



CASE FOR SUPPORT

SOUTH AFRICA

Period Poverty Project

Project description that gives a brief summary of the project aims

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International Relief & Friendship Foundation
Empowering Communities and Changing Lives

www.irff-uk.org

Introduction

There are 500 million women and girls in period poverty in the world which causes all of them problems for five days every month, with the risk of disease every present according to what method is used to manage their period; schoolgirls, in particular, can easily lose almost 25% of their schooling, which hinders full development of their potential and achieving self-sufficiency.

Apart from the physical difficulties of period poverty there are also many other obstacles to overcome particularly for the young, who are often mis-informed and badly informed about this most natural of biological event, which can also hinder their understanding; fear and shame around menstrual hygiene as a result of stigmatization inhibit mobility and participation in society, which results in social isolation. Unequal access to it will perpetuate existing socio-economic inequalities within society.

The answer is to provide menstruating schoolgirls with safe, hygienic and effective period products but also substantial Menstrual Health Management education so that manage this monthly event without worry or shame and do not lose any schooling.

The Need

IRFF UK has obtained basic funding for such so-called period poverty projects in two countries at the moment (South Africa and Uganda, since Ghana had to shut down mid-2025). This covers the costs of these projects but, looking ahead, it is quite conceivable that the South African project in Port Elizabeth could expand to other schools in 2026. Current costs of £130 per month for this relatively small project could quite easily increase to £230 per month or more during the year.

The Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of this work with young menstruating girls which cares for them and guides them to grow up proud of themselves and careful about what adult relationships they enter into, if any, before the age of 18 for example, are not only the girls themselves but also their parents who see their daughters having more self-determination and defence against the dangers of the society they live in. The education programmes developed for them help these schoolgirls to navigate a safe passage through life.

The presence of hundreds and thousands of girls and young women in society who have learned to respect themselves and who keep themselves clean and tidy at all times of the month, and who are empowered to steer their own destiny and contribute well to their community and nation is a lot better scenario than having hundreds and thousands of girls and young women who lack education, enter into transactional sex to get period products, contract unwanted diseases, easily get pregnant, often leaving them to take care of a child.

The Solution

Financial contributions, even a regular £10 per month, every month by many, is what is needed to support and further develop this vital work. IRFF UK is preparing itself for an increase in demand in the local project and is building up a reserve which will also allow launching a third such project to replace the excellent Ghana lost in mid-2025, which reached 700 girls with reusable pads.

In the meantime, assuming the number of girls to take care of will increase soon from 168 to 300 in 2026 at a cost of £0.75 for two packs of pads per girl every two months, the following costs every two months are foreseen:

Project area	Additional funding needed	Specific impact
Additional purchase of pads	£100 per month	To supply 600 girls with adequate period products and the poorest and youngest with a second (or first) pair of knickers

Your Support

Building on what “The Pads Project” has achieved so far in 2023 to 2025, this work can only expand from 2026 onwards with your help – by increasing the income already available.

The Ask

All support is welcome from £10 per month (ideally for some time) to support the project, right through to a lump sum to help pay for more period products.

What you receive in return

In return you will know that your donations are helping to reduce the spread of even HIV/AIDS and STIs in boys and girls, unwanted pregnancies for girls etc., but, even more so, to improve the lives of many young people in South Africa through economic empowerment and self-determination.

One hundred percent of all donations are sent to the projects. IRFF has other sources of income to cover overheads

IRFF UK will send you regular reports on the impact of your donation; we are also happy to recognise major donors on our website.

Thank you!