



Kenya



## Zana Pads

ZanaAfrica 

ZanaAfrica works with community-based organizations to teach girls about menstrual hygiene management and help them access reusable and disposable sanitary pads.

Launched in 2007, Hybrid (For-profit / Not-for-profit) , Menstrual Hygiene Management , Cross-sector , Cross-sector: Education , Women's Empowerment , East Africa: Kenya

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### Problem Addressed

In Kenya, approximately 1 million girls miss over 6 weeks of school per year because they do not have access to sanitary pads during menstruation. In the absence of pads, women and girls turn to unhygienic alternatives, such as rags. These alternatives cause reproductive tract infections in at least 10 percent of cases and, left untreated, can lead to more serious health issues, including prenatal infection and increased susceptibility to sexually transmitted diseases. In the absence of free or affordable sanitary pads and health information, girls are also at a higher risk of dropping out of school.

### Innovative Approach

ZanaAfrica focuses on a product that women have said that they want – the disposable pad – and offers reusable pads in conjunction with Transformation Textiles. Their pads are offered through supermarkets and community-based distribution models, where they work with community health workers to sell pads and integrate the pads into community schools.

ZanaAfrica capitalizes on an existing marketplace for pads and uses it to further engage women and girls on reproductive health and education. By making affordable sanitary pads, delivering health education, and informing policy, ZanaAfrica creates new opportunities for women and girls to thrive as focused students, productive workers, and informed mothers

### Program Solution

ZanaAfrica has developed a sanitary pad product that leverages local agricultural resources to save 30 percent on pad unit cost compared to the market average. The product will be offered in flexible package sizes so that women can buy what they need with what they have earned on a given day. Furthermore, the pads are distributed through a network of door-to-door saleswoman employed by nongovernmental organizations such as Marie Stopes and Living Goods.

Aside from developing an affordable and environmentally friendly sanitary pad, ZanaAfrica plans to deliver critical health information alongside the product. A comic-style paper insert will come with the pads and feature female health heroes who convey positive messaging about reproductive health and menstrual hygiene, family planning, HIV and sexually

transmitted diseases, and maternal and infant health.