

Affordable Sanitary Pads for 1500 Ugandan Girls

Project Summary

The government of Uganda provides “free” primary education for all. However, statistics show that fewer than 38% of girls entering Primary 1 (the equivalent of kindergarten) in 2009 will complete their primary education. Many obstacles stand in the way of successful education for rural African girls but chief among them are issues relating to puberty, teen pregnancy, and early marriage. This project will increase the chances of academic success for 1500 Ugandan girls by:

- Developing the self - supporting production of locally produced, environmentally -sound sanitary pads (**Saint Pads**) which, within 3 years, will provide a sustainable source of free pads for 1500 adolescent girls through the **St Mark Institute of Health Sciences**.



- Funding the training by **St Mark Institute of Health Sciences**, of student educators who will teach their peers about menstrual hygiene, sexually transmitted diseases, and how to avoid early pregnancy. This program has been shown to bring those girls who have dropped out back to school. At the end of 3 years, income generated by saint pads production will finance the peer education program.
- Building girl -friendly latrines with discreet washrooms.
- Producing the first movies in the local language, on puberty, growing up, and ways to protect against unwanted sexual advances.



Rationale of the Project.

Eighty five percent (85%) of Ugandans live in rural poverty; earning an average of \$300 a year. More than 50% of the population is under 15 years old, and the education of these children is critical for Uganda's economic development. Educating girls is widely regarded as one of the best ways to improve the

economy and health of developing countries (www.girleffect.org). However, girls consistently fare less well academically than boys. Academic performance correlates closely with school attendance, and absenteeism, and dropout rates are high for rural Ugandan girls for reasons often linked to their reproductive biology. Menstruation, early pregnancy, and HIV interfere with their success at school. HIV infection rates in girls are 9 times that of boys the same age. By the time they are 18, over 30% of the girls have had their first baby. Uganda has one of the highest maternal death rates in the world; unsafe abortions accounting for a quarter of these deaths.

Lack of education and financial inequalities between men and women mean that women often lack the power to control their reproductive health. Girls who frequently attend school earn a higher income in the future, are more independent, and are more likely to be able to make well informed decisions about their sexual lives. Each additional year of educational attainment can reduce the risk of HIV infection and delay a woman's first pregnancy.



Project Goals and Objectives

This project addresses the problems of attendance and health by:

Reproductive Health Education

The Ugandan school system is woefully inadequate in educating boys and girls about healthy sexuality. A 2006 study found that 44% of boys and 50% of girls, aged 15-19, had never participated in a classroom discussion of sexuality nor attended an education talk on sex before their first sexual encounter. For the most part, schoolchildren rely on self-education from peers who often know as little as they do. This project takes advantage of this established mode of learning about sexuality by teaming up with a program run by the **St. Mark Institute of Health Sciences** (Uganda), which trains girls to become peer educators. The **St. Mark Institute** peer-education program, will be piloted in one of the schools targeted by this project, we believe this will lower dropout rates and improve attendance. This project will finance training and long-term support of peer educators in sixteen rural primary schools for three years. At the end of three years, the peer-education program will be funded .by income from the production of **Saint Pads** (see below). In addition the project will be producing the first local language movies on puberty and growing up. Peer Educators interviewed in August 2009 reported that movies gave added authority to the information that they were sharing with their peers. Movies in their mother tongue will have all the more impact. Supervision and adult support for the peer educators will be provided by a **St. Mark Institute Female Community Health Worker**.



Sanitary Pad Production

UNICEF estimates that 1 in 10 menstruating African girls skip school four to five Days per month or drop out completely. In 2004, a survey of menstruating girls in Uganda found that “the biggest number of school dropouts is girls because of inconveniences during their menstrual periods.” This absenteeism leads to poor academic performance and subsequent dropping out of school. **St. Mark institute of Health Sciences Project** data support these findings. *St. Mark institute of health Sciences Project will support Girls with* sanitary pads and underwear to menstruating girls in five primary schools. **The St. Mark institute of Health Sciences** Project will also build girl friendly latrines with washing facilities and incinerators in all project schools. We predict that in the

early stages of the project, a 30% drop in absenteeism in girls receiving sanitary pads and a marked improvement in academic scores. This project *will* aim to expand this program to eleven more schools and make it self-supporting by setting up a local facility to manufacture



an affordable, eco-friendly alternative to expensive, imported pads.

Directors of St. Mark Institute and other associates are looking forward to developing **Saint Pads**. We shall ensure that the pads are acceptable by young girls and will have a good absorption rate better than that of any pad on the market. In addition, their production will provide a viable income-generating activity for impoverished women.

St Mark Institute of Health Sciences agrees to provide the training, equipment and quality control needed to make this a successful venture.

Until the time that this facility becomes self-supporting and producing sufficient pads, we will continue to supply a decreasing number of imported pads to menstruating girls thus phasing out imported donations over the three years of the project.

Project Supervision

Project directors of **St. Mark Institute** and other associates will oversee the project putting into perspective government and institutional goals. Subsequent supervision will be from other funders.

Regular visits by project personnel will keep the program on track.

Budget

The following budget for a 3 year implementation of the project phases out imported pads and phases in **Saint Pads** making the program self-sufficient.

At the same time improvements made in girls attendance and academic performance by the *St. Mark Institute of health Sciences Project Girls Support Program* are maintained and extended. The budget includes an annual inflation rate of 10%.



BUDGET: Three Year Plan for “Affordable Sanitary Pads for 1,500 Ugandan Girls”

Year 1	Item	Cost (\$)	Running Total (\$)
	Program Supervisor Salary	4,000	4,000
	Motorbike for program supervisor	2,000	6,000
	Fuel, phone, office expenses etc	1,500	7,500
	Imported Sanitary Pads	20,000	27,500
	Underwear	6,000	33,500
	Community Health Worker Salary	2,500	36,000
	Travel Expenses for Community Health Worker	500	36,500
	Teaching Aids: Charts, paper, videos, markers etc	500	37,000
	Peer Educator Training for 32 girls and 16 teachers	1,920	38,920
	Computer and printer	1,000	39,920
	Projector, generator, screen, and batteries	3,000	42,920
	Diesel	300	43,220
	6 blocks of Girl-friendly latrines@ \$4000 each	24,000	67,220
	Saint Pad production business management plan and environmental impact assessment	5,000	72,220
	Local language films on puberty, reproduction, etc	3,500	75,720
	Year 1 Total	\$75,720	
Year 2			
	Program Supervisor Salary	4,400	80,120
	Fuel, phone, office expenses etc	1,700	81,820
	Imported Sanitary Pads	22,000	103,820
	Underwear	6,600	110,420

	Community Health Worker Salary	2,750	113,170
	Travel Expenses for Community Health Worker	550	113,720
	Teaching Aids: Charts, paper, videos, markers etc	550	114,270
	Peer Educator Training for 32 girls and 16 teachers at \$65 per person	3,120	117,390
	Diesel	330	117,720
	Construction and equipping of Saint Pad Production plant	45,000	162,720
	Year 2 Total	\$87,000	
Year 3			
	Program Supervisor Salary	5,000	167,720
	Fuel, phone, office expenses etc	2,000	169,720
	Imported Sanitary pads	11,000	180,720
	Underwear	6,600	187,320
	Community Health Worker Salary	3,000	190,320
	Travel Expenses	600	190,920
	Teaching Aids: Charts, paper, videos, markers, etc	600	191,520
	Peer Educator Training for 32 girls and 16 teachers at \$65 per person	3,360	194,880
	Diesel	320	195,200
	Saint Pad Plant supervisor Salary	5,000	200,200
	Administrative and accounting fees	3,000	\$203,200
	Year 3 Total	\$40,480	
	TOTAL		\$203,200

WORK PLAN												
ACTIVITY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Peer Education												
Distribution of sanitary pads												
Incinerator Building												
Movie production												
Monitoring												

By

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