

Breaking Barriers: Empower at least 300 Girls with Menstrual Health and Increase School Retention in Busoga through education, awareness and localized innovation challenges.

Summary:

A girl in resource-poor schools in Uganda faces a disadvantaged position that affects her education, health, and social development. Menstrual health challenges, including lack of access to sanitary products and usage knowledge, inadequate hygiene facilities, and limited awareness, cause many girls to miss school or drop out altogether. Studies show that up to 20% of school-age girls in rural Uganda miss school during menstruation, and repeated absences significantly impact their learning outcomes, self-confidence, and future opportunities. In Budondo - Busoga, these challenges are compounded by high rates of urinary tract infections (UTIs) and other hygiene-related health issues due to insufficient access to safe water and sanitation facilities. The Students Support and Philanthropy Program with its menstrual health education and hygiene strategy wishes to engage and empower at least 300 girls and boys at the SSPP Eastern Regional office and multipurpose center and educate a minimum of 1,200 local youth on menstrual health management and hygiene.



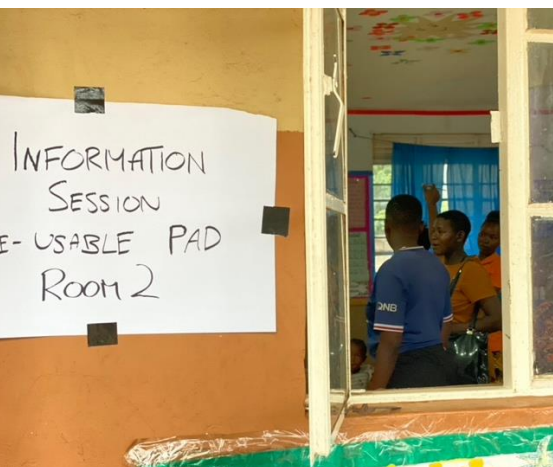
Image 1; The inaugural menstrual health training done by the SSPP staff and master's students/ volunteers from Stockholm at the Students Support and Philanthropy Program eastern regional office and multipurpose center, Jinja

Challenge:

Girls in rural Uganda face a combination of social, economic, and infrastructural barriers that impede their school participation and personal development.

Some of these are;

1. **Limited Access to Menstrual Health Products**
Many girls in Budondo cannot afford sanitary pads, relying instead on improvised materials that increase discomfort and increased risk of infections.
2. **Poor Sanitation Facilities in Schools:**
Many schools lack private, safe, and hygienic toilets with water access, making menstruation management difficult.
3. **Health Risks:**
The use of unsafe materials contributes to urinary tract infections (UTIs), reproductive tract infections, and other hygiene-related illnesses.
4. **Stigma and Gender Norms:**
Cultural taboos around menstruation discourage open discussion, causing girls to skip school or drop out.
5. **Lack of Awareness:**
Both girls and boys often lack comprehensive education on menstrual health, hygiene, and reproductive health.



Images 2,3 and 4 show various trainings sessions the SSPP has carried out over the years to empower local communities and girls in menstrual health and hygiene. Below the Ugandan flag are more images showcasing the same.



Solution:

This project proposes a comprehensive menstrual health empowerment program that combines direct support and education to at least 300 girls, training and workshops to at least 1,200 girls and boys inspiring innovation, and advocacy all centralized at the Students Support and Philanthropy Program Eastern Regional Office and multipurpose center, Jinja:

1. **Provision of Menstrual Health Supplies:** Distribution of reusable sanitary pads and hygiene kits to girls in target schools as relief and catalytic strategy to reduce school infection surges.
2. **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Interactive sessions for girls and boys on menstrual health, hygiene practices, and breaking gender related stigma at the SSPP multipurpose center, a safe space for interaction and innovation in the menstrual health space
3. **Innovation Challenge:** A school-level innovation competition encouraging girls and boys to design low-cost, sustainable menstrual solutions, hygiene products, or awareness campaigns. Winners will receive awards, mentorship, and funding to implement their ideas. Attractive ideas will be adopted in next phases of scaleup.
4. **Health Interventions:** Partnerships with local health centers to screen for UTIs and other reproductive health issues, providing treatment and awareness for prevention.
5. **Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy:** Collaborations with school administrators, local leaders, parents, and government officials to strengthen menstrual health policies, improve sanitation infrastructure, and ensure sustainability. After the engagement with students from these schools, the SSPP works with key stakeholders and designs communication tools and strategies to ease the living condition for girls and reduce stigma in these situations.

Long-Term Impact:

This program aims to:

Increase school retention and attendance for girls, targeting a 30% reduction in absenteeism due to menstruation within the first year.

Improve menstrual hygiene management knowledge and practices among girls and boys.

Foster innovation and leadership skills among students through competitions and community projects.

Reduce incidence of UTIs and other hygiene-related health issues in participating schools.

Influence policy and school-level practices for sustainable menstrual health management.



The Budget.

Item	Units	Unit cost USD	Total Cost USD	Narration
Sanitary towel package for the 300 merit selected girls in need.	300	20	6000	A kit with 4 reusable pads and a knicker per school going girl in Budondo plus training on MHH.
Subtotal			6,000	
Education, training and workshops at the multipurpose center				
Tent procurement	2	1,000	2,000	2, 100 seater tents to boost the accommodation of 200 girls per training
Chairs procurement	200	10	2,000	
Public address system hire	6	100	600	2 times every month of 3 months
Refreshments for trainees	1,200	5	6,000	200 trainees every training session for 6 sessions
Education material	1,200	5	6,000	Hard copy brochures with menstrual health education tips and management.
Subtotal			16,600	
Innovation challenge award to 4 local students			400	
Overall Total			23,000	

Specifics

20 dollars will buy a girl a 4-reusable pads kit.

13 dollars educates a local student and youth on menstrual health and hygiene.

1,000 dollars will procure a 100-seater tent for the outdoor trainings to be done in the shade.

100 dollars will reward the best boys and girls for their innovative ideas around menstrual health and hygiene management that can be scaled up in next phases.

STUDENTS WITHOUT BORDERS

SSPP

JUST READ PROJECT ALMA

