



The Grow Africa Foundation presents #ProjectPenya

Every day, thousands of
teenage girls in rural Africa
miss out on their education
due to menstruation



Teenage girls who live in rural regions in Africa experience a 25% drop in school attendance which hinders their education. Many of the girls do not go to school whilst they are menstruating because they have no access to sanitary wear. That is one week every month, which is a massive set back in their school careers. If there is money in the family, the priority is to buy food for the family. The sanitation in the schools is mostly dismal, if not of a very low standard, which makes it extremely difficult for girls to discard used sanitary pads. One in ten schoolgirls in Africa miss classes or drop out completely due to their period, and substitute regular pads or tampons for less safe and less absorbent materials such as rags, newspaper or bark.

What is #ProjectPenya about?

We at Jenman believe that we need to respect the places we travel to. Responsible tourism is important to us. We decided to get involved with Dingani Primary School, located near our lodge Elephant's Eye in Hwange. We have decided to dedicate #ProjectPenya to female empowerment to help teenage girls with their futures and general wellbeing. For us, it's about empowering a generation of women to have equal chances at attending school and receiving a good education. We will begin by providing girls with a sustainable solution to menstruation, but beyond this, we will host a series of workshops and motivational talks to encourage women that they too can focus on a brighter future!

Why #ProjectPenya?

The word Penya means 'shine' in Shona. We think the name is appropriate because we are doing exactly that- we are teaching young ladies to shine! This project is close to our hearts because we know that in rural Africa there is a lot of pressure on girls to drop out of school to get married, have babies and take care of their families. We want to instil in the girls that this is not their only option, and they can in fact be as successful as boys (if not more!). It is possible to finish school, it is possible to go to University, and it is possible to have a successful career. Because menstruation is a major factor in the completion of school due to lack of access to sanitary items, we hope that by providing the sanitary pads we can make a small step in the right direction of getting girls to finish their schooling.

What is the solution?

Subz reusable pads and panties

We wish to raise money to assist in supplying underprivileged girls with re-usable sanitary pads so that they are still able to attend school during their menstruation.

Subz Pads are eco-friendly, washable pads and panties that can be re-used. The panty is made from 100% cotton, and the pads are made from 5 layers of hydrophilic fabric which clip onto the underwear and does not need to be disposed of. This enables girls to take home their soiled sanitary towels, wash them in the privacy of their own home, and use them again. It is a sustainable solution.

In a South African pilot project, a headmaster recently remarked that after one of his pupils began using the Subz pads her marks improved from 48% to 85% simply because she didn't have to miss any more school. This is instrumental in gender equality and giving women the same chances while empowering them from an early age!

For more information on Subz pads please visit their website: <http://www.subz pads.co.za/>.

Motivational and Educational Workshops

Together with a qualified health professional, The Grow Africa Foundation will arrange a series of motivational workshops and talks for the girls, their parents, the teachers and the local clinic staff about puberty, sexual health and wellbeing, and career choices.

The girls will receive in-depth information about the changes their body is experiencing and what it means, how to control what is happening, and why it is important to remain in school. They will also gain exposure to different career opportunities and be given the chance to go out and experience what it's like to work in the real world on a 'work shadow' basis.

We hope that this will show women that they have enough power to be in control and make decisions for themselves, and they have a bright future ahead of them! This is not just about providing sanitary panties to school girls, this is about providing education to an entire community and empowering an entire generation of young girls.

How do I get involved?

Purchase a pair of Subz pads for a teenage girl at Dingani

Starting off, we don't want girls to miss school because of the lack of access to sanitary items. If we can keep girls at school to improve their marks, we are one step closer to empower the women of all generations to come.

Through donations, we are hoping to purchase a set of Subz panties and pads for all Grade 6 and 7 learners at Dingani Primary School on a sustainable and on-going basis. We will also use donations to fund and organise the motivational workshops for the girls at Dingani Primary.

A set of panties and pads for one girl costs R220, or US\$15. We ask our friends and clients to think about donating just one pair of panties for a girl in need. If you would like to donate more, we would be extremely grateful!

More information about Grow Africa

If you would like more information about The Grow Africa Foundation and our current projects please visit: <http://www.jenmansafaris.com/about-us/grow-africa/>

Or read up about our previous Dingani Primary School projects here:

<http://www.africanluxuryhideaways.com/blog/2016/7/29/travellers-make-a-difference-with-pack-for-a-purpose.aspx>

<http://www.africanluxuryhideaways.com/blog/2016/6/1/sustainable-tourism-painting-a-classroom-at-dingani-primary-school.aspx>

<http://www.africanluxuryhideaways.com/blog/2016/2/25/building-a-playground-for-our-zimbabwean-dingani-primary-school.aspx>