in Masaka district. Team members of New Hope for Children Organization and a member from Re-usable pads manufactures will deliver the pads to the girls at each school. These members will meet with the director of each school and together with school staff will distribute the pads to the most vulnerable girls.

3. New Hope for children Organization plus a member from Re-usable pads manufactures will organize training and question-and-answer sessions in each of the schools at the start, middle, and end of the project. At the start of the project, New Hope for children Organization, Re-usable pads manufacturers' team and female teachers will hold a meeting together and then a forum with female students to discuss the sanitary pads and concurrent problems encountered by girls in the schools. Members of New Hope for children Organization will build a relationship with the female teachers and nurses over the course of the project and involve them in organizing the trainings. The club will also follow-up on the girls and involve their parents, by contacting the parent teacher associations

DETAILED PLAN OF ACTIVITIES

Distribution of **3,500** reusable pads

- Conduct familiarization visits to schools
- Procuring materials and collection of the reusable pads
- Development of detailed instructions for pads use
- Distribution of pads in schools and monitoring

Building the capacity of **3,500** girls on menstrual hygiene management

- Staff induction on the project
- Mobilization of school management committees and heads
- Menstrual Hygiene Management trainings
- Undertaking a girls day event
- Periodic staff planning and review meetings

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Conducting baseline survey
- Undertaking monitoring visits
- Evaluation

IMPACT

Up to 3,500 girls from rural communities within Masaka district schools will benefit from the project. The project will have an impact on health status of girls through improvement in the health status and personal hygiene of the girls as a result of using the reusable pads. This will be realized in the sense that girls will no longer have to use unhygienic materials like old pieces of cloth/rugs or old newspapers and tree leaves that most of them are currently using during their periods. Also considering the fact that the first menstruation is often horrifying and traumatic to an adolescent girl because it usually occurs without her knowing about it, the knowledge and understanding of girls on menstrual hygiene and reproductive health issues will be enhanced further leading to improved health status, increased levels of confidence and active involvement of girls in school. It is consequently anticipated that by providing the re-usable pads, the number of days of education that a girl might receive as a result of this initiative could increase by as much as 3-5 days in a month. Ultimately, there will be a significant reduction in the rate of school dropout as well as reduced vulnerability of the girls to early engagement in sex in order to get income for acquiring the basic needs like sanitary pads.

Girls that are regularly absent from school are more likely to be those that drop out and fail to transit successfully through the education system. By reducing the number of days of absence currently related to their menstrual cycle, it is anticipated that retention and transition rates amongst girls at individual schools could improve by up to 60%. Girls will therefore be able to go to school and participate in school activities thereby ensuring a holistic development i.e. mental, physical and social development. With the significant reduction in drop out cases amongst girls, which ultimately will lead to improved performance of girls in schools, these will eventually culminate into increased income opportunities for girls as they finish school and are able to access more opportunities for income earning/generation and dignified livelihoods. The provision of re-usable sanitary pads coupled with the proposed activities involving girls, boys, and the wider community on menstrual hygiene and rights are likely to have important direct impacts on the economic status of up to 10 households.

Recognizing that girls from low income families which this project will focus on engage in transactional sex to get money for pads further predisposing them to higher likelihood of contracting HIV as they are not able to negotiate

with their partners to use protection, the proposed activities will have direct impacts on up to **3,500** girl's exposure to risks such as early pregnancy, marriage and HIV AIDS given that the project will equally address issues of individual and communal behavior change with regard to adolescent sexuality, menstrual hygiene health and reproductive health rights issues. Additionally, issues of environmental conservation will be addressed as the problems posed by disposing the sanitary pads in schools will be a thing of the past. The re-usable pads we plan to use are more environmentally friendly compared to commercially produced pads because they contain fewer chemicals such as polyacrylate superabsorbent gels. Their use will ultimately lead to environmental conservation.

Pupils and students will receive information about menstrual hygiene management about biological facts and practical ways of managing blood flow in a hygienic and discrete way. Through the knowledge that the beneficiaries will get through the program, more awareness and capacity enhancement on natural family planning methods will be reinforced. Also by focusing menstrual hygiene management education towards both boys and girls, this will foster more understanding attitudes and decreased social stigma in schools.

Method of Evaluation

The evaluation will use interviews with officials at the schools involved as well as teachers, with a special focus on female teachers. In addition, we will hold interviews and focus group discussions with the girls. Due to the nature of the issues involved, all evaluation involving interviews with the girls will be carried out by female representatives of New Hope for children Organization. This part of the evaluation will be carried out at the start of the project and every three month by New Hope for children Organization. The female teachers at the schools will also be encouraged to keep track of the progress of the project as the year progresses.

Involvement of Stakeholders:

- Girl recipients - Feedback will be sought as to the improvements in performance and significant reduction in absenteeism
- Boys schooling with the girls - Feedback sought on usage of the sanitary pads by the girls
- School heads - Feedback on performance by girls compared to the boys
- Education officers at the county and sub-county level - Feedback on significant increase in enrolment to schools by girls.

- New Hope for children Organization – Feedback on distribution methodology and whether the trainings conducted have opened up learning opportunities

Indicators of achievement:

- Increased attendance in schools
- Manufacturer commissioned to produce affordable Sanitary Pads
- Importation of affordable Sanitary Pads
- Girls perform as good as boys

PROJECT BUDGET:

WHAT WE NEED TO ENABLE US TO CARRY OUT THE PROGRAMME

1. Program sponsors
2. Amount for 3,500 kits of Re-usable pads (**\$12,816 USD**)
3. Amount for Transportation of pads to the schools and small allowance for facilitators (**\$1,500 USD**)
4. Voluntary human resource
5. A total Sum of (**\$14,316 USD**)

MANAGEMENT TEAM

New Hope for children Organization Management Committee-(6 members):

1. Ssentume Julius
2. Ms. Kukundakwe Sylvia
3. Ms. Namigadde Harriet
4. Ms. Nakagezi Pennina
5. Ms. Nakayiba Sophia
6. Ms. Nabicu Sylvia
7. Mr. Sseggane Cranimmer