



**Empowering Girls  
Through Menstrual  
Health Management in  
Tanzania**

# **IMPACT REPORT 2023-2025**

**Prepared by:  
Friends of children and youth  
organization (FOCAYO)**

**Location of Focus:  
Dar es salaam & Coastal Region.**



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# Campaign Impact & Statistics

This section provides a statistical overview of the campaign's outreach efforts across different districts. The data highlights the number of girls, boys, teachers, and community leaders reached, demonstrating the significant impact achieved in each location.

TOTAL GIRLS REACHED:



Over 2,600 Girls

TOTAL BOYS REACHED:



Over 200 Boys

TOTAL TEACHERS ENGAGED:



Over 20 Teachers

TOTAL LOCAL LEADERS ENGAGED:



7 local leaders

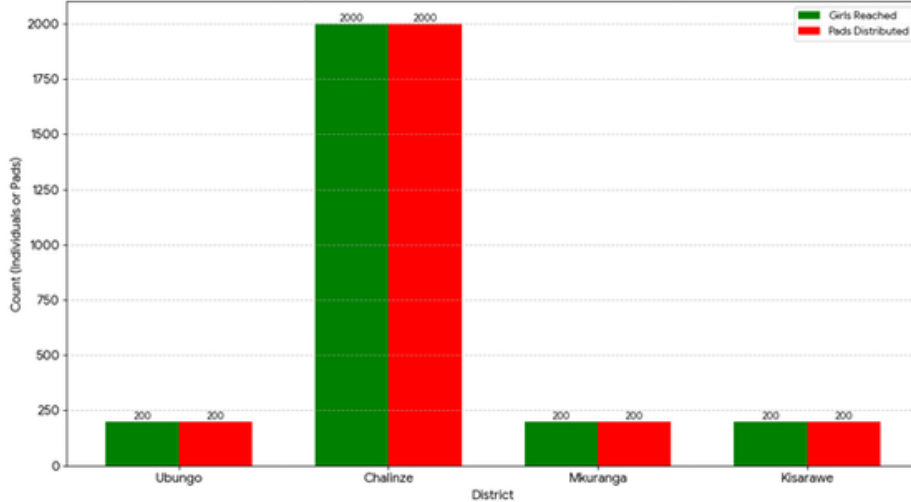
TOTAL PADS DISTRIBUTED:



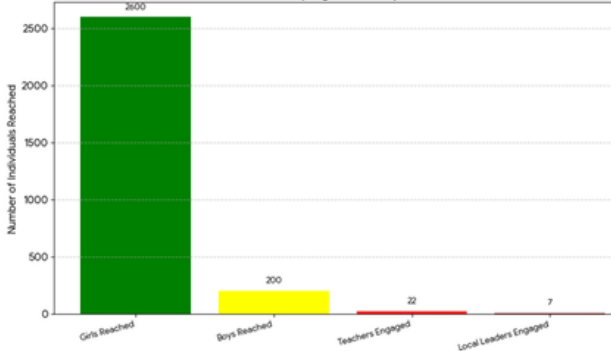
2,600 Pads



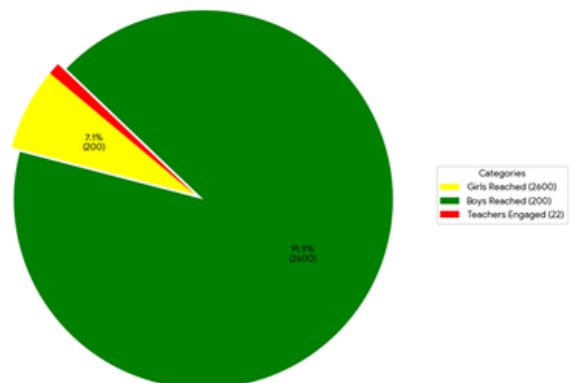
Campaign Impact: Girls Reached and Pads Distributed by District



Overall Campaign Reach by Audience



Overall Campaign Reach by Audience



# A Message from the Executive Director

It is with deep commitment and hope that I share the journey and impact of the “One Girl, One Pad” campaign. What began as a response to an overlooked challenge has grown into a movement that restores dignity, promotes education, and empowers girls in rural Tanzania.

Menstruation, though natural, has long been a silent barrier keeping too many girls from school, limiting their opportunities, and affecting their confidence. Through this campaign, we have witnessed how poverty, stigma, and inadequate facilities can rob girls of their right to education and well-being. At the same time, we have seen how collective action, through simple acts such as providing pads, creating safe spaces for dialogue, and engaging teachers and communities, can transform lives and open doors of opportunity.

Over the past years, “One Girl, One Pad” has reached thousands of girls, boys, teachers, and community members. Together, we have not only distributed pads but also built confidence, fostered open conversations, and challenged taboos that once silenced girls. Today, classrooms are more inclusive, communities are more supportive, and girls are more confident in pursuing their dreams.



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Yet, our mission does not stop here. We have learned that true change requires sustainable solutions. That is why we are evolving into the “Her Future Project”, a long-term, community-driven initiative that ensures access to reusable menstrual products, strengthens health education, and empowers communities to create lasting menstrual equity.

This progress has only been possible through the commitment of our partners, schools, community leaders, and supporters who continue to walk with us. Together, we are not only breaking the silence on menstruation—we are breaking barriers to education, equality, and opportunity.

To every girl who now attends school with dignity and confidence because of this campaign—you are the reason we continue this work. Your future is our shared commitment.

With determination,  
Esther A. Liukal  
Executive Director

# Executive Summary

The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign is a critical initiative aimed at addressing the profound challenges faced by adolescent girls in rural Tanzania concerning menstrual health management (MHM). Through grassroots efforts and strategic partnerships, our campaign has reached thousands of girls and boys across multiple regions. This report outlines the pressing issues identified, the campaign's objectives, and the tangible impact we have made in fostering an environment where girls can manage their menstruation with dignity, stay in school, and reach their full potential.



# Introduction: The Silent Crisis

Menstruation, a natural biological process, remains a significant barrier to education and overall well-being for millions of girls in Tanzania, particularly those in underserved rural communities. Poverty, cultural taboos, lack of access to appropriate sanitary products, and inadequate WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities in schools and homes contribute to a cycle of missed schooling, health risks, and social isolation. The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign recognizes that this is a collective challenge, and we are dedicated to providing sustainable solutions



## Background: The Challenges We Address

The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign was a direct response to the profound challenges adolescent girls face regarding menstrual health management (MHM) in rural Tanzania. Our preliminary engagements in these communities revealed a stark reality, highlighting a clear need for this initiative.

Key issues we identified include:

- **Poverty-Driven Product Scarcity:** Many families cannot afford commercially produced sanitary pads. Girls often resort to unhygienic alternatives such as rags, leaves, or even mud, leading to discomfort, leakage, and a high risk of reproductive tract infections.
- **Educational Disruption:** The lack of affordable menstrual products and adequate sanitation facilities in schools directly impacts girls' school attendance and performance. The fear of leakage and social stigma often causes them to miss school, leading to poor academic performance and high dropout rates. Studies show that as many as 1 in 10 school-aged girls in Africa miss school during their menstrual cycle.
- **Cultural Stigma and Lack of Knowledge:** Menstruation is often shrouded in secrecy and misinformation due to cultural taboos. Girls lack accurate information about their bodies and how to manage their periods hygienically, leaving them feeling ashamed and isolated.
- **Inadequate School Infrastructure:** Many rural schools lack private, clean, and gender-separated latrines with water and soap, as well as safe disposal mechanisms for used menstrual materials, making it very difficult to manage periods at school.



## School Implementation and Outcomes

The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign has been successfully implemented in four specific schools, bringing tangible change to students and the wider community.



- **Bethsaida Orphans Girls Secondary School, Mpigi Magoe (2023):**

We reached 200 girls and provided education and advocacy on safe menstruation with the slogan, "Menstruation is a treasure and foundation for the health of women and girls; let's empower them." We also engaged

**3 teachers** and distributed **200 pads**. The initiative created a safe space for girls to openly talk about their menstrual health. As a result, teachers were better prepared to support them, and the stigma around menstruation began to fade, helping ensure girls could attend school with dignity and without interruption.

*"Before the campaign, I used to miss classes whenever I had my period because I was afraid of embarrassment. Now, I have pads and the knowledge to take care of myself. I feel confident going to school every day, and I no longer see my period as something to be ashamed of"*





- **Hocet Secondary School, Mkuranga (2025):**

We provided education on sustainable menstrual solutions and vital health information, giving 200 girls the freedom to learn, dream, and thrive without limits. We distributed

**200 pads** and engaged with **50 boys** to promote a more inclusive understanding of menstrual health. We also worked with **4 teachers**. The initiative led to a reduction in school absenteeism related to periods and fostered a more supportive environment.

*“Having pads and learning about menstrual health has given me freedom. I don’t have to stay home anymore, and I can study without fear or worry. I feel stronger knowing that my period cannot stop me from chasing my future”*



- **Kisarawe Secondary School, Kisarawe (2025):**

Our campaign participated in the "Hike for a Girl Child" event, where we provided menstrual health education and donated pads to **200 girls**. We also engaged with **50 boys** to raise awareness and foster a supportive environment, and held a community dialogue with 10 teachers and **5 local leaders**. The discussions helped to challenge the notion that menstruation is just a "girls' issue," leading to increased community support for menstrual health initiatives.

*"Before this program, I thought menstruation was something I had to hide. After the campaign, I feel proud and supported. With pads and open discussions in school, I can attend classes without fear, and I know my community understands me better"*



# Campaign Objectives

**Vision:** To create an environment in rural Tanzania where every girl can manage her menstruation safely, hygienically, and with dignity, enabling her to attend school regularly and achieve her full potential.



## Specific Objectives:

1. **Increase Access to Affordable & Sustainable Menstrual Products:** To provide vulnerable girls with access to sanitary pads (reusable or disposable) to ensure hygienic menstrual management.
2. **Enhance Menstrual Health Education:** To equip adolescent girls, boys, parents, and teachers with accurate knowledge about menstruation, hygiene practices, and reproductive health, thereby dispelling myths and reducing stigma.
3. **Advocate for Improved WASH Facilities:** To encourage and support the establishment of girl-friendly WASH facilities in schools, including private changing rooms, water access, and disposal units.
4. **Promote Community Dialogue:** To foster open conversations about menstruation at home and in schools, ensuring girls receive support from their families and communities.
5. **Reduce School Absenteeism & Dropout Rates:** To significantly decrease the number of school days missed by girls due to menstruation, improving their educational outcomes.



## Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign is a micro-level initiative that directly contributes to achieving the larger objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our work is primarily aligned with the following goals:



- **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being:** By providing menstrual health education to prevent infections and equipping girls with the knowledge and tools to manage their periods hygienically, we directly support this goal.



- **SDG 4: Quality Education:** The campaign tackles a key barrier to education for girls. By providing sanitary products and a supportive school environment, we help reduce absenteeism, enabling girls to stay in school, complete their education, and improve their academic performance.



- **SDG 5: Gender Equality:** Our campaign directly addresses this by challenging the stigma and taboos surrounding menstruation and empowering girls. By promoting open dialogue and involving boys and men, we work to remove one of the many obstacles that perpetuate gender inequality in education and social participation.

## Community and Environmental Outreach

The campaign's implementation went beyond simply distributing sanitary pads, focusing on holistic, hands-on activities that engaged the community and created lasting impacts.

- **Environmental Stewardship & Menstrual Health Initiatives:**

In partnership with "Bata Msituni," we conducted a tree planting initiative and planted flowers. This activity symbolized breaking down the barriers that prevent girls from participating in community-building events during their menstrual cycles. The initiative reached a total of 15 people, including girls from the schools and community members, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for both environmental and menstrual health.



- **"Hike for a Girl Child" - Breaking Stigma:**

This event, in collaboration with The Brighter Binti Foundatin And Raising Teenagers Uganda, reinforced that menstrual health is a community-wide issue. By engaging boys, we fostered a supportive environment and challenged the notion that menstruation is just a "girls' issue". The event reached 70 people from the community, including both genders, creating a more inclusive and supportive network for girls.



# Voices from the Field

These powerful testimonies highlight the direct impact of the campaign on the lives of young girls. The quotes show how the campaign has given them the knowledge and confidence to manage their periods and focus on their education.

## Success Story 1: Education Without Interruption

For Hellen from Berthaida Orphans Secondary school, education has always been her dream. But every month, her period became an obstacle. Without access to proper menstrual products, she often missed school, fell behind in her lessons, and struggled with confidence.

Through the “One Girl, One Pad” campaign, Hellen received not only sanitary pads but also vital education on menstrual health. With the right resources and knowledge, she no longer misses school during her period.

*“My education has always been important to me, but menstruation sometimes made school days harder. With One Girl, One Pad, I now have the knowledge and resources to manage it better. I feel confident, focused, and proud to keep learning.”*



Today, Hellen attends school consistently and approaches her studies with renewed focus and determination. Her story reflects the power of menstrual health support in helping girls stay in school and pursue their dreams without interruption.

## Success Story 2: Breaking the Silence

For many girls, menstruation was once a secret filled with fear and shame. Carina from Kisarawe secondary school, is one of them. She didn't understand her body and avoided talking about her period, even with close friends or teachers. The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign changed that. By creating safe spaces for open discussions, Carina and her classmates learned about menstrual health and hygiene in ways that broke down taboos.



“The program taught me so much about my body and how to stay healthy. I'm not afraid to talk about my period anymore, and I feel supported by my friends and teachers.”



Carina now speaks openly about her experiences and even supports younger girls, showing how knowledge can replace silence with confidence

### Success Story 3: A Return to the Classroom

For Zawadi from Kikaro Secondary school, periods often meant staying home. Without pads, the fear of leaks and embarrassment kept her away from school, forcing her to miss important lessons.

The “One Girl, One Pad” campaign provided her with sanitary pads and the assurance that she could attend school without worry.



*“Before this campaign, I often had to stay home because I was worried about having an accident at school. Now, I have pads, and I feel so much more comfortable. It’s made a huge difference.”*



Zawadi’s attendance has improved significantly, and she now participates in class with enthusiasm, no longer sidelined by her period.

### Success Story 4: Finding Confidence and Belonging

Periods once made Linda from Hocet secondary school, feel isolated and ashamed. With no open conversations about menstrual health, she thought she was facing the challenge alone.

Through classroom discussions and peer learning sessions organized by the “One Girl, One Pad” campaign, Linda discovered that menstruation is normal and nothing to hide.



*“I used to feel isolated and ashamed, but the open discussions in the classroom made me realize that what I’m going through is normal. I’m not afraid of my period anymore.”*



Today, Linda feels more confident and supported. Her voice has grown stronger, and she sees her period not as a limitation but as part of her identity

# Challenges and Recommendations

Despite the success of the campaign, several key challenges were noted that will inform our future strategies:

## ✓ Financial Issues:

The most significant challenge is the lack of adequate and consistent funding. The cost of purchasing sanitary pads, educational materials, and transportation to remote areas often exceeds our available resources, limiting the number of schools and students we can reach.

## ✓ Logistical Difficulties in Remote Areas:

Many of the targeted schools are in remote areas with poor road infrastructure. This makes it difficult and costly to transport materials, and it can also limit the frequency of our visits, hindering our ability to provide long-term, continuous support.



There is a continued need for more comprehensive education on safe menstruation for both girls and their parents. The deep-seated cultural taboos require persistent and repeated engagement to fully overcome.



## Low Male Involvement:

The limited participation of boys and men in the event reinforced the idea that menstruation is a "girls' issue," rather than a community-wide one. This lack of male engagement perpetuates the stigma and limits the full support girls can receive.



## Recommendations for Future Initiatives:

- **Secure More Funding:** We will actively seek additional funding and stakeholders to provide sanitary pads to all girls in need and to cover the operational costs of reaching remote areas.
- **Encourage Partnerships:** We will continue to develop more partnerships between schools and organizations to make menstrual health education a continuous activity.
- **Ensure Inclusivity:** We will make a concerted effort to include men and boys in menstrual health education to foster a community-wide understanding and support system.
- **Implement a Sustainable Model:** Explore and implement sustainable solutions such as training local women to produce reusable sanitary pads, which can reduce long-term costs and create local employment.

# Conclusion

The "One Girl, One Pad" campaign is about restoring dignity, promoting health, and ensuring every girl in rural Tanzania has the opportunity to pursue her education without interruption. The tangible outcomes from our school visits and collaborative events underscore the power of community engagement in breaking down barriers and empowering a generation of girls to realize their full potential.

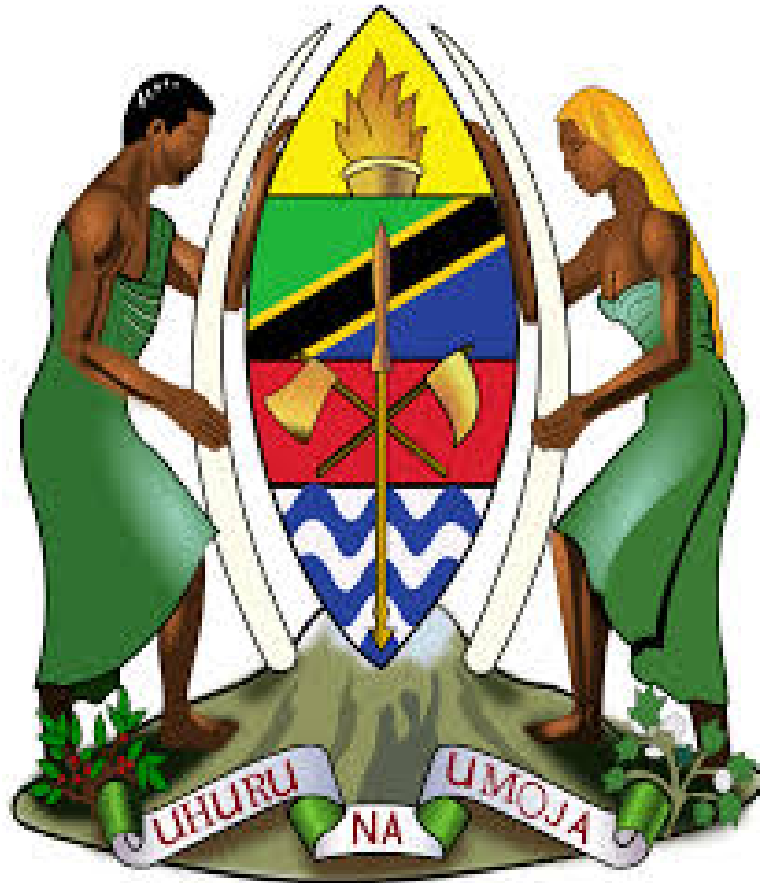
Our experience has shown us that while disposable pads offer immediate relief, they are not a long-term, economically, or environmentally sustainable solution for communities facing persistent poverty. This insight has prompted a strategic evolution of our work, transitioning from a campaign focused on distributing pads to a comprehensive initiative called

"Her Future Project." This new project aims to establish community-driven reusable menstrual product systems, scale up comprehensive health education, and empower communities to drive sustainable menstrual equity, ensuring girls can thrive with dignity and self-sufficiency



# Our Partners

The success of the "One Girl, One Pad" campaign is made possible by the generous support and collaboration of our dedicated partners. We extend our sincere gratitude to:



TUWAVISHE TUWALISHE.  
Pamoja Tunaweza.



the HeartFelt Hands




MORE CARE MORE LOVE



Softcare



# THANK YOU

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