



ODFL Project Details

Girls' Equality Project

PROJECT NAME:

The Girls' Equality Project

PROJECT SUMMARY:

ODFL's Girls' Equality Project provides girls and young women in the developing world a solution for managing their monthly menstrual cycle, thereby enabling them to attend school full time. In many countries, once a girl begins menstruating, she misses a week of school every month because she has no way to deal with her period. She will stay at home and fall further and further behind in school. Eventually, she will drop out entirely. As a result, she will, for the rest of her life, have less education than boys of the same age. She will be permanently disadvantaged in the quest for social equality. This need not be.



The goal for this campaign is to provide 10,000 kits to girls in Nepal, South Africa, Zambia, Kenya, and Malawi. The cost ranges from \$5 to \$16 per kit, depending on the local vendor and markets. This includes education for the girls in managing their health and bodies as they enter this new stage of life. The total cost of the campaign is \$70,000.

PROJECT PARTNERS:

One Dollar For Life helps American donors build classrooms, medical clinics, and other small-scale infrastructure projects in the developing world from donations as small as one dollar. Since its founding in 2007, ODFL has completed 104 such projects in ten countries in Asia, Central America, and Africa. ODFL is an IRS registered 501(c)3 non-profit. ODFL has raised funds from private foundations to cover back office expenses—phones; web site; literature, etc. As a result, *every dollar donated* by an individual or group goes to the GEP project.



Our partners are different in each country. Each, however, is intimately involved in supporting education and providing health services for girls. In Kenya, we have worked for years with Kiini Sustainable Initiative. In Nepal, we work with Little Sisters' Fund, which carries out work in more than 100 schools. In Zambia, we work with Raise a Smile. In South

Africa, with CUDDLE Trust which is doing work in townships around Johannesburg and Cape Town. Other partners are listed below.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

One Dollar For Life

Sponsoring Executive:

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Nepal: Little Sisters Fund

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South Africa: CUDDLE Trust

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Malawi: Kasimu Education Fund

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Zambia: Raise a Smile

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Nicaragua: Seeds of Learning

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PROJECT DATES:

Distribution began in summer of 2017, has been ongoing since, and will continue.

ABOUT THE PROBLEM:

In many countries, girls don't go to school during their monthly period. A UNESCO report estimates that one in ten girls in Sub-Saharan Africa misses school during their menstrual cycle. By some estimates, this equals as much as twenty-five percent of a given school year. The costs of this are staggering.

With education girls make better decisions for their entire lives. They make better health choices, better choices of partners, have better vocational options, are better parents, and become more engaged members of their civic communities. If a girl attends school for only *seven years*, she marries later and has fewer children. She'll also be more likely to delay having sex, be less likely to be forced into sex, and, if she is sexually active, more likely to use contraception, avoiding both unwanted pregnancies and infection with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. An educated girl adds to a country's GDP, and is essential for lifting her, her family, and her community out of poverty. It is no hyperbole: **Investments improving a developing world girl's chances for education may be the most cost effective liberation of human potential on the planet.**

Besides these losses of upside potential, there are many, often sinister, downside consequences of girls dropping out of school. The most important is that they lose the protection of the adults who shepherd them in the school environment. Their choices are few, and all are forbidding. They might be married and become child brides and mothers. Otherwise, they will almost certainly be forced to join the work force where they are subject to almost constant sexual predation. In the worst cases, they will be sold into the sex trade and be used as sex slaves.



Girls in Zambia receiving ODFL GEP kits

ABOUT THE PROJECT:

The ODFL Girls' Equality Project provides teenage girls and young women in developing countries with reusable sanitary pads, allowing them to attend school in a manner equal to boys. Each kit includes 8 washable, reusable pads, 2 exterior waterproof shields, 2 pairs of panties, 1 washcloth, soap and a discreet bag for transport. The pads can be washed and re-used dozens of times. When properly cared for, the kit lasts for three years, in most cases, long enough for girls to be able to finish school.

The kit is delivered with a 3-hour educational seminar which includes not only curriculum on feminine hygiene and health, but on many other facets of feminine life-cycle management. All of ODFL's NGO partners work with educational authorities in their countries to make the kits available to the girls in the greatest need. We have provided kits to thousands of girls in multiple countries.

If the local community wishes and is able, ODFL's NGO partner can help them to produce GEP kits and support feminine hygiene needs in other communities, while earning a dignified income. The hope is to expand the number of sewing centers that employ the women who sew the kits as well as fund kits by the thousands for distribution through ODFL's existing network of NGO partners in 10 countries. Through this process, we have been able to reduce the cost of providing a kit to a girl in Africa by more than 46%, effectively doubling the number of girls to whom we can provide help.

PROJECT COSTS:

Kit prices vary by country. For a standard kit consisting of 8 washable, reusable pads, 2 exterior waterproof shields, 2 pairs of panties, 1 washcloth, soap and a discreet bag for transport, costs can range from \$9 to \$16, depending on where they are sourced, and where they are delivered. Because of this, ODFL has funded a sewing center in Kenya which is operated by its Kenyan NGO partner, Kiini Sustainable Initiative. This center is producing standard kits as described above for less than \$5 apiece. This allows us to more than double the number of kits we can provide to developing world girls. We are evaluating extending this model to other countries.

EVALUATION:

We rate this a High Priority investment based on these factors:

- Very low cost/granularity per client served (\$5 - \$16)
- The extreme need among the population served
- Absence of available alternatives to address the need
- The very high impact of invested funds and delivered services
- Extraordinary secondary benefits to the area populations being served
- Relatively low cost/high benefit compared with other ODFL investments
- Distribution can be done quickly, with benefits enduring over multiple years
- Compatibility with ODFL partner NGOs and their local missions
- Support from local and national education officials in all countries covered
- Path for self-sufficiency in kit production among local populations