

Pigers Mentale og Fysiske Sundhed



Dansk Børnefond har støttet med 7.000 US \$

I Sierra Leone er menstruation stadig et tabu, der tvinger piger til at blive væk fra skole hver måned. Det skyldes både det sociale tabu, men også fordi mange ikke har råd til ordentlige hygiejne produkter.

Projektet har uddelt genbrugelige menstruationskits til skolepiger i Sierra Leone. Sammen med menstruationskits, har pigerne modtaget undervisning i menstruel hygiejne. Pigerne er nu mere informerede om deres egen krops udvikling gennem puberteten og de ved, at menstruation er en normal ting.



Udtalelse fra partner om vigtig ting lært fra projektet:

“The shocking lesson we learned about period poverty, If you give a girl a menstrual kit. She will split her kit with her mom, sister, or aunt. Last year, we gained new insight into what happens in communities where we distributed menstrual kits provided by DCF and teach sex and reproductive health education. Girls stop missing school when they have the tools and knowledge to manage their periods, but if a girl is the only one at home with a kit, the kit is shared.

A new holistic approach, we have decided to expand our reach beyond the schools to the families and communities we serve. We will give two kits to every student household. Our reproductive health education training will engage mothers, sisters, and aunts, many of whom also often lack knowledge about menstruation.”



SPECIAL PROJECT REPORT



Name of project: Girls' Mental and Physical Health

Location: Masanga Community, Northern Province Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District and in the Southern Province Bo District Sierra Leone West Africa:

1. Masanga S.D.A Primary School
2. Bo S.D.A Primary School
3. Kandor BDEC School
4. Bathurst
5. Buma Ansarul Primary School
6. Bendu R.C Primary School

NUMBER OF KITS RECEIVED FROM DCF=687

NUMBER OF PUPILS- GIRLS=1,346

NUMBER OF KITS DISTRIBUTED 687

RETENTION=GOOD

Project description and progress:

In Sierra Leone, many adolescent girls miss a few days of school every month when they have their period because they cannot afford quality sanitary products. This means they can miss up to 20% of their school year with heavy consequences on their educational outcomes. In order to support girls' retention in school, Danish Children Fund and its partners fund the SRHE Lessons and distribution of re-useable hygiene kits to six schools in the north and south of Sierra Leone.

Progress: The project was launched – procurement of the menstrual kits was done and girls received a DFG washable pad kit, providing the comfort they need to manage their menstruation and continue to attend school without shame or fear. In addition, girls received the DFG menstrual health education lessons so they know puberty and menstruation is a normal part of life. We are all aware of the negative effect low levels of sanitation practice, hygiene facilities, and education around menstruation have on the attendance of girls in these schools. These lessons have helped many pupils in dealing with personal and environmental problems.

Topic taught:

- 1: Puberty
- 2: Menstruation
- 3: Hygiene
- 4: Self-defense

POSITIVE IMPACT

1. The sexual reproductive health education lessons have created a lot of positive changes in the girls' lives; the awareness of health-related issues, and how they can help improve on their well-being and that of their environment.

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2. The SRHE lessons have helped them (girls) to have the basic knowledge about the journey of puberty what happened to their bodies and how to cope with those changes when they go through this amazing journey called puberty.
3. Girls were made to understand that menstruation is normal vaginal bleeding that occurs as a part of a women's monthly cycle. Every month women's body prepares for pregnancy. Menstruation makes women powerful and only women have the ability to reproduce. Menstruation makes the continuity of the world. Menstruation is never a sickness to any female that limits girls- individuals to achieve their dreams should not limit girls not to go to school and they should take good care of themselves when they are in their menstrual period and also change and washing of their pads frequently.
4. Pupils were made to understand when it is really important to wash their hands and that washing hands with soap and water can save lives.
5. Girls were taught self-defense, and self-protection on any attack from the opposite sex. where they should fight their attacker(s) they can shout, use their knees, elbows back of the arms to hit the attacker in the genital, stomach, throat, eyes, etc.

We went for the sexual reproductive health education on 10th May 2023 and returned on 17th May 2023.

NAME OF SCHOOL TARGETED

NO	SCHOOL	TOWN	GIRLS SRHE Lessons	KITS DISTURBED
1.	S.D.A	MASANGA	301	126
2.	S.D.A	BO	640	348
3.	B.D.E.C	KANDOR	52	28
4.	B.D.E.C	BATHURST	283	150
5.	ANSARUL ISLAMIC PRIMARY	BUMA	42	21
6.	ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY	BENDU	28	14
			TOTAL GIRLS=1346	TOTAL KITS= 687

All the pupils were glad for the financial and social support rendered to make their life meaningful. Most shared that, it is their first time experiencing a washable kit with so much dignity. They are hoping that this opportunity continues. They also promise to take good care of the sanitary kits so they can last long in their hands.

Story/quote from pupil

A girl in S.D.A Primary school explained that she has been using old abandoned cloth whenever she sees her period, within herself she knew it wasn't good but had no means to buy the sanitary pad. Having this opportunity is the best you have done in their lives. It has saved them from several problems and also help them to educate others about the importance of menstruation, care of the sanitary pads, their environment, and their bodies. She further stated that she wishes this opportunity to continue. So that girls who are suffering in silence will be reached.

Did you encounter particular problems with the project? We do not encounter any major problems as such, but the devaluation of the leones poses some challenges, and the tight schedule we had for the National Election a misted threat of violence and conflict almost interfered with our reporting time.

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However, the tense atmosphere preceding the elections is gradually getting back to normal, and thank God for that. Notwithstanding, the enthusiastic response we have received so far from the communities that we work with has been overwhelming, and the demand for the kits is immense.

We observe the boys and girls who do not have the kits hanging their mouths watching. In the future, we would want to request the education of both boys and girls to help address sexual and gender-based violence (specifically teenaged pregnancy) and school dropouts – promoting a gender–equal Sierra Leone.

Who will benefit from the project and how will the local community benefit? Direct and indirect beneficiaries are the 1,346 girls who received both the kits and menstrual education, providing them the comfort they need to manage their menstruation and continue attending school without shame or fear and the education so they know puberty and menstruation are part of life.

This project will empower the girls to discover their potential and self-value so that they can thrive, grow, contribute to the betterment of their communities, and have more dignity, health, and economic opportunities in all of the targeted school communities. **THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!!**