Remember When Anything Was Possible?
...Want Your Cape Back?

IMPOSSIBLE JUST GOT TAKEN DOWN A NOTCH.
Dear Days for Girls Supporters,

In 2008, an inspired question at 2:30 AM in Kenya started this journey of empowerment for women worldwide. The question: *Have you asked what the girls are doing for feminine hygiene?* I hadn't. I hadn't even considered the question. When the answer came it was stunning: "Nothing. They wait in their rooms." The response left a small group of volunteers **bustling to do the impossible**: innovate and create 500 sustainable kits for girls in just 21 days. We didn't even know where to start. Yet the kits were completed (though compared to today's kits, they were simplistic).

We had realized that washable and sustainable hygiene kits were the only viable option, after returning a month after our initial distribution of disposable pads to discover that girls had no place to put the used items. With the sustainable version, girls were overjoyed they could stay in school month after month. But it was not until girls told us of how they had been sexually exploited in exchange for hygiene before our arrival that I saw the true value of what we had brought, and Days for Girls was born. It turned out that this dilemma was true all over the world. Girls who have to go without feminine hygiene miss up to 3 months of school a year.

Through small, simple, and effective means, we have seen that something can be done to change that. It's been working worldwide thanks to a grassroots network of thousands of amazing volunteers. In fact, it turns out that you can be one of the keys to reversing the cycle of poverty. Chapters, Teams and individuals make it possible to expand awareness, extend results, empower more girls, and save resources. Your willingness to dive in and do what you can will make all the difference in the world. You are Days for Girls International.

With Warm Regards,

Celeste Mergens
Founder & Executive Director
Days for Girls International

Every Girl.
Everywhere.
Period.
POSSIBLE...to Give Back Dignity to Thousands with Something Smaller Than a Grocery Bag.

Having her basic hygiene needs covered month after month makes all the difference.

Dignity: It’s in the Bag.

Each Days for Girls (DfG) hygiene kit lasts 2-3 years.
"The Days for Girls towels have been very beneficial to me because I can wash and re-use them. I do not now have to fear what I will do when my periods come and I do not have the sanitary pads. The Days for Girls are comfortable just like the other disposable pads and easy to use. Because in our community this is an issue with a lot of stigma, I can never ask for money for pads from my father. My parents have never budgeted for this need although it means a lot to me and often times I have missed school or improvised with pieces of rags and cotton wool. Some girls in my village have even used toilet tissue or even tried to recycle used disposable towels."

- Susan, Kenya
In Kenya alone, 6 out of 10 girls lack access to feminine hygiene solutions.

Pads give back girls and women time they would otherwise lose. This time translates into education, greater income, and better health. Days for Girls hygiene kits each cost $10 or less in materials. That’s a tiny investment that yields huge impact for girls, women, communities, and nations.

Days for Girls’ kit design is based on the feedback of thousands of women. The resulting design is so uniquely culturally and environmentally relevant that it is worthy of a patent. We crossed the important threshold of filing for our first patent in 2013. A patent will protect the burgeoning community-based businesses of those we serve with around the world.
POSSIBLE...for Thousands to Change Lives with Their Own Hands, Hearts and Resources.

Days for Girls’ effective impact is due to its amazing global network of Volunteers, Chapters and Teams. They also report that they have…

“Become more thankful for everything I have.” “Found a greater purpose for my being.” “Felt empowered to make a difference.” “Become more committed to a sisterhood around the world.” “Been uplifted by the common love of women everywhere.”

What DfG volunteers say: “Since joining Days for Girls I have…”

- 12% “Become less lonely.”
- 40% “Felt more needed.”
- 63% “Learned more about other cultures.”
- 33% “Developed friends in new cities or countries.”
Chapter and Team Power:

2013 was a year of exponential growth for Days for Girls. At the end of the year, we had 140+ Chapters and Teams on 6 continents working together to change lives and building connections to reach women and girls around the globe.

“I think about the simple health education and community engagement we deliver. I think about the radiant smiles on children’s faces as they wave to our departing boats. ...And I think - of course it’s worth it.”

— Madeleine South Hobart Chapter, Tasmania
“When [the girls] opened their kits, it was like the room filled with electricity...They were thrilled...smiles! What a perfect gift...I have been loving these girls for years...Now, with the help of hundreds of women back home, there is something we can do for them that will bless their lives over and over and over again. I feel like I have finally found my mission here.”

- Ann, Utah Valley Chapter Co-Director

“If you notice an unmet need, it is probably because you are supposed to help fulfill it...I can’t think of a better way to teach my daughters...the dying art of sewing quality items while helping them develop a selfless attitude in today’s...society.”

- Rayette, Fairbanks, AK Team
Our Global Impact

Since 2008, Days for Girls and partners have given back dignity to over 100,000 girls and women, and reached over 60 countries.
POSSIBLE...to Apply Our Global Lessons to Local Enterprises.

“[The other pads] weren't good, but because of problems I had no options. I would use [them] but wouldn't be comfortable in public. I would always be standing because if I sat down I might get stains.

Now I'm very happy because of the skills that I got in making reusable pads. Now if I'm in my menses I'm safe and secure because I know that even if I go in public I won't have stains in my clothes...It can also be a way that I can earn a living if I start making it and selling it.”

- Stella, Uganda

DfG Uganda is paving the way for a country-based model that provides women with the tools they need to make and sell DfG hygiene kits in their communities. The HUB trains women's cooperatives to become Sewing and Health Enterprises (*SHEs).
In 2013 the Uganda team also led several important monitoring and evaluation efforts. Results for two of the questions can be seen below. Larger words represent a more common response.

“How do you feel when you don’t have pads?”

uncomfortable sick unstable confused dirty worried sad unclean bad weak displaced pain upset ashamed miserable lonely

“I'm really impressed by you coming because I used to have a lot of problems when I had my menstrual cycle...I've realized that now I will be free and even stay with people if I'm menstruating because I don't have to worry about leaking. I can just stay with people.

I will also use the skills that DfG taught in order to earn a living. I will start a business of making and selling reusable menstrual kits in my community and earn money.”

-Eunice, Uganda

“How do you feel the Days for Girls kit will help you?”

I will not miss school

I will save money

I will help others

I will stay clean
POSSIBLE...to Create Global Change on a Shoestring Budget.

Most of our funding comes in the form of in-kind donations, and goes directly to support kits. Funding also supports our Chapters and Teams, and country-based programs.
Our fiscal stewardship and impact didn’t go unnoticed this year. We appeared in the following publications:

Our Year in Review

In 2013, we:

- Added over 50 new Chapters and Teams
- Reached over 20 new countries
- Rolled out completed reproductive health, sewing, and business skills curricula to women’s cooperatives in Uganda, paving the way for global replication
- Opened a new office
- Conducted Ambassadors of Women’s Health Training in 4 cities

We also were selected as a Girl Effect Champion for the second year running, and were awarded a top rating on Great Nonprofits, were a GuideStar Exchange Gold Participant, and were a featured organization on Global Giving.