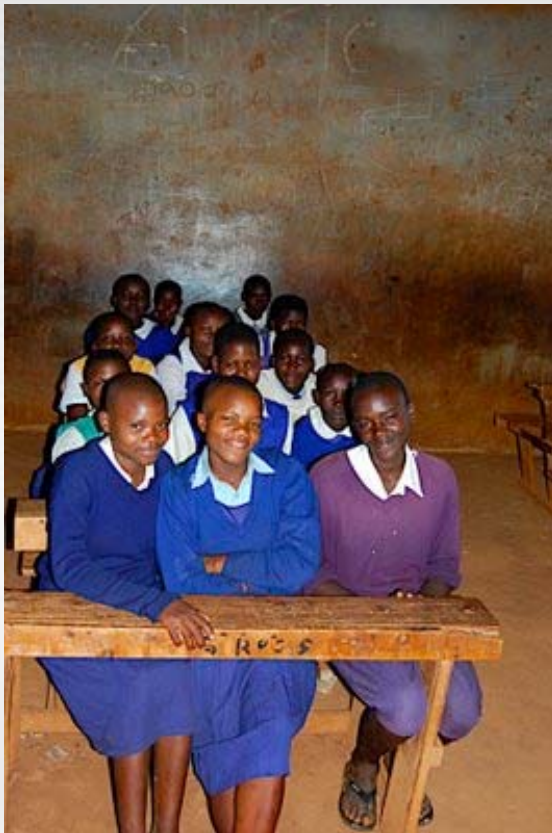


Kabondo Poverty Alleviation Organization



Re-usable Cloth
Sanitary Pad Pilot
Project Summary

June 2009

Photo courtesy Raul Caceres ©

Kabondo, Kenya

- Located 60km south of Kisumu in Rachuonyo District, Kenya
- Area - 141.5 square km
- Population of Rachuonyo District (2002) - 321, 877
- Population Kabondo Division (2001) - 49,934
- Young population (0-14 years) - 47%

Source: National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development, "Rachuonyo District Strategic Plan 2005-2010" (2005)

Demographics

- Number of females in district - 169,167
- Primary school population (6-13 years)
81,225
- Secondary school population (14-17 years)
36,263
- Female/Male sex ratio - 110:100

Source: National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development,
"Rachuonyo District Strategic Plan 2005-2010" (2005)

Demographics Cont'd

- 339 primary schools in district
- 20% drop-out rate for females
- 15% drop-out rate for males
- 58 secondary schools in district
- 15% enrolment rate in secondary school for females

Source: National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development, "Rachuonyo District Strategic Plan 2005-2010" (2005)

Demographics Cont'd

- 77% of total population in district lives in absolute poverty
- 67% of population is food deficient
- 70% of income comes from agriculture
- Most affected socio-economic groups are the unemployed, widows, orphans and illiterate

Source: National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development, "Rachuonyo District Strategic Plan 2005-2010" (2005)

Background to the Pilot

- Goods 4 Girls collected and donated 70 cloth, reusable, sanitary pad kits from individuals and manufacturers in the United States
- Kits consisted of carrying pouch, 3 pads and 3 liners (various weights and thicknesses)
- Kits were not identical
- Distributed July 2008

Background Cont'd

- Basic overview on use and care was provided when distributed to the girls
- Instructions provided in English and repeated in Luo by teachers
- 7 teachers provided support over the course of the pilot
- Pilot lasted 6 months (July 2008-Dec 2008)

The Pads

- Various shapes and sizes
- Made of cotton or fleece
- Pad wraps around panties
- Liners inserted into pad
- Add more liners to increase absorbency
- Some hand-made, some manufactured



Participating Schools

- 68 Girls from 4 Schools
 - Got Rateng' Primary School (n=30)
 - Got Rateng' Secondary School (n=14)
 - Bishop Linus Okok Girls Secondary School (n=20)
 - Nyasore Primary School (n=4)
- 1 teacher and 1 female member of Kabondo Poverty Alleviation Organization also participated

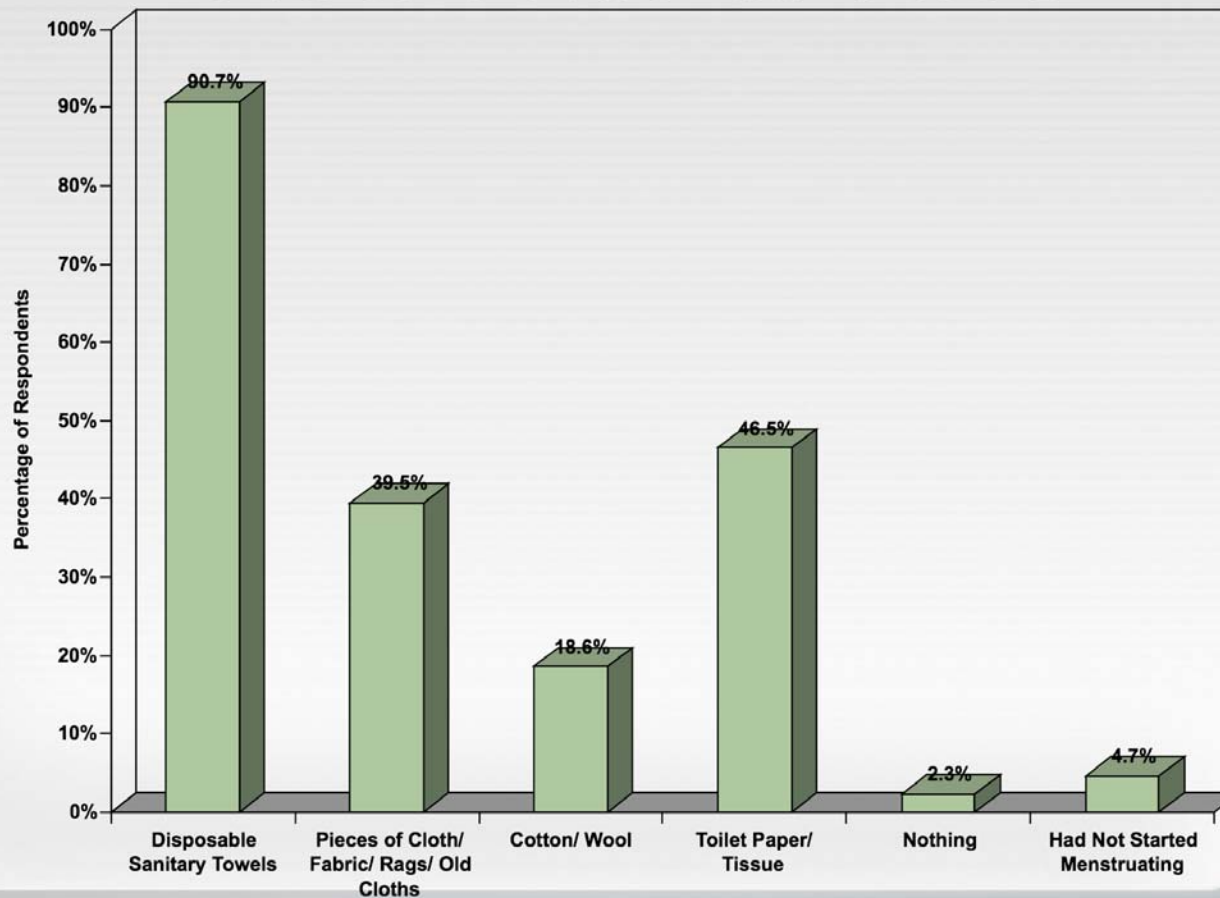
Participants

- 68 girls ranging in age from 12 to 18 years
- Ranging from Primary 3 to Secondary 12
- Majority of girls in Primary 10

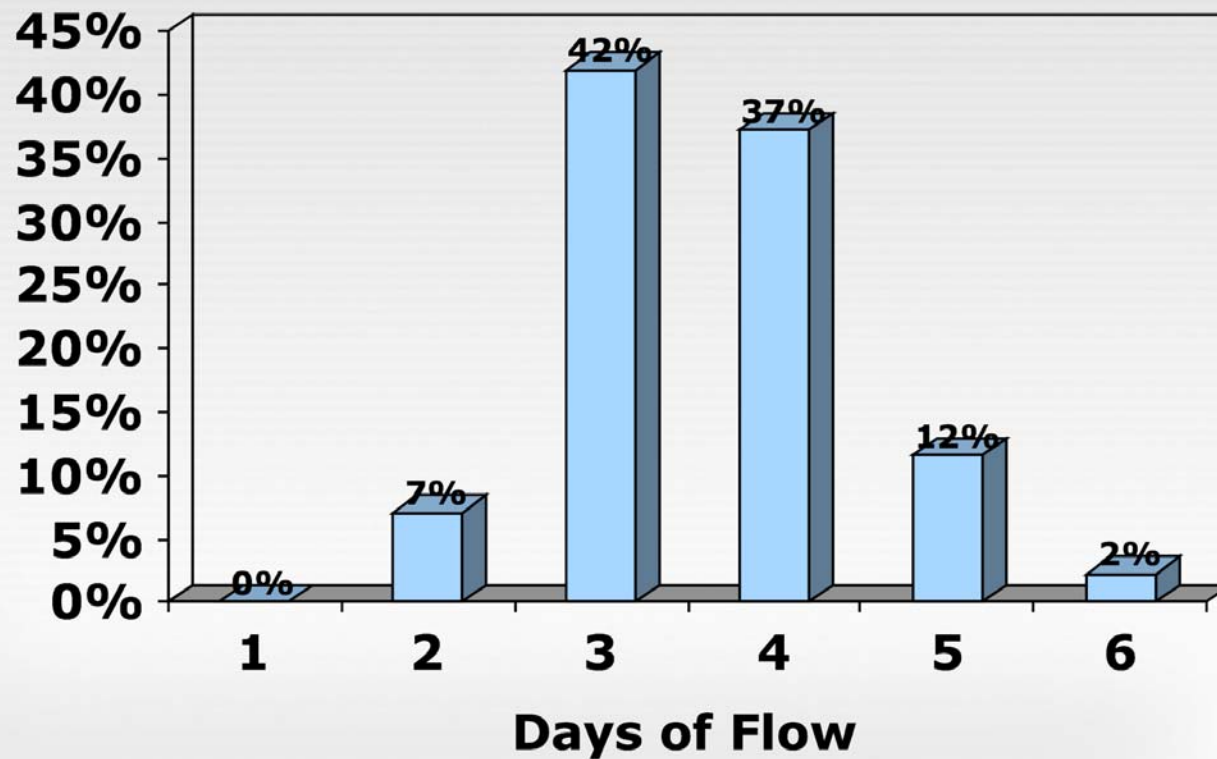
The Questionnaire

- Administered at end of pilot
- Completed as an interview (n=6) and self administered (n=41)
- 47/70 participants responded to the questionnaire (67%)
- Primary reason for not participating in questionnaire - leaving the community upon completion of school

Materials Used to Manage Flow Prior to Pilot

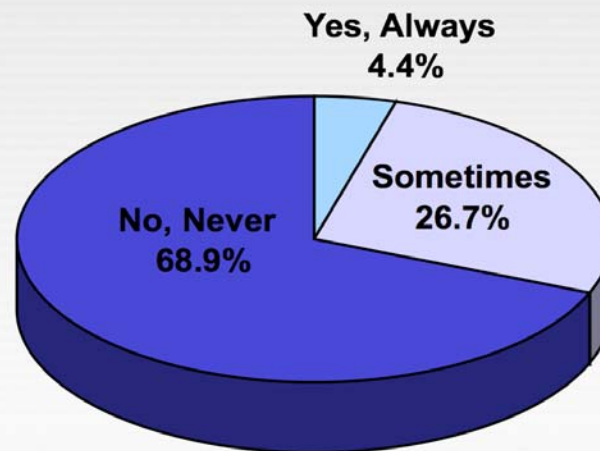


Duration of Menstruation



School Absence During Menstruation*

**% Stay Home from School Because of Menstruation
(n=45)**



*Prior to the pilot

Typical Reasons for Missing School During Menstruation*

(n=12)

- Worried about leaks/accidents (61.5%)
- Did not have sanitary pads (53.8%)
- Cramps/pain (23.1%)
- Sick (7.7%)

*Prior to the pilot

Activities Prevented from Participating in During Flow*

(n=39)

- Playing Sports/Physical Activity - 64.1%
- Socializing/visiting family/friends - 35.5%
- Completing chores - 25.6%
- Not prevented from doing anything - 25.6%
- Working - 23.1%
- Leaving home - 10.3%
- Eating - 10.3%

*Prior to the pilot

First Impressions of the Pads

- Not sanitary towels
- Thought they were disposable
- Attractive/smart
- Might leak
- Might be itchy
- Didn't like them
- Eager to try

First Impressions

- *“The first time I saw the reusable sanitary towels, I thought of using them and dropping them in the pit latrine. But, after the instructions on how to use them, I appreciated and used them with a lot of courage.”*
- *“They were wrapped so neatly I thought they were presents to be eaten.”*
- *“I first thought they were not suitable to use, but after using I felt good and appreciated them.”*

Training



Photo courtesy Raul Caceres ©

- 97.7% of girls felt they received enough training and instruction on use and care of the sanitary pads (n=44)

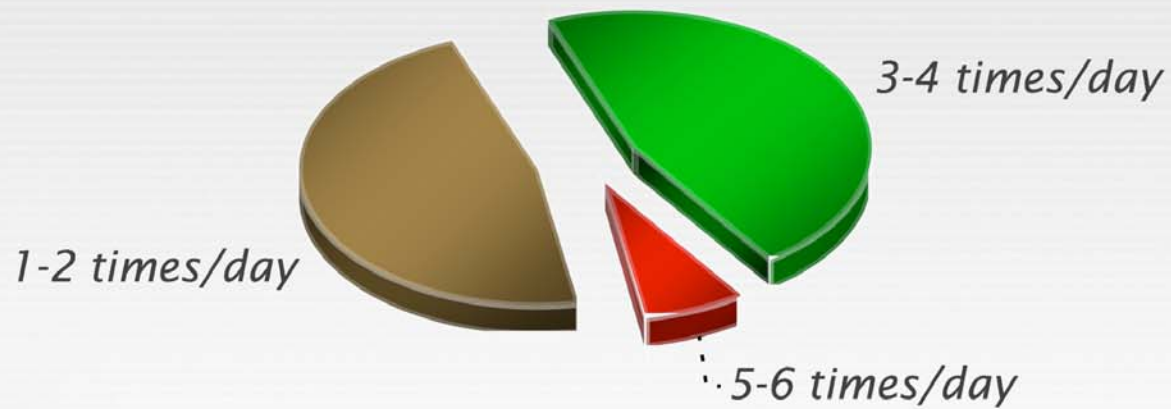
Difficulties Using Pads

- 46.7% indicated they experienced difficulties using the sanitary pads (n=45)
- Difficulties included (n=19):
 - Determining correct amount of layers to use - 68.4%
 - Not having enough sanitary pads for duration of flow - 57.9%
 - Had to wear the pads longer than they would have liked - 57.9%
 - Storing used/dirty pads during school day - 63.2%
 - Accessing clean water to wash them - 42.1%
 - Washing them/getting them clean - 42.1%

Number of Pads Needed to Manage Flow

- 80% of girls (n=45) didn't think they were provided with enough pads for the duration of their flow
- When asked how many pads they thought they needed to manage their flow(n=38):
 - 47.4% said 7 or more pads
 - 34.2% said 3-4 pads
 - 10.5% said 5-6 pads
 - 7.9% said 1-2 pads

Frequency of Changing Pad



Changing the Pad

- 80% able to change sanitary pad at school (n=36)
- Reasons for not changing at school included (n=9):
 - Not enough sanitary towels to use - 66.7%
 - Embarrassed - 22.2%
 - Did not need to change during school hours - 11.1%

School Absence During Pilot

- 86.7% of girls (n=45) **did not** miss school because of their flow during the pilot
- Of those that did miss school, reasons included (n=6):
 - Did not have enough sanitary towels - 66.7%
 - Worried about leaks or accidents - 50%
 - Cramps/pain - 33.3%

Access to Clean Water & Washing the Pads

- All the girls (100%) said they had access to clean water to wash the sanitary pads (n=44)
- Yet, 8 indicated they had difficulties accessing clean water to wash them in another question
- 61.4% said they washed the pads more than once per day (n=27)
- 38.6% said they washed the pads every day (n=17)

Continued Use

- At completion of the pilot, 93.2% stated they were still using the pads (n=41)
- Of those that said No, reasons for not using included:
 - uncomfortable to use
 - embarrassed to use
 - not enough liners to manage the flow
- However, **ALL** said they will continue to use the towels in the future (n=44)

Impressions After Use

- Good/Liked them
- Economical/Less expensive than disposable
- Better than disposable towels/last
- Absorbent and don't leak
- Comfortable/Soft/No irritation
- Easy to use
- Environmentally-friendly
- Please give more/distribute to others
- No one realized they were not disposable towels

Impressions After Use

- *“No stress of planning to buy another as they can be reused for the other months.”*
- *“They are good because they enabled me to be courageous in class and I have not had any difficulties in using them.”*
- *“They don’t leak and I can perform my duties without worries.”*

Other Comments

- Most comments reiterated comments already made elsewhere
- Additional comments included:
 - They take a long time to dry
 - Need more liners/pads for the duration of flow
 - Distribute more widely/give to everyone

Other Comments

- *“Give more towels so we may change when the other is wet and to help those who suffer silently.”*
- *“My suggestion is that if everyone can be provided with sanitary pads it will decrease poverty as many people are not economically stable to afford the expensive ones.”*

Next Steps

- Establish training project to make pads locally - possible income-generating activity
- Seek funder for initial training and/or small micro-loans
- Establish partnerships with NGOs, government or interested parties

For More Information

For more information on Kabondo
Poverty Alleviation Organization visit
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