



REPORT ABOUT THE « WATER AND PADS » WP ACTIVITIES

Project	Water and Pads for schoolgirls
Activity	Awareness about menstrual health hygiene in schools
Financed by	International Alliance of Women IAW
Responsible person	Coordinator of SOFEDEC
Timing	School year 202-2025/ on 27/9/2024
Location	Complexe scolaire la puisette NGOIKA / Gombe/ Kinshasa/ DR Congo

Context

The phenomenon of young people living on the streets, known as Shégués in Kinshasa, is alarming, with an estimated figure of over 60,000 out of a total population of around 15 million in 2023. These young people live in extremely precarious conditions, exposed to violence and sexual promiscuity, and face major educational challenges. This phenomenon has had a major impact on school-age children up to the age of majority. Some girls become pregnant at an early age and end up on the streets due to a lack of resources and an education conducive to recovery and prevention.

Current initiatives, while commendable, remain inadequate, with most focusing on socio-economic reintegration without comprehensively addressing the physical, community health, mental and educational needs of this vulnerable population. Faced with this complex reality, the 'Water and Pads' project is proposing an innovative approach in schools to menstrual hygiene, to become a woman in complete serenity, and to the functioning of a young girl's body.

The first aim of this approach is to educate girls and boys about hygienic behaviour in the school environment regarding menstrual circumstances, along with education about sexual and reproductive health.

course of the activity

Planning of activity	Implemented activity	Necessary material and funding
-Establishing contacts with the responsables of school	-Contact done. -Permission to conduct activity.	-Letter is written to obtain a room.
-Printing of the booklets	-Booklets printed, -tarpaulin and T-shirts	The planned funds were used.
Awareness	-The teaching-session took place from 8.10 am until 10 am-	-Booklets -Pads -Megaphone -Printed tarpaulin

Comments

The authorities at the La Puisette Ngoika School Complex approved our request and supported us in achieving our objective.

The demand for booklets was high, but due to the high printing costs not more booklets could get printed.

311 pupils, including 200 girls and 111 boys in two classrooms, benefited from the awareness campaign. It was also attended by the headmaster of the primary school, the prefect of the secondary school and two teachers.

The pupils were so interested that the school management asked us to come back for a broader activity during a conference. Many questions were asked and experiences were voiced by the children, attracting the attention of their teachers.

Other problems were revealed, such as the lack of education by some parents, the lack of dialogue between children and parents, and several cases of teenage pregnancies. The project was an opportunity for pupils and leaders to organise more intensive activities to combat various community problems around menstruation which prevents girls from achieving their full potential. The demonstration on the use of sanitary pads also raised many questions among teachers and pupils. It was demonstrated with water how the blood is being absorbed and the absorption of the blood by the tissue.

Recommendation

We are asking for another awareness session with WP during a day granted by the school.

Report written by Ms Anuarite Siirewabo, SOFEDEC Coordinator

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