

A monthly challenge, a sustainable solution



Organisation: Stichting AFRIpads Foundation

Document: Annual Report 2018

Board:

Sanne Bolkenstein (chair)
CeesPieter Boender (board member)
Laurens Buijs (board member)
Nicoline Evers (board member)
Hans Spaan (board member)
Cerise Kruize (board member)
Carina Bolkenstein (board member)

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AFRIPads Foundation in 2018

The Foundation

The main goal of the Foundation is to raise funds to enable school attendance amongst girls in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi. The Foundation concretizes this goal by buying AFRIPads kits from the AFRIPads Ltd., a local social enterprise based in these three countries. This company provides low-cost, washable sanitary pads for young girls to curb the high rates of menstrual-related absenteeism. The Foundation donates AFRIPads kits to vulnerable girls who can't afford to buy these pads themselves, in remote areas like former war zones and refugee camps. This way, even the most vulnerable girls get the chance to stay in school and fulfil their academic potential.

The AFRIPads Foundation works completely independent from, but in close collaboration with the AFRIPads Ltd. Where the main focus of the Ltd., being a social enterprise, is to become financially independent and self-sufficient, the AFRIPads Foundation is an NGO with the ambition to keep all girls in school, even when they have their period! The Foundation uses almost all of its funds to support girls with AFRIPads kits.

All practical facilities which the Foundation needs are provided by Bert Bolkenstein and Carina Bolkenstein-Bast, free of cost. Bert Bolkenstein enabled both the start of the AFRIPads organisation in Uganda, and the AFRIPads Foundation in the Netherlands. Bert and Carina offer the Foundation:

- Secretarial support;
- Office facilities;
- Administration.

The AFRIPads Foundations' website is built and maintained by Enrique Soemanta. Because Enrique is supporting the AFRIPads Foundation in her work, he charges minimal hours for his work and puts a lot of his time in for free, for which we are very grateful! This way, the Foundation is able to keep her overhead costs at a bare minimum.

The board consisted in 2018 of:

- Sanne Bolkenstein (chair)
- Cees Pieter Boender
- Laurens Buijs
- Nicoline Evers
- Hans Spaan
- Cerise Kruize
- Carina Bolkenstein-Bast



Donations

The AFRIpads Foundation donates AFRIpads kits in projects which are carried out by the AFRIpads organisation in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi. These projects are meant to introduce the AFRIpads product in remote areas. This introduction requires thorough and intensive planning and organisation. A project usually consists of:

- Contacting local organisations to introduce AFRIpads to, mostly schools;
- Giving sexual and feminine hygiene education to groups of girls;
- Demonstrating the use of AFRIpads;
- Donating AFRIpads kits (sanitary pads that last for one year).



Through financing these projects the Foundation realizes three goals:

1. New groups of girls in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi are provided with sanitary pads, enabling them to go to school even when they have their period, and to participate in social activities such as sports;
2. The target group for the use of AFRIpads is enlarged;
3. The Foundation pays for the AFRIpads kits which are distributed through the AFRIpads Ltd. AFRIpads Ltd. has a certain guaranteed revenue this way which contributes to the continuance and growth of the company, providing local employment and economic stimulus.

In 2017, we introduced 2 exciting new things in our donations projects in Uganda: underwear and a booklet called "Girl Talk". We noticed that a lot of girls in remote areas lack underwear, which is necessary to use AFRIpads. That is why we include a pair of underwear in the donation, which is financed by the AFRIpads Ltd. in Uganda. On top of that, we created visual teaching materials to educate girls about menstruation and sexual and reproductive health, including the booklet "Girl Talk", which we also include in donations.

In 2018, we wanted to focus more on data collection to prove the effectiveness of AFRIpads as well as raising attention for this topic on a wider scale. Therefore, we conducted a pilot study together with UNHCR. We will present you the findings of this study as well as highlight 2 donations we carried out in 2018.

Donation to schools around Mityana for International Women's Day

The International Women's Day (IWD) is commemorated on the 8th of March every year in recognition of the contribution and the different roles women play in the development process of Uganda.

In light of the theme for the national celebration of the International Women's Day, a number of activities were highlighted to be implemented during the Women's Week and these are aimed at achieving the national objective of this important day which included:- medical camp, blood donation, AFRIpads distribution, community dialogues as well as exhibitions.

On the 5th of March, there was the distribution of AFRIpads kits which was done in schools around Mityana, the purpose of this activity was to show solidarity with rural school girls and also ensure girls do not leave school as a result of menstrual periods.



Prior to the distribution of the AFRIpads kits , the target girls were sensitized on menstrual hygiene mainly with regards to normality of the menstruation days among females, keeping clean through this period, use of pads and the effects of poor hygiene during this period like infections and also how best these pads can be used to the girls.

Several packets of AFRIpads and knickers were given out to the 500 girls in P6 and P7 from the four selected primary schools which included Butega COU primary School, Demonstration primary school, Nandegejja primary school, and Namyeso primary school.



Donation together with Fields of Dreams in Wakiso, Gulu and Omoro districts

Fields of Dreams Uganda (FoDU) is a local non-profit organization that exists with a mission of providing hope to the orphaned and vulnerable children through the vehicles of soccer and education. To accomplish its mission, FoDU works with partner schools, various communities, volunteers and other stakeholders within the central and northern regions of Uganda particularly in Wakiso, Gulu and Omoro Districts.

FoDU annually joins the rest of the world in celebrating and commemorating the Day of the African Child and the World Menstrual Day. During these two events, the organization recognizes and celebrates the gift of a girl child by providing sanitary pads to marginalized girls identified from poverty stricken households but on many occasions the demand for this service is overwhelming and in order to close this gap, Fields of Dreams Uganda seeks for partners/friends like the AFRIpads Foundation that can donate towards this noble cause.



The beneficiaries were older girls that are in school and currently living in Kiryandongo Refugee Camp and were identified with the help of youth coordinators from the church that is within the camp and attached to Arnold Primary School with an enrolment of 4070 children who are all refugees. The other beneficiaries were out of school girls and women who came to participate in the 2018 Fields of Dreams Dresses for Dreams Race and were identified from various villages within Wakiso Town

Council and they included Banda, Namusera, Kakunyu, Kavumba and this exercise was carried out by Fields of Dreams staff with the help of local leaders.

The Dresses for Dreams Run, Day of African Child and the World Menstruation Day were the key events that were used to mobilize the direct beneficiaries and the AFRIpads kits were distributed after sensitizing the beneficiaries on the product, how to use it and after, their names were read and they were provided with their hygiene kits.

FoDU procured soap, pegs, buckets and hygiene bags in which the sanitary pads were put. FoDU also provided transport to the beneficiaries that enabled them to come to the distribution centres and also provided allowances to the team that was involved during the mobilization and identification exercise of the beneficiaries.

In the first place, the direct beneficiaries appreciated the quality of the AFRIpads and expressed their gratitude to the AFRIpads Foundation for the timely support that was going to help them enjoy the comfort of the products with dignity for a full year without any worries.

It was mentioned by the beneficiaries that they will no longer have to use bad materials as alternatives to provide sanitary pads for themselves and were to interact and move freely with dignity when compared to the past when they would feel shy to move freely before receiving the donation.

One of the beneficiaries in Kiryandongo Refugee Camp said



that "Whenever I experience my periods, I fear to attend classes and also to stand up because sometimes boys laugh at the girls when they get to know that they are experiencing monthly periods but with AFRIpads, I will be very comfortable and I will not fear any more to attend my classes."



MHM pilot studies together with UNHCR

Over the past two years, Uganda has responded to an immense influx of refugees from its neighbouring countries. While new arrivals from South Sudan have slowly reduced, Congolese refugees are crossing the border in large numbers. As a result, Uganda is currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the country's history. It's estimated that there will be 300,000 Congolese refugees in Uganda by the end of 2018 and the vast majority of them are women and children. Globally, girls and women often lack the ability to manage their menstruation safely and with dignity due to a lack of adequate facilities, products and knowledge, which can be further exacerbated in refugee settings. In many cases, Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is overlooked in emergency situations, which has an impact on areas like personal hygiene, education, gender equality and health. Reusable pads in this context have rapidly gained interest from development and humanitarian partners as a more sustainable, cost-effective and environmentally friendly solution for MHM related challenges in emergencies.

In collaboration with the AFRIpads Foundation, UNHCR Sub-office Mbarara implemented a three month pilot intervention in three southwestern settlements to test the appropriateness and acceptability of introducing reusable sanitary pads to schoolgirls in the refugee context. Product

distribution (AFRIpads Menstrual Kit with 4 reusable sanitary pads, underwear, soap and bucket) was accompanied by a menstrual hygiene training as well as instruction for the appropriate use and care of AFRIpads. Data collection for the pilot evaluation was carried out at baseline and endline via individual interviews and focus group discussions.



Results from the baseline study indicated that schoolgirls in the southwestern refugee settlement context lacked access to the menstrual hygiene knowledge and products required for them to manage their menstruation in a healthy and dignified manner. Although UNHCR mandates that all women and girls of reproductive age are to receive distributions of disposable sanitary pads,

soap and underwear, 71% of the girls reported not having enough menstrual products, 65% reported not having enough soap and 59% reported not having enough underwear. 44% percent also reported that they didn't have enough information about menstrual hygiene. Access to water was not, however, reported to be a major challenge with 65% reporting they always had enough water to manage their menstruation (the remaining 35% reported "sometimes") at baseline.

Participants generally reported being satisfied with the facilities available for changing, washing and drying their AFRIpads. The number of girls that reported missing school during their period was cut in half when using AFRIpads and the girls indicated a significant drop in the number of leaks they experienced (59% to 9%) as well as a significant decrease in itching or burning (73% to 24%). During the wet season, when drying times are longer, girls mentioned they need more AFRIpads to manage their cycles. However, respondents generally reported being satisfied with the infrastructure and facilities available to them to wash and change their pads at school.

Prior to the intervention, girls reported that their main challenge was not having enough products and 20% even admitted reusing disposable sanitary pads because they had no other options. Many refugee girls could not remember the last time they had received disposable pads from a general distribution. This underscores the ongoing logistical challenge that UNHCR currently struggles with in sustaining timely replenishments. After the intervention, not having enough products was no longer reported to be a top challenge, implying that the AFRIpads provided in the MHM kits met that challenge for many.

Access to enough soap and underwear remained top challenges even after the intervention, indicating that there is a larger, structural challenge in providing enough supplementary MHM necessities. It is important to note that access to enough soap and underwear is crucial, irrespective

of the solution used (disposable or reusable). Reported access to water, however, went up at endline with 73% reporting they always had enough water to clean their AFRIpads.

Product uptake among the study participants was 99% and respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the AFRIpads. The girls retained the instructions provided during the MHM training and adherence to the use and care guidelines was also close to 100%. Even before AFRIpads were introduced, 52% of the participants indicated a preference for reusable pads over disposables.



At endline, 84% indicated they'd prefer to use AFRIpads over disposable pads (8% preferred a combination of both kinds of products and 8% chose disposable only). Reusable menstrual pads were clearly culturally and socially accepted in this refugee context. Considering the difficulty of continuously distributing disposable pads throughout the settlements and the waste management challenge disposable pads create, AFRIpads reusable sanitary pads are an appropriate, highly preferred and effective solution to managing menstruation in a safe, dignified and culturally acceptable way.



Fundraising activities and PR

Luckily, the AFRIpads Foundation has always been able to rely on the loyalty of her long-term committed donors for the majority of her income, as was also the case in 2018. Apart from that, the AFRIpads Foundation organised or engaged in several fundraising activities. After the success of the previous years, the AFRIpads Foundation participated in 2018 again in the Dam to Dam run with 3 teams.

The Dam to Dam run is an annually organised run in the Netherlands, covering the 10 miles or 16 kilometres between the cities of Amsterdam and Zaandam. It's possible to run several distances and the run is open to



actively involved in ending child marriage in Uganda and helps the AFRIpads Foundation carrying out donations and spreading the word about AFRIpads, has attended the MHM Symposium in Johannesburg, South Africa, in May. Here, she ran our booth and met lots of interesting contacts to help us end the stigma on menstruation and keep girls in school!

companies, individuals and charities. Together, our runners fundraised €5.000,-, an amazing result! We're proud of our runners, both for their athletic and their fundraising achievements (despite the rain)!

Meanwhile, the AFRIpads organisation in Uganda is not sitting still either, as they opened their own factory in December. This generated a lot of attention from press all over the world, and we're proud to partner with them!

Our good friend Hope Nankunda, who is



Special thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to give our special appreciation to some organisations or persons who really helped us grow and reach more girls than ever before in 2018. First of all, thanks again to the [Soroptimistclub De Bilt-Bilthoven](#) for choosing the AFRIpads Foundation once more as their charity this year, and fundraising the amazing sum of €13.468,06,-! You have helped over 2.600 girls, which is incredible!



We would also like to thank the [AVAST Foundation](#) for donating 1.000 kits. This is hopefully the beginning of a long-term partnership!

Special thanks also go to [Vrouwen van Nu](#): ever since our chair Sanne has achieved an award for Differentiator of the Year from them in 2017, many individual members and local divisions of Vrouwen van Nu donated generously to the AFRIpads Foundation.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank some long-term partners: [Lunapads](#) and [Tides Foundation](#), who continue to support us through their one-for-one program. [Alex Gilbert](#) and the [London Humanists](#): you've been with us and supporting us from the beginning onwards! [Roth Family Foundation](#), thank you for your generous contributions and continuous support!

[Arthur Tutein Nolthenius](#), [Jan](#) and [Titia Moulijn](#) and [miss L. Pinta](#), thank you so much for your individual contributions!

Not all contributions come (purely) financially: [Enrique Soemanta](#) from [CoolNerds](#) has been and continues to be of great help for the AFRIpads Foundation's website and IT. [Hope Nankunda](#) has been advocating girls' rights in Uganda for many years, and has helped the AFRIpads Foundation in carrying out donations. Many thanks to you both!



Finally, we would like to thank [you](#), because if you're reading this, you're somehow involved with or supporting the AFRIpads Foundation. We can only do what we do thanks to the loyal support of our donors and raving fans. Together, we can make sure that a period is simply the ending of a sentence, not the end of a girl's education! Thank you!!!

Financial report AFRIpads Foundation 2018

Euro account:

Income:		Expenses:	
Donations < € 100	€556,-	11.000 kits Uganda	€55.000,-
Donations € 100 - € 1.000	€ 3.627,-	3.000 kits Malawi	€15.000,-
Donations > € 1.000	€16.000,-	Costs Dam to Dam run	€1.893,-
Donations via Geef.nl	€ 1.520,-	Printing/design/stamps	€1.038,-
Donations via Mollie*	€ 6.130,-	Farewell/wedding present	€685,-
Donations via Adyen	€100,-	Symposium	€250,-
Donations Dam to Dam run	€5.935,-	Donation costs Malawi	€1.545,-
Kits sold	€25,-	Costs PayPal/bank	€364,-
Donations from Paypal	€4.103,-	Video	€440,-
		Partin/Strato/ANBI membership	€135,-
		Donation costs RTU	€615,-
TOTAL IN	€37.996,-	TOTAL OUT	€76.955,-

USD account:

Income:		Expenses:	
Donations	\$ 39.326,-	1.000 kits Malawi	\$ 5.000,-
		Donation costs Malawi	\$1.514,-
		Bank charges	\$66,-
Total IN	\$ 39.326,-	Total OUT	\$6.580,-

Balance sheet per December 31 2018

Assets in euro	Liabilities in euro
ABN AMRO € 13.512,-	Own capital € 17.021,-
Lanschot € 885,-	
Paypal € 2.624,-	
Total € 17.021,-	Total € 17.021,-
Assets in dollar	Liabilities in dollar
Paypal \$200,-	Own capital \$33.051,-
ABN AMRO \$32.851,-	
Total \$33.051,-	Total \$33.051,-

*This account has been replaced by Geef.nl. This amount has been donated in 2017 but Mollie transferred it in 2018 into the APF account.

De result of the fundraising by Soroptimistclub De Bilt-Bilthoven 2018 will be shown in the numbers of 2019. The result of their fundraising during 2017 are partly shown in these numbers: € 4.500 directly to us but €15.000 via Wilde Ganzen who payed for the purchase of 3.000 kits. These are not shown in these numbers.

