

BEYOND WATER: WorldServe Facilitates Menstrual Health and Hygiene for Girls



At WorldServe International, our mission has always been to provide access to clean water to people in the most water-stressed regions of the world. Implementing sustainable water solutions in Africa for nearly 20 years, WorldServe has long recognized that women and girls are disproportionately affected by water scarcity as they:

- spend countless hours away from education and other meaningful activities
- risk personal safety and wellness walking alone for water and bearing heavy water containers over miles of rough terrain
- suffer violations of basic dignity and health as they are unable to experience a healthy standard for cleanliness

But – when water is present, great things can happen, especially for women and girls! Beyond increased opportunity for education and other drivers of economic mobility, water is foundational to dignity.

"If you educate a man, you educate an individual. If you educate a woman, you educate a nation."

Beyond Water –A Challenge for Dignity, Health and Education

When girls are finally able to attend school, we want to do everything possible to keep them going! A challenge with which many girls struggle is the ability to attend school during menses. Inadequate restroom facilities, a lack of hygiene products, and rampant taboos which surround menstruation may mean that girls in developing countries miss up to four days of school every month.

As absences add up, girls may fall so far behind that they don't return.

WorldServe's Global Partnership for Eco-Friendly Menstrual Hygiene and Education Is Changing Lives!

Five years ago, a strategic advisor of WorldServe began a global search for solutions to address the challenge of menstrual hygiene for girls in developing countries. Involvement with WorldServe influenced her search as she understood that the lack of water in many school settings limited the effectiveness of washable sanitary products and other solutions (such as tampons and cups). Further, the economic and environmental challenges



inherent in traditional “manufactured” products could result in new difficulties. She ultimately discovered an award-winning compostable pad production system created by Aakar Innovations and already changing the lives of women and girls in India. With support from WorldServe, she brought the system to Tanzania, founding a microenterprise run by local women to manufacture the nation's only locally made, 100% compostable and biodegradable sanitary pads (called “UhuruPads” - “uhuru” is the Swahili for “freedom”).

Much more than just a “handout” of pads (*and undergarments – since many girls do not have them*), the girls receive critically needed health and hygiene education. With compassion and grace, the girls learn what menstruation is, its role in the lives of a healthy women and girls, and benefit from a dialogue where their great potential and self worth are affirmed.

In Tanzania, construction of a new UhuruPads production facility is underway, situated on the campus of WorldServe. This facility will optimize production so that UhuruPads can serve many more girls.

In addition, in Kenya, WorldServe is building a similar production facility with the capacity to employ more women and serve tens of thousands of girls!



You Can Help: Sponsor a Girl, a Classroom, a School, or Another Production Center

As WorldServe’s menstrual hygiene collaboration expands, support from generous donors will allow more women to produce a remarkable, eco-friendly product which can be provided to give more girls a life-changing gift of health and hygiene and employ.

Your donation – *for one girl or many* – truly makes a difference.

Contributions are pooled so as to allow entire school communities to be served, positively impacting girls’ education and allowing a culture of dignity, strength, and grace to blossom.

To learn more about opportunities to support this effort, contact: Laura Chauvin at laura@worldserveintl.org or 314-550-6665.

www.WorldServeIntl.org