



Uganda



Reusable Sanitary Pads

AFRIPads

AFRIPads empowers women and girls through business, innovation, and opportunity by manufacturing and selling reusable sanitary pads.

Launched in 2009, For-profit, Menstrual Hygiene Management, Women's Empowerment, East Africa: Uganda

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Problem Addressed

Menstruation is one of the most common and uniquely female experiences. However, around the world millions of girls and women struggle to manage their monthly periods. Unable to afford or access proper sanitary products, many girls and women rely on crude, improvised materials like scraps of old clothing, pieces of foam mattress, toilet paper, leaves, and banana fibers to manage their menstruation – all of which are unhygienic, ineffective, and uncomfortable.

Faced with frequent, embarrassing leaks and a susceptibility to recurrent infections, the impact is that millions of girls and women experience their monthly period as something that prevents them from engaging in daily life – whether this is school, work, or domestic responsibilities.

Innovative Approach

AFRIPads is innovative in that it addresses a clear and demonstrated need in East Africa; this contrasts with past development organizations who provide based on what “should” be provided. AFRIPads pioneered the creation of reusable sanitary pads in East Africa, and they bring a new, high-quality, test product to the market. They sell their product and are able to employ over 150 women, and they were able to double their workforce in 2014.

Program Solution

AFRIPads is a social enterprise in Uganda that specializes in the local manufacture and global supply of reusable sanitary pads as a cost-effective menstrual hygiene solution for millions of women and girls worldwide. By operating a social business in Uganda and employing a 90% female staff responsible for manufacturing their innovative menstrual hygiene solution, AFRIPads creates unique opportunities for both their customers and employees.

The girls and women around the world who use AFRIPads Menstrual Kits are empowered with the protection, comfort and dignity they need during menstruation. This enables them to stay in school go to work, and participate in daily life with confidence.

Creating gainful employment opportunities is at the core of AFRIPads' mission. They believe in local job-creation and the

transformative impact it has on the lives of their employees and their families in Uganda. They provide manufacturing-based employment at their rural production facility, in addition to the staff who run their head office in Uganda's capital city of Kampala. For their employees, working with AFRIPads means the opportunity to gain financial independence and acquire both technical and business skills, which will increase their opportunities in the future.

Additionally, AFRIPads plays a leading role in the menstrual hygiene sector, having pioneered the reusable sanitary pad industry in East Africa and through both private and public-sector partnerships. AFRIPads has sold over 600,000 AFRIPads Menstrual Kits to date, and expects to surpass one million kits sold by the summer of 2016.