



UMMY DRAYTON SC



15 years OF AFRIpads



2025

IMPACT REPORT

Women and Girls Redefining Menstrual Health

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KEY DEFINITIONS

Menstruation: Menstruation, or a period, is the normal, monthly shedding of the uterine lining (*endometrium*) in females, resulting in vaginal bleeding.

Menstrual Health and Hygiene: Menstrual health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in relation to the menstrual cycle.

Pilot Study: A small-scale market research project to test effectiveness before investing more time and money into a large-scale project.

Customers: Individuals or organisations that purchase reusable menstrualpads or underwear from AFRipads.

Users: Women and girls who experience menstruation. They are the direct users of menstrual reusable pads and underwear.

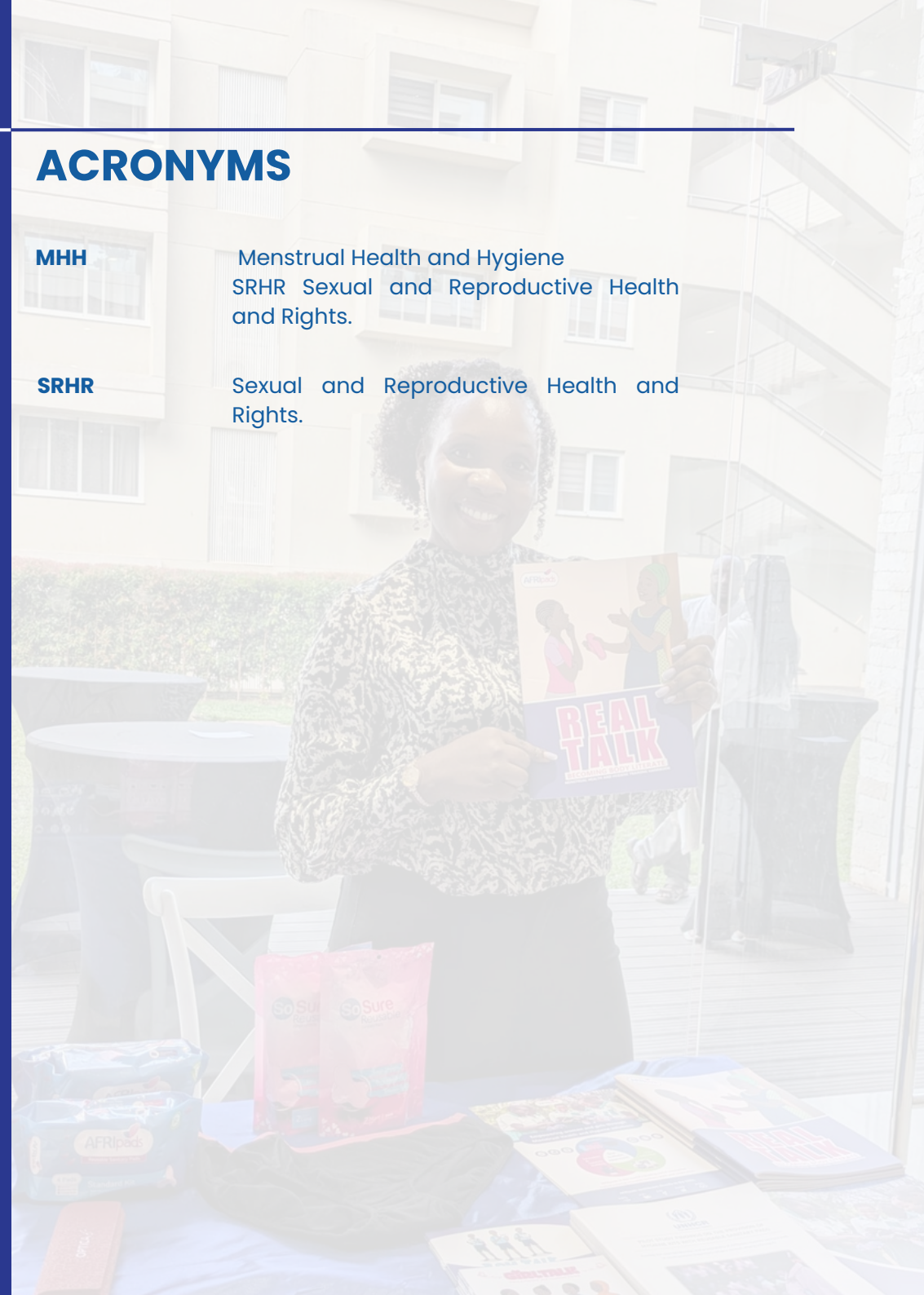
Partners: Stakeholders who have a direct partnership with AFRipads, formalised through a memorandum of understanding or agreement.

Market-Based Approach: This is a public-private partnership approach where access is achieved by making menstrual products part of a functioning market – not just a one-time distribution.

ACRONYMS

MHH Menstrual Health and Hygiene
SRHR Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

SRHR Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.



CEO's Message

Having worked with AFRipads for the past three years in a different role, it is a privilege to now serve as CEO following the leadership transition from Joris Boon. The transition has been steady, grounded in a strong and experienced team that continues to drive our work forward. I step into this role with deep confidence in our people, our purpose, and our path ahead.

Over the past year, we have also navigated significant shifts in the global development and humanitarian funding landscape. As funding models evolve, there is a growing emphasis on market-based and locally rooted solutions. This is a shift we welcome. We firmly believe that increasing affordable access to high-quality reusable menstrual products is essential to achieving sustainable and lasting improvements in menstrual health outcomes. Expanding our reach across more African countries through commercial partnerships, social enterprise models, and foundation-supported donations allows us to strengthen both impact and resilience.

In 2025, AFRipads marked 15 years of impact, reaching more than 500,000 women and girls across Africa in a single year and more than 7 million across its lifespan. What began as a small social enterprise in a garage in Uganda has grown into a leading African manufacturer of reusable menstrual products. This journey reflects the vision of our founders and the many leaders and team members who have shaped AFRipads along the way.

Across our programmes, we continue to see the power of combining products with education and community engagement. In Uganda, teacher-led menstrual health education, alongside reusable products, demonstrated how period-friendly schools can reduce absenteeism and build confidence among students. In Kenya, girls shared how period pain and lack of adequate products affect their daily lives, reinforcing the importance of both education and product access. In Nakivale refugee settlement, women's circles created safe spaces for open conversation, an important step toward dignity and informed choice.

Advocacy and storytelling remain central to our work. Screenings of the Impure film have brought diverse audiences together to confront stigma and deepen understanding of the realities of menstrual health. Through the AFRipads Foundation, we launched the Pad Bank project in Uganda and South Sudan and extended donations to 57 organisations across Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, South Sudan, Malawi, and Zimbabwe.

As we look toward 2026, AFRipads remains dedicated to its social enterprise model: evidence-driven, listening to the girls and women who use our products, and increasingly market-facing. We are proud to contribute to a growing movement that recognises menstrual health not only as a development issue, but as an economic and public health priority.

To our customers, partners, supporters, and the resilient women and girls at the heart of this work: thank you. We are energised for the journey toward reaching the 8 million women and girls milestone next year.

With gratitude and optimism,
Michelle Tjeenk Willink
 CEO, AFRipads

“We are **proud** to contribute to a growing movement that recognises **menstrual health** not only as a development issue, but as an **economic and public health priority**”



AFRipads' Holistic Approach

AFRipads offers a holistic **Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH)** approach that goes beyond providing products. It combines the manufacture of reusable sanitary pads with educational, social, and data-driven actions. At 16 years of AFRipads, we know that menstrual health goes beyond products to include education and evidence. Here is how we do it:

Products

Reusable Menstrual Kits

Our reusable menstrual kits are **cost-effective, waste-reducing, quality-certified**, and provide **reliable protection for 2+ years**. Designed with users in mind, the range includes the Standard 6-Pack for full convenience, the Standard 4-Pack for budget-friendly access, and the Schoolgirl Kit developed with school-aged girls to suit their preferences and active lifestyles, helping them manage their periods with confidence.



Products

AFRipads Underwear

AFRipads Underwear features a high-stretch fabric available in five flexible sizes that comfortably accommodate a diverse range of body types. We recognised that standard underwear often fails to meet the specific anatomical needs of women and girls in the regions we serve; therefore, we manufactured a product that prioritises an adaptive fit.

Evidence

The AFRipads Data Collection Toolkit is a practical Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning tool designed for NGO practitioners working in the development or humanitarian context, who want to better understand the menstrual hygiene practices, challenges, and needs of their target group.

Education

Education is key to breaking barriers, addressing taboos, and improving MHH worldwide. This is why we actively support our partners with Use and Care materials, an MHH Education Curriculum, and Capacity Building services.



A happy moment for the sales team



Our outgoing CEO Joris Boon, celebrating his tenure in the 15 years of AFRIpads journey



The AFRIpads team



Fun time by the Senior Management Team



A happy moment for the production team



Gifts and a shoutout to our long-serving factory staff



| AFRIpads@15



Okia Abdu, sharing a moment with the outgoing CEO, Joris Boon

Redefining What Works: Pilot Study Learnings

Reusable Pads vs. Menstrual Cups: What We are Learning

In Nakivale Refugee Settlement, AFRipads is collaborating with UNIDOS Social Innovation Centre to support women's circles. The ongoing study comparing reusable pads and menstrual cups seeks to assess menstrual health challenges and determine which product is most appropriate in the refugee setting. While preliminary findings confirm inadequate access to menstrual products, one of the most significant wins has been the impact of women's circles in spearheading menstrual health conversations.

Participants reported feeling more confident and comfortable discussing menstrual health openly within their communities. A parallel study focused on menstrual cups is also underway, and the combined findings will enable a comparative analysis to better understand which product is most suitable for the community context.



“Through the women’s circles, respondents felt **empowered** and more **comfortable** talking about **menstrual health** with others.”

Redefining What Works: Pilot Study Learnings

Building Period Friendly Schools in Bundibugyo and Kabarole Districts, Uganda

Through a strategic partnership with SIMAVI, we successfully piloted a menstrual health intervention for 50 girls in the Kabarole and Bunyangabu districts. By combining AFRipads distribution with teacher-led education and menstrual health education, the program transformed the school experience for participants.

Key outcomes included a shift toward universal adoption of reusable products, enhanced hygiene practices, and a significant boost in school attendance. With a period enabling environment and reduced stigma, girls in Muganga and Kyamatanga Primary Schools can now manage their periods with the dignity they deserve.



“Reusable pads, teacher training, and menstrual health education together create a period-friendly school.”

IMPACT REPORT 2025

IMPACT in numbers

GLOBAL REACH in 2025

586,119



Total **girls and women** reached with reusable menstrual pads directly **across Africa**

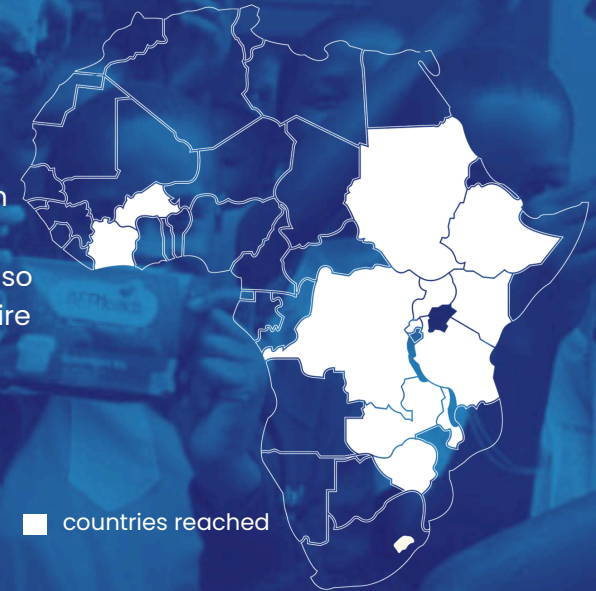


275,000

Total **girls and women** that received AFRipads underwear

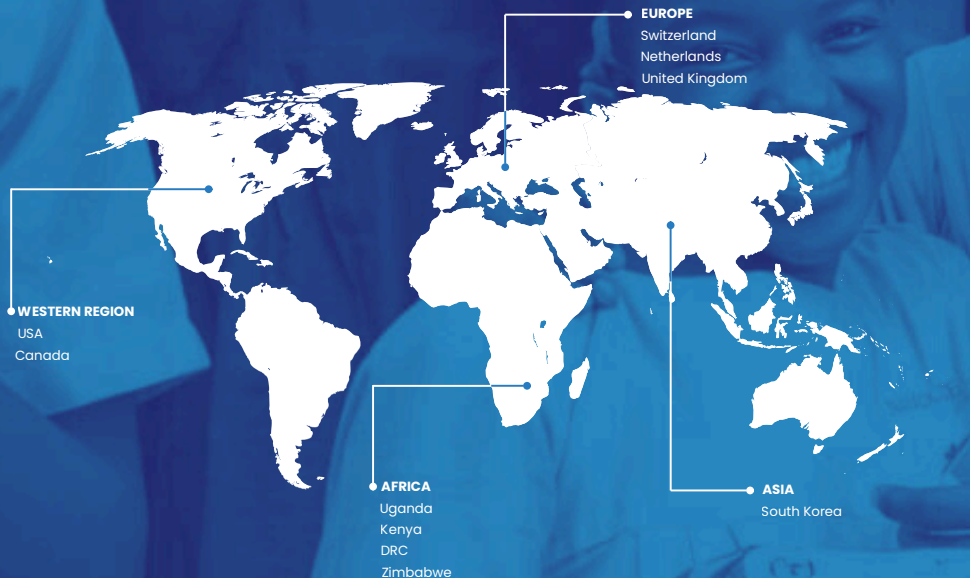
15 countries reached with **reusable pads**

- DR Congo
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Malawi
- South Sudan
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe
- Rwanda
- Cameroon
- Sudan
- Burkina Faso
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Lesotho



10
countries reached

IN RESEARCH, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, INTERNSHIPS, AND LEARNING EVENTS



WASTE AVERSION

By using reusable pads, we have stopped over

703,343 kgs

of waste from polluting our environment in 2025

TRAININGS

20



Direct AFRipads trainings conducted through **in-person and virtual platforms**

2927



Participants trained directly by AFRipads in 2025

2535

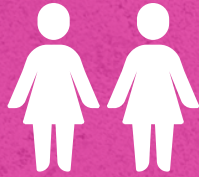


Females trained

392



Males trained



7.5 million
women and girls reached
30+ million
reusable pads made

Thousands of opportunities created for increased income, school attendance, self esteem, agency, and menstrual health awareness since we launched in 2010.



Pads when you need them

TRAINING COLLAGE



Anne Zeldenrust speaking on **pad banks and menstruation**



Menstrual Health Training of Trainers for the **HEROES Project** in Mayuge District.



Equipping peers with knowledge on the **use and care** of reusable menstrual pads



A **menstrual Health Talk** for Peers at the **Reach a Hand Academy**

DONATIONS

Throughout 2025, AFRIPADS Ltd worked in partnership with the **AFRIPADS Foundation** and a committed network of donors to expand access to *menstrual health products and education* across Uganda and neighbouring countries. The 2025 donation programme was supported by **13 unique donors**. These donors included Victrix/Naiad, van Vlissingen Foundation, Stichting EER, Daniela Ryf Foundation, Flying 8 Dutch Rotary Group, Pharos Foundation, GoodFlow, Wieringa Advocaten, Stichting Henriette Fonds, Indra van Demeenter, and Dirk Bos Stichting, Alex Gilbert, and Jan Wiegers.

In total, **41,904 girls and women** were reached with reusable menstrual products and menstrual health education. Donations supported 57 organisations across Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Ghana. The majority of distributions took place across Uganda, including Kampala, Arua, Wakiso, Jinja, Masaka, Bundibugyo, Karamoja, Nebbi, Lyantonde, Bukedea, and Kyaka Refugee Settlement.

The **pad bank concept**, providing emergency pad kits when and where they are needed, was launched in 2025. The full pilot study report on the pad banks will be ready in 2026. The goal is for the main impact to yield longer-term and community-based access to menstrual products.

The AFRIPADS Foundation increased its support with reusable menstrual pads, underwear and resource materials in 2025:

13 Donors

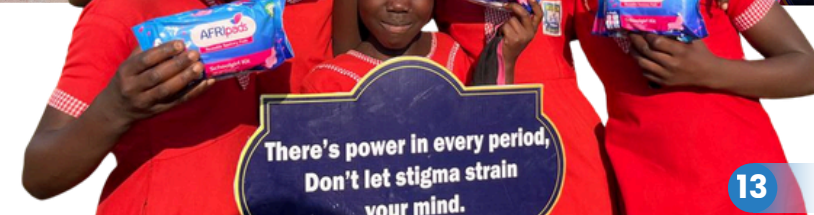
6 Countries

41,904 Menstrual kits distributed

57 Organisations supported

“Pad banks have supported patients who come without anything to manage their menstruation”

Nurse,
Nyaka Global,
Kihhi Health Centre IV



IMPURE Film Screening



The movie tells the story of a Kenyan schoolgirl named June, who faces intense stigma and shame because of her period. For instance, she is called “dirty” by her school teacher, mocked by fellow students after blood stains are seen on her skirt, and suspended from school with instructions to return only “after she cleans herself.”

During the screenings, participants from government, universities, civil society, and the wider public spoke about the longstanding shame present in their communities due to menstrual stigma.

Two screenings of the Impure film took place in Kampala following strong public demand. These were organised through a collaborative effort between the Impure film Director **Rico Herre**, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda, the High Commission of the Republic of Kenya, Makerere University School of Public Health, and AFRIPads.



“This film reminded me of what happened in my High School. I always stained my uniform, my periods were heavy and painful, and my classmates knew about it. I struggled to overcome this, and I am glad this discussion is open to the general public because I know other young girls are struggling as I did,”



shared **Maurine Tukahirwa**,
CEO at Girls Must Uganda





AFRipads partners and stakeholders watching the Impure Film

Corporate Social
Responsibility
Spotlight : KCB



“Kenya Commercial Bank in Uganda Supports Girls to Stay in School, where they belong”



Following reports that surfaced in previous years of girls in the Busoga region resorting to using soil to manage their menstruation, **Kenya Commercial Bank Uganda** partnered with **AFRipads** to launch a targeted intervention in Jinja district. This was conducted through donation drives with menstrual health education at five key institutions: *Jinja Progressive Academy, St. Ursula Special Needs School, Nile Vocational Institute, Mpumudde Seed Secondary School, and St. Mary’s Najja.*



Spotlight
OFI OLAM:



The AFRIPads team travelled to **Kampala, Mbale, and Bushenyi**, where OFI Olam is based, to lead conversations with *223 men and women*. Even during the busy workday, the factory teams remained fully engaged to acquire tools for a healthier lifestyle. Participants learned why and how to check their HIV status, where to access local treatment services, and how to choose the best prevention options for their lives. The teams also received hands-on training on how to use and care for reusable menstrual products.

OFI Olam in building a culture of wellness on the factory floor



“I have saved the cost of buying pads every month because I can use these for at least a year.” A participant

As a global leader in food and beverage ingredients, OFI is committed to building a positive and supportive environment within its facilities. To bring this commitment to life, the *OFI Olam Factory* partnered with *AFRIPads* to host a series of health and wellness sessions for their teams, focusing on two areas: *Menstrual Health Management and HIV prevention and treatment*.

International Collaborations

AFRipads hosted and supported several students and researchers from around the world who are committed to advancing menstrual health and gender equality. The collaborations included supporting researchers in conducting in-depth interviews, exploring the global menstrual health landscape, and facilitating internships.

These engagements involved students from institutions across South Korea, Switzerland, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the USA, including Seoul National University and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

AFRipads, in collaboration with Joy for Children, hosted 30 students participating in the Association of International Schools in Africa Global Issues Service Summit (AISA-GISS), held at the International School of Uganda. These students, representing a diverse range of countries, visited AFRipads to learn firsthand about our social enterprise model and our impact on the ground. As part of their annual Service Day, the group visited the AFRipads head office. This provided an opportunity to demonstrate how our work directly contributes to SDG 3 (*Good Health and Well-being*) and SDG 4 (*Quality Education*). The students concluded their visit by advocating for menstrual health through the creation of a menstrual health bracelet.



The image above shows ISU students taking a break after creating menstrual health bracelets that promote awareness about menstrual health.

Change Stories

The image below shows a boy from New Haven Wattuba, demonstrating how to use the reusable pads.



"Menstrual Health Projects with AFRIpads have encouraged boys and men to step up the fight in ending menstrual shame"

Scope Foundation, Jinja



"Many organisations have distributed reusable pads here before, but the ones we received today stand out; they look high-quality and unique."

Senior Woman Teacher, Tujifunze Africa Foundation



"As a pad bank manager, I have observed that many women struggle in silence, and assumptions often hide their real challenges. **Pad banks** are helping bridge this gap by providing access to emergency pads."

Monious Semyungu, Pad Bank Manager



"Through this project, young girls are gaining the confidence and voice to resist sexual exploitation. Continued support is essential to protect and uplift the most vulnerable in our communities."

Dreams Foundation Uganda



"Getting money to buy pads is not easy for me, but now I am happy because AFRIpads gave us pads to use."

Halima, Blessed To Transform, Korogocho Slums

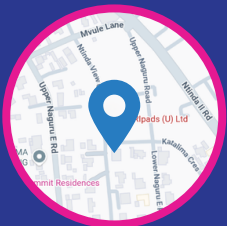
Contact us: info@afripads.com



We are energized to reach **8 million lives** next year

*To our partners,
supporters, and the
resilient women and
girls we serve*

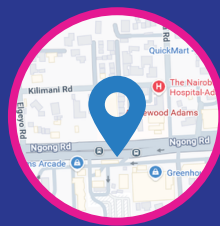
Thank you



UGANDA

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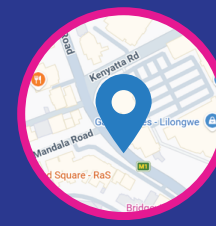
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