

AN INNOVATIVE WAY TO MAKE
CHEAP AND RISK-FREE
SANITARY TOWELS FOR
SCHOOL GOING GIRLS USING
DRIED BANANA FIBRE





PRESENTERS OF THE INNOVATIVE SANITARY WEAR PROJECT

1. PAUL S. NTIKOISA

2. IVY ETEMESI



OBJECTIVES

1. This project aims at providing affordable and safe sanitary wear for needy girls across the country.
2. This project also aims at ensuring that no school going girls miss school because of the menstrual cycle.
3. This project also aims at ensuring that all the misconceptions that people hold on the menstruation cycle and process are cleared.
4. This sanitary wear project also aims at providing a long term solution to this problem faced by our girls.

CLIP



INTRODUCTION

- The female gender is vital to the development and well being of the families, communities and country at large and their schooling shouldn't be hindered due to the natural body functions and processes
- Adolescence is a crucial stage of life and one that is challenging for most girls because of its physical and psychological changes.
- Adolescence is a transition phase in life from childhood to adult hood that everybody is entitled to and they have to enjoy the whole process and not mourn.
- However, for most girls in Kenya and other parts of the continent, this phase often brings challenges that push girls out of school and social activities, making the celebration of adolescence short-lived.

CONTINUATION ON INTRODUCTION

- Today in Kenya menstruation is not only a health concern, but also an educational policy concern.
- This project is there to ensure that all girls enjoy the fact that they are growing and developing into young, healthy and happy ladies.
- It is there to ensure that our girls across the country do not feel bad or regret the fact that they are girls.

JUSTIFICATION FOR OUR PROJECT

- There exists limited knowledge about the biological process of menstruation among the girls and women in many parts of the country, including urban areas, with only a minority able to describe menstrual blood in biological terms.
- Menstruation is treated with silence and as a taboo topic, which limits women's and adolescent girls' access to relevant and important information about their bodies.
- Sanitary supplies are expensive and beyond the means of most households. The cheapest pack of sanitary pads in Kenya costs KSH.65, which is just less than the average daily wage of most unskilled workers by twenty shillings.
- Poor quality materials such as old rags, foam torn from their bed mattress, bits of paper from schoolbooks or from the newspaper, and sometimes even grass, are the substitutes for menstruation facilities used by Kenyan girls. These items irritate the skin thus causing infections and do not prevent leaking which causes embarrassment, and prevents girls from concentrating on their schoolwork.

CONTINUATION

- The fact that the girls have poor concentration and attendance in school leads to very poor performance among the girl child. This is mainly seen in rural areas where even the ratio of attendance of boys to girls is 5:1.
- Girls who are on their menses miss roughly 3 to 5 days of the school per month thus almost seven weeks out of the 36 weeks of school are missed.
- Sometimes the school going girls decide to indulge in child labor by working for people in their farms or houses, or even in mining sites so that they can get money to buy themselves sanitary towels.
- The inaccessibility of menstrual products results in some school going girls engaging in prostitution, child prostitution, so that they can afford the money to buy sanitary towels; this might lead to the girls contracting deadly sexually transmitted diseases, like gonorrhoea or HIV/AIDS or syphilis since the girls are young and have little knowledge about sex.
- Finally, our project also seeks to provide a long time solution to this problem which mostly gets short term solutions from media campaigns and corporate and government funding.

WHY CHOOSE BANANA FIBER FOR THE PROJECT

- Banana fibre is readily available across the country. Most of the banana trunk is always disposed off after they have produced banana which is a big waste.
- Banana fibre is soft and tender and once made properly, it can be used for a lot of purposes including making affordable sanitary wear.
- Banana fibre is also healthy and doesn't have any health problems like causing of rash on the skin or causing the skin to itch.
- Banana fibre is very absorbent, which is a key issue in the preparing of any sanitary wear, thus a major factor which we considered in preparing our sanitary wear.
- Also banana fibre is very light even in large amounts, thus heavy flowers will still be comfortable while using our new sanitary wear.

OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. Dried banana fibre
2. Soft absorbent material for upper cover
3. Liquid proof nylon material for lower cover
4. Disinfectant
5. Ruler and pencil for measurement
6. Pair of scissors
7. Celotape
8. Needle and thread for stitching



MAKING THE FIBER SANITARY WEAR

1. The first step is to ensure you have a banana tree trunk which has just been cut. This is to ensure you have a fresh, soft and clean trunk which is easy to work with.



2. After you have the fresh trunk, carefully strip the cover in order to remain with the fleshy inner part which is our main material. Crush the fleshy stem of the trunk both to make it easy for drying and mobility.



3. Dry the fibre under the sun for up to a maximum of six hours.

The images below show fibre drying up in sun.



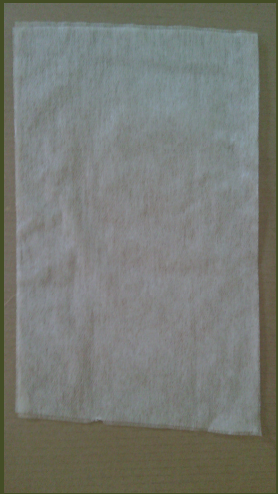
The images below show dried and cleaned up fibre ready to be disinfected by spraying with a disinfectant of your choice. In our case, Dettol was used.



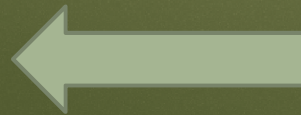
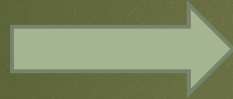
4. Arrange the clean dry and disinfected fibre in strips . This helps since it makes it easier to measure and cut the fibre to the proportions required.



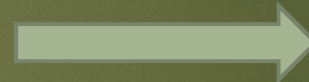
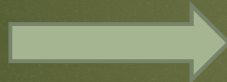
5. Get the soft absorbent material and fix the first stitches which will help to hold the fibre in position. Turn the stitched material inside out then carefully put the arranged fibre in it. Carefully place the material back and stitch it from top to bottom then finally stitch the other open end to ensure that all the fibre is well put inside.



6. Measure the nylon liquid proof material and cut it out carefully. Then place the covered fibre on it and carefully stitch the covered fibre on the nylon that has already been measured and cut.

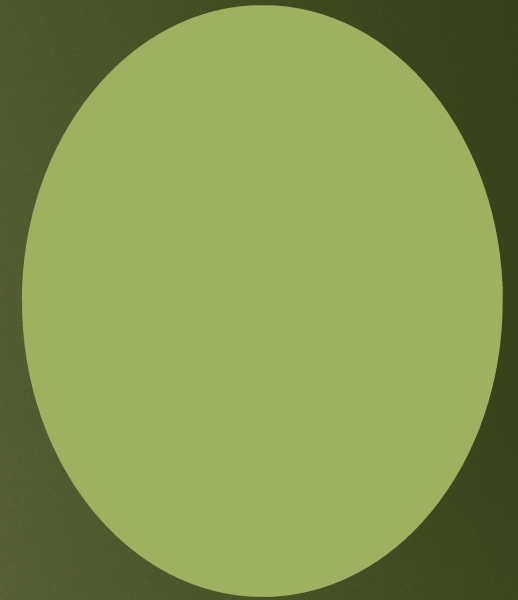


7. Finally put the seal that will help the sanitary wear hold itself firmly on the undergarment of the lady. In our project, celotape was used as it proved to be more efficient.



COST OF OUR SANITARY WEAR

- Since we are looking at providing cheaper sanitary pads for our girls, we broke down the costs as follows
 - ❑ Upper cover per piece : sh.2
 - ❑ Lower cover per piece : sh.8
 - ❑ One sanitary pad : sh. 7
 - ❑ One pack of eight sanitary pads: sh.50
- The other pads sold in outlets go for Sh.10 /sh.15 per piece
Sh. 65-sh.75 per pack with 7 pads in it



COMPARISON

Looking at our fibre pad and the other pads sold in shops, you will notice that our fibre pads look more comfortable and up to standard and our girls will feel great using them since there is no obviousness of the fibre in it and it is more soft as compared to the other manufactured sanitary wear.



PARTING SHOT



BY PROVIDING GIRLS WITH THE ABILITY TO
MANAGE THEIR OWN BODIES AT A CHEAPER
AND AFFORDABLE COST, WE ARE UNLEASHING
A GENERATION OF STRONG, CONFIDENT AND
HEALTHY WOMEN.

