



Proposal

Title: The Girls to Women Talk Talk Business Project

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Implementing Agency: We Yone Child Foundation (WYCF)

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Location: Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa



Organisation Background

We Yone Child Foundation (WYCF) was founded by Santigie Bayo Dumbuya in 2009. Santigie was a child soldier captured and forced to fight for the Revolution United Front (RUF) rebel during the Sierra Leone civil war. In 1999, after three years of fighting, Santigie fled the RUF at the age of 15 and sought safety in Freetown. He worked as a manual labourer while completing his secondary school and college.

Santigie lived among and volunteered for local organizations and came to know the people of two slums communities, Kroo Bay and George Brook. He started WYCF with a simple mission; to provide sustainable education and care to underprivileged children of Kroo Bay and George Brook and to overcome the social and environmental problems that deepen and perpetuate the cycle of poverty in those communities.

For the past five years, we have constructed three Primary schools and returned 300 vulnerable children to primary schools in the aftermath of Ebola. We reached out to 7,700 households in 17 slum communities and hard to reach communities with our Ebola education. We have launched our annual secondary school scholarship starting with 81 children from our two primary schools 2015-2017 academic year. We have hired 18 teachers, 6 staff and 6 volunteers. We also distributed business grants to 135 families in April 2015. Our newest school, Upper George Brook Primary School, is currently providing high-quality education to a community where there is no pure water or and sanitary facilities.

Problem statement

According to UNICEF, 1 out of every 10 schoolgirls in Africa skips school or drops out entirely due to struggles faced when managing their menstruation cycles. The vast majority are unable to afford or access safe, sanitary and private spaces to change their menstrual cloths and pads or even to wash. The poor hygiene schoolgirls face during menstruation and inability to access or afford sanitary products frequently pushes menstruating girls temporarily or sometimes permanently out of school, especially when she fears a stain on her skirt.

But in Sierra Leone, more than [20% of girls](#) in Sierra Leone miss school during their periods -- exceeding the average of the entire continent. Sierra Leone's 2015 Census, launched by the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, revealed via provisional results on 31st March 2016 that its population grew from 4,976,871 in 2004 to 7,075,641 in 2015, registering 50.9% of the total population as female ([UN 2015](#)). This staggering increase leaves over half of the population vulnerable to menstruation-related obstacles. For some girls, the problem is as basic as toilet access: only [45% of schools](#) in Sierra Leone have proper facilities.

At the same time, cultural stigmas about menstruation pervade the communities in Sierra Leone, and the schoolgirls' fear of leaks, lack of knowledge and inadequate or nonexistent access to sanitary products force them to stay home from class. In most places it is a combination of factors.



Compromised or eliminated educational opportunities caused by menstruation don't only affect adolescent girls; they impact the whole community. A woman's [future earnings grow](#) with every additional year of primary education. When a girl receives continuous education, she typically marries later, has fewer, healthier children and is less likely to experience sexual violence.

In the face of this alarming global problem and particularly high vulnerability in Sierra Leone, [We Yone Child Foundation](#) is prioritizing opportunities to empower women to become successful, healthier and more productive members of society. WYCF operates in Freetown, Sierra Leone & has existed for over 7 years, with main operations commencing in 2011. We serve local slum communities & focus on education, family healthcare and community development.

To reduce the menstruation challenges that adolescent schoolgirls face in Sierra Leone, we plan to empower 142 girls and 4 women in the Kroo Bay & George Brook communities through **The Girls to Women Talk Talk Business Project**. This project has two components, supporting both local women & schoolgirls. The 4 local women, who live within the communities we serve, will develop social enterprises & seamstressing skills to produce reusable sanitary pads; and all 142 girls age 10-16 attending our three primary schools who are experiencing menses will have access to these reusable pads, allowing them to attend school without interruption. This mutually beneficial relationship will create sustainable ongoing access to sanitary products for our schoolgirls & empower local women to rise out of poverty.

Project rationale

Access to safe, clean, low cost and sustainable reusable sanitary pads is extremely low or nonexistent in Sierra Leone. Lack of understanding exacerbates the situation for vulnerable schoolgirls. Menstruation stigma, fear of leaks and cultural taboos act as additional major constraints. 20% of Sierra Leonean schoolgirls skip school or drop out of school entirely due to lack of menstrual products and poor access to proper sanitation. This alarming & pervasive problem is one of the most significant barriers for girls, causing them to miss school during their periods.

To understand the prevalence of this issue within the communities we serve, WYCF paired 10 secondary schoolgirls with 9 girls at the primary level as part of a distribution & education training programme in both reusable sanitary pads & safe protection during menstruation. Community feedback was overwhelming, & it became clear to us that a larger project on a broader scale was critical to meet the needs of the schoolgirls. As a leading, trusted advocate in the slum communities within which we work, WYCF is uniquely positioned to expand upon this earlier success.

As part of this initial programme, WYCF's staff of 6 social workers also identified significant levels of menstruation stigma within our schools. With 704 total beneficiaries in our three primary schools, such stigmas can create fear, shame & isolation for the schoolgirls, negatively impacting attendance & academic performance. It also perpetuates inequality for the schoolgirls when compared to their male



counterparts.

From an economic perspective, the World Bank has stated that for every year a girl stays in school, her future income increases 10% to 20%. It also confirmed that a woman invests 70% of her income in her family. To promote a continuous cycle of female empowerment from school age to adulthood, WYCF will foster economic opportunities for 4 local women. We will partner with these 4 women to create sustainable social enterprises, which will produce reusable sanitary pads for primary schoolgirls in the communities we serve.

The Girls to Women Talk Talk Business Project will directly support WYCF's mission and specific objectives: i) high quality primary schools, ii) access to secondary school, iii) equal opportunities for girls, iv) healthy families for a healthy community. WYCF has been at the forefront in supporting girls, currently working together with Street Child UK (with many projects funded by DfID). Now, we are pursuing the pilot initiative to improve the conditions for schoolgirls caused by menstrual problems, while also empowering 4 local women with sustainable livelihoods.

Objectives of the project

General objectives:

- ✓ Provide reusable sanitary pads for schoolgirls
- ✓ Empower local women to produce reusable sanitary pads

Specific objectives:

- ✓ Ensure 142 schoolgirls in three WYCF Primary Schools have access to safe, clean, low-cost sanitary products
- ✓ Reduce absenteeism & improve attendance
- ✓ Overcome menstruation stigma and taboos of menstruation through education, training & support
- ✓ Improve confidence and self-worth for schoolgirls
- ✓ Reduce teenage pregnancy/child mothers
- ✓ Educate schoolgirls through 2 month kick-off awareness campaign
- ✓ Empower and train 4 local women to build & sustain production of reusable sanitary pads
- ✓ Foster economic growth through income-generating social enterprise
- ✓ Conduct 1 week training for social workers on menstruation protection
- ✓ Advocate within Sierra Leone Ministry of Health & Education Department

Strategy implementation

Phase 1 - Training of 4 local women in the production of reusable sanitary pads



WYCF has identified local experts in Freetown who will provide skilled instruction & training to our 4 local women on producing the sanitary pads. WYCF will also provide startup kits to each of the 4 local seamstresses, which will include one sewing machine, cotton pupline, fasteners, thread & other basic components required for the initial launch. We will provide business coaching & job mediation to ensure our beneficiaries have the skills necessary to succeed.

Phase 2 – Staff training, in collaboration with Ministry of Health representatives (under the Health Education Department), on sexual and reproductive health in 3 primary schools

Sexual and reproductive education will be provided in each school by our trained staff. Our social workers will address the stigma, taboos and shame faced by schoolgirls through counseling sessions and instructions on safe & proper use of the sanitary pads.

Phase 3 - Project delivery – Distribution to beneficiaries

WYCF will identify an ideal target week for implementation during the school year and utilize this timeline to coordinate with trainers, staff & stakeholders. WYCF will distribute 100% of the locally produced sanitary pads to schoolgirls of menstrual age as target beneficiaries.

Phase 4 – Monitoring & Evaluation of project results

WYCF's team, representatives from the SMC (School Management Committee) and other stakeholders will debrief & analyze project results to ensure project success. WYCF will measure outcomes in alignment with the goals and objectives of this proposal.

WYCF will invite donor representatives and members of the Health Education department to attend all trainings & conduct independent monitoring and evaluation of the project from inception to completion. WYCF will review all feedback & incorporate any recommendations, corrections or contributions as necessary.

WYCF will share the results derived from this project with our partner, Street Child UK, to explore possible expansion & replication of this program into other schools located in the western and rural areas (where this organization also operates).

A variety of formal and informal Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms will be central to ensuring the appropriate delivery of effective and sustainable services. These will include: Multi Indicator Cluster Surveys, class attendance data, girl-boy retention data and exit surveys.

Expected results

School	# of girls age 10 -16
We Yone Primary School	35



We Yone Kroo Bay Primary School	46
Temple Of Faith Primary School	61
TOTAL	142

- 142 girls in 3 Primary schools receive sanitary pads, sexual health education and counseling
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- 80-90% of the 142 girls remain in school & attend class during menstruation
- Stigma, taboos and shame decline for 387 of girls
- Girls feel empowered to talk or share information about menstruation
- 4 local women develop skills in seamstressing & have reliable income
- Access to safe, clean, locally-produced & reusable sanitary pads increases
- Girls and women within 3 communities begin to appreciate reusable sanitary pads & popularize their use
- Boys and men within 3 communities develop greater respect & understanding for the challenges created by menstruation
- Pilot project success translates into expansion opportunities for other rural communities

Deliverables

WYCF's Chief Executive Officer will deliver both technical and financial reporting upon completion of each phase as outlined above & on a continuous basis, as requested by the funding organization. The reporting will include, for example: specific details pertaining to local production output of sanitary pads, girls impacted every month, materials purchased, stakeholder feedback, expenditures, emerging issues, achievements realized, challenges faced, School Management Committee insight, & WYCF's internal financial & administrative contributions.

Target beneficiaries

The project's direct beneficiaries are 142 schoolgirls in 3 Primary schools in the Kroo Bay and George Brook communities of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Indirect beneficiaries include community members, families, other schoolgirls, school management, social workers, teachers & local women.

Project sustainability

- **Independent Social Enterprises**
 - After initial funding of start-up costs from WYCF, these enterprises will be self-sustaining & independently run by the women – creating both continuous employment & future growth opportunities.
- **Continuous Beneficiaries**



- WYCF currently operates three schools in the communities, so local schoolgirls will have reliable, continuous access to education & the ability to progress in grade level.
- **Partnership with school administration**
 - Teachers in the communities are paid and supported by WYCF, creating strong, trusted relationships. WYCF can utilize these relationships to promote & foster future programs.
- **Organizational Standing**
 - WYCF was founded in 2009, with major operations commencing in 2011. We have established three schools & served the surrounding communities for over 5 years, continuously building upon our existing strong reputation.
- **Strategic Partnering**
 - **Government**
 - WYCF will continue to partner with representatives of the Ministry of Education to provide training & create awareness within the schools and greater communities.
 - **Other NGOs (domestic & international)**
 - We will use project data to partner with outside organizations, sharing statistics & resources to expand the target beneficiary population of girls and local businesswomen.
 - **Other Community Schools**
 - WYCF will develop a sustainable structure in the pilot project & partner with Street Child UK to further expand this initiative into other rural schools.

WYCF'S Capacity

WYCF has the capacity necessary to design, implement & lead this pilot initiative of The Girls to Women Talk Talk Business Project. Our previous community outreach awareness campaigns & established networks with other trusted organizations in the field give us the legitimacy necessary to enact these measures. At the same time, WYCF's recognition by local community leaders and government representatives has given us strategic footing to continue to build upon our strong reputation.

As part of our commitment to the success of this project, we will prepare formal reference documents referencing critical components of our plan, including but not limited to:

- Strategic Planning
- Project Outline
- Project Timeline
- Short Term & Long Term Deliverables
- Project Budget v Actual Data
- Identification of Project Leads



- Management Oversight, Monitoring & Evaluation
- Compilation/Analyses of Feedback

Project Budget

**Practical
Training for
Local
Women
(Days 1 & 2)**

WE YONE CHILD FOUNDATION - THE GIRLS TO WOMEN TALK TALK BUSINESS PROJECT				
Description	# Units	Unit cost	Total SLL	Total £
Communication	2	100,000	200,000	30.30
Contape	1	60,000	60,000	9.09
Cotton (plain)	1	140,000	140,000	21.21
Cotton (print pupline)	1	150,000	150,000	22.73
Fabric metres	1	100,000	100,000	15.15
Facilitator Fee	2	100,000	200,000	30.30
Fastener to snap together	1	25,000	25,000	3.79
Hall rental	2	250,000	500,000	75.76
Meals (Breakfast & Lunch)	10	70,000	700,000	106.06
Metres breathable PU WATERPROOF fabric	1	25,000	25,000	3.79
Renting of projector	2	50,000	100,000	15.15
Sewing machines	4	1,500,000	6,000,000	909.09
Sewing thread minimum	1	250,000	250,000	37.88
Sticker	1	20,000	20,000	3.03
SUB-TOTAL			8,470,000	1,283.33
Description	# Units	Unit cost	Total SLL	Total £



Collaborative Practical Training for Local Women & Social Workers (Days 3, 4 & 5)	Communication	3	150,000	450,000	68.18
	Facilitator Fee	3	100,000	300,000	45.45
	Flipchat pad	3	30,000	90,000	13.64
	Hall rental	3	250,000	750,000	113.64
	Meals (Breakfast & Lunch)	15	105,000	1,575,000	238.64
	Ministry facilitators	3	100,000	300,000	45.45
	Renting of projector	3	50,000	150,000	22.73
	Transportation	3	150,000	450,000	68.18
	SUB-TOTAL	4,065,000			615.91
	Description	# Units	Unit cost	Total SLL	Total £
Pad Start-up Production Costs (3 months)	Contape	20	60,000	1,200,000	181.82
	Cotton (plain)	16	140,000	2,240,000	339.39
	Cotton (print pupline)	16	150,000	2,400,000	363.64
	Fabric metres	16	100,000	1,600,000	242.42
	Fastener to snap together	16	25,000	400,000	60.61
	Metres breathable PU WATERPROOF fabric	16	25,000	400,000	60.61
	Monthly stipend for Health educators	3	900,000	2,700,000	409.09
	Sewing thread minimum	4	250,000	1,000,000	151.52
	Sticker	16	20,000	320,000	48.48
	SUB-TOTAL	12,260,000			1,857.58
	GRAND TOTAL	SLL 24,795,000			£ 3,756.82

