

A monthly challenge, a sustainable solution



Organisation: Stichting AFRIpads Foundation
Document: Annual Report 2022

Board:

Sanne Bolkenstein (chair)
Nicoline Evers (board member)
Hans Spaan (board member)
Sølvi Hart (board member)
Willeke Westra (board member)
Carina Bolkenstein-Bast (board member)
Helen Walker (board member)
Lucas Gmelig (board member)

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AFRIPads Foundation in 2022

The Foundation

The main goal of the Foundation is to raise funds to increase school attendance amongst girls in Uganda and Kenya. The Foundation concretizes this goal by buying AFRIPads kits from the AFRIPads Ltd., a social enterprise based in these 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 independently 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.

Changes in the board

Helen Walker unfortunately had to leave the board in 2022 due to personal circumstances. We would like to thank her for her contributions to the AFRIPads Foundation, it was short but sweet! We wish you all the best in your future endeavours. We are happy to announce that we welcomed a new board member in 2022: **Lucas Gmelig**, who brings a lot of relevant experience working in the NGO sector, and brings some much-needed gender balance to the team! We're so happy to have you on board!

COVID recovery

Primary schools have been closed for 2 full years in Uganda during COVID, leaving children uneducated on the streets. This has had an enormous impact on school attendance and poverty increase, especially amongst girls. Luckily, schools have been open in all of 2022, so we can start to repair some of the damage. Now, more than ever, is the AFRIPads Foundation needed to help girls get back to and stay in school!

Employee Fund

The Employee Fund is a fund employees of the AFRIpads Ltd. can apply to for help with extraordinary medical costs, which are not covered by the healthcare insurance, particularly when it comes to mental health. As the AFRIpads Foundation, we realise that the AFRIpads Ltd. employees are critical in reaching our mission, and we feel we need to step in when necessary. This is why we donated to the Employee Fund.

Foundation management

All practical facilities 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.

2022 marked the launch of our new website, designed and built by **Abovo Media**. We are very happy with the result and would like to thank Abovo Media for their great partnership!

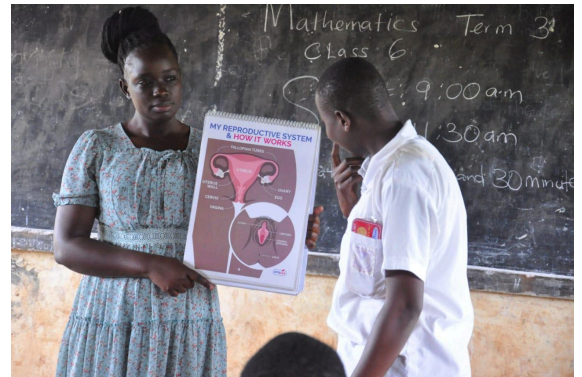
The board consisted in 2022 of:

- Sanne Bolkenstein (chair)
- Nicoline Evers
- Hans Spaan
- Carina Bolkenstein-Bast
- Sølvi Hart
- Willeke Westra
- Lucas Gmelig (joined in October)
- Helen Walker (left in August)

Donations

The AFRIpads Foundation donates AFRIpads kits to projects which are carried out by the AFRIpads Ltd. in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. 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 menstrual and feminine hygiene education to groups of girls;
- Demonstrating the use of AFRIpads;
- Donating AFRIpads kits (sanitary pads that last for one year), including underwear and the informational booklet 'Girl Talk'.



Through financing these projects the Foundation realises three goals:

1. New groups of girls in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania 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 2022, the AFRIpads Foundation carried out 57 donations. We will share 3 of them below.

Donation with Girls to Lead Africa

Girls to Lead Africa (GTLA) is a leadership incubator for girls focusing on girls' leadership participation in students' councils. GTLA believes that nurturing leaders who understand the challenges facing communities and have the skills necessary to engage in policy discussions and leadership processes will help achieve gender equality. This is because



young women are vastly underrepresented in policy making positions at all levels and this disparity leads to policies which perpetuate gender inequities and make it difficult for women to contribute to the development of their communities. GTLA's mission is to disrupt this

status quo by training and mentoring girls to get positions of leadership right from school. Once the girls join students' councils, they are able to advocate for girl-friendly policies, stand up for themselves and for their peers.

Girls to Lead Africa, together with the AFRIpads Foundation, organised training and sensitization of school girls on menstrual hygiene management under her Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights program. This took place in all primary and secondary schools in the sub counties of Bugongi and Kayonza in Kanungu District.



Training in each school involved sensitization on menstrual hygiene and management, demonstrations on the usage of AFRIpads, as well as distribution of a menstrual kit



consisting of a 5 pieces pack (School girl Kit) of AFRIpads, cotton knickers, the Girl Talk booklet as well as soap to every girl. A Question and Answer Session summed up every training session before embarking on the distribution of menstrual kits.

The main objective of the activity is to tackle and end period poverty which remains a big challenge to school going girls in the rural areas of the district, and highly contribute to school dropout. Sessions in every school had the attendance of girls and their teachers since they were informed a week prior to the training day, so they were eagerly waiting for the training and distribution of the menstrual kits.



Girls to Lead Africa always puts emphasis on male teachers in addition to traditional senior woman teachers because most male teachers are fathers to girls and we want to interest them and mentor them in how to help their daughters when they menstruate. Secondly, involving male teachers will aid in breaking the stigma around menstruation and will increase girls' confidence to interact with male teachers even when they are menstruating.

We distributed AFRIpads to the following schools in Bugongi sub county:

1. Ihembe Primary School (54 girls)
2. Bugongi Primary school (47 girls)
3. Bugongi Progressive Primary School (40 girls)
4. Bright Star Primary school (68 girls)
5. Bitabo Primary School (29 girls)
6. Bishop Callyst High School (43 girls).

We distributed AFRIpads to the following schools in Kayonza sub county:

7. Karangara Primary School (31 girls)
8. Bujengwe Primary School (162 girls)

9. Katembe Primary School (53 girls)
10. Nyamirama Twimukye Primary school (40 girls)
11. Rutendere Primary School (22 girls)
12. Nyamiyaga Secondary School (148 girls).

The total number of beneficiaries is 737.

Girls showed up in big numbers in all the three training areas, paid much attention to every detail during the training, and exhibited a high level of interest from the beginning to the end.

The training and distribution sessions were a success. The trainers perfectly explained the concept of menstrual hygiene and management which kept the trainees interested and actively participating throughout the training.

Donation with Women's Hub Uganda



Women's Hub Uganda is a women-led NGO working in underserved communities to push quality education for girls while advocating for the end of child marriage and stopping teenage pregnancy as they inspire girls to make informed choices so that they realize their dreams through

attaining an education. The AFRIpads Foundation decided to partner with Women's Hub Uganda for visibility because menstrual poverty was one of the issues they wanted to address in 6 selected schools.

The girls were so overwhelmed in joy that they are now going to have better red days. The knickers excited them and they promised to keep them clean. Teachers and district officials appreciated the donation and are calling on for coverage of more



schools in the district as they exclaimed it was the first project of its kind.



Donation with Vision of Hope



We gave out pads to the children of Vision of Hope, who run a centre for vulnerable children in Mukoni district, and 4 other sister projects and 5 schools. The beneficiaries were children and young mothers whose condition really talked about what they were going through, some had experienced stigma during menstruation, these were selected by centre guides and school teachers.

The kits were donated for 3 reasons:

- To stop menstrual stigma to young mothers and girls in their community and to girls under the children's centre;
- To make girls overcome menstrual barriers;
- To provide safe menstrual periods to girls and young mothers.

We distributed the pads in groups of different age groups in schools and organisations. We carried out counselling and guidance as well to all who received the pads, we encouraged personal hygiene, HIV/aids



prevention and we empowered girls and young mother to keep the ball rolling. Most of them did not like being girls due to menstrual challenges and others were discouraged by their families and community as they told them they look, speak like men and others. Also we took them through training on how to use the reusable sanitary pads.

The beneficiaries were so grateful for the

pads donation, some of them shared their experiences with menstruation and others their worst experiences, they shared the challenges they face. One of the stories that touched us was that one girl went into her period while in class during lessons. She had no idea of how she could get through this, she went out with blood leaking and used papers to pad herself. Boys saw her and started nicknaming her. With counselling from the senior woman she gained the courage to move on with life.



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 as many girls as possible in 2022. First of all, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank some long-term



partners: **Period Aisle** and **Tides Foundation**, who continue to support us through their one-for-one program. **Alex Gilbert**, **Macquarie Green Investment Group**, **Transport for London** and the **Central London Humanists**: your long-standing support has brought so many smiles on so many faces already, we're so thankful for your partnership!

A special thanks to **Nadine Mottu** and **Celine Denizot** from the **Education and Health department of Vistra**. Thank you so much for your generous and continuous donations, they have been a tremendous help for us, and thousands of girls, since 2015.

We have some large donors who wish to stay anonymous, so we won't name them, but please know we are very grateful for your generous contributions! Not all contributions come (purely) financially: **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!



Many thanks also to **Lowri Davies**, who is our contact person at AFRIPads Ltd. Thank you for your hard work!

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 2022

Euro account:

Income:		Expenses:	
Donations	€104.250,53	18.500 AFRIpads kits	€138.752,35
		Paypal	€177,-
		Organisational costs	€1.144,66
		Banking costs	€121,26
		Administration	€341,03
		Website	€1.900,38
		- Donor visits	€1.309,77
TOTAL IN	€104.250,53	TOTAL OUT	€143.569,60

USD account:

Income:		Expenses:	
Donations	\$60.000,-	10.200 kits	\$76.551,-
		Bank charges	\$26,17
Total IN	\$60.000,-	Total OUT	\$76.577,17

Outlook 2023

We're excited to continue our work in 2023, as we can help Uganda recover after COVID. There will be some organisational changes in the AFRIpads Ltd. in Uganda, as Sophia Klumpp and Paul Grinvalds, the founders of AFRIpads, decided to step down after 15 years.

We are looking forward to working together with the new leadership in Uganda!

