Girls Mental and Physical Health Grant Progress Report

In the fourth quarter of the Embassy Girls Mental and Physical Health Grant, we have focused primarily on increasing production of Days for Girls reusable, sustainable menstrual hygiene kits and distributing the kits and reproductive health education to girls in schools around the country.

Kit-making progress:

Since the end of June, our team has hired additional tailors (funded by Schools for Salone) to build up the team, increase production, and keep up with demand for the menstruation kits. We now have four tailors sewing the kits, with Juliet overseeing the project. We have also built up the necessary supply of materials to maintain and build continuous kit production.

Our team has now sewn a total of 572 menstruation kits. We began with a production rate of 100 kits per month. Since adding more tailors, building up our materials supply, and solidifying our supply chain, we have been steadily increasing production. Our team is now producing 245 kits per month.

We have also begun developing relationships with other organizations to make these kits available to even more women and girls in Sierra Leone. Our goal is to establish ongoing partnerships where our kits can be distributed by other groups to the communities in which they work to increase the accessibility of these kits in all parts of Sierra Leone.

Impact Spotlight:

Our team has been spreading the life-changing impact of these menstruation kits. Nearly 200 kits have been distributed to other parts of the country by other groups. Our team was also able to provide menstruation kits to female survivors of the August mudslide and flooding.
Health education and kit distribution progress:

In July, our team held reproductive health education sessions in our schools in the South, North and Western areas to ensure that children were grounded with the knowledge and understanding of what they have been taught in our reproductive health education classes throughout the 2016-2017 academic year and distribute kits to girls coming of age and needing kits.

Girls in our schools entering puberty were no longer surprised by their period because of the education they have received about puberty and menstruation.

The number of students reached in our schools with this quarter’s sexual reproductive health education session and DfG kits distribution is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Boys</th>
<th>Number of Girls</th>
<th>Number of Kits Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Area</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a clear indication from the students’ participation and stories that the lessons we’re teaching are taking root and information on reproductive health is spreading out. Parents have even come by to listen and some contributed to the lesson and express their gratitude to us for the education we are giving to their children. The reception of this program in the villages where we work has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Impact Spotlight:**

A pupil from one school testified that she always carries her menstruation kit along whenever she has symptoms of menstruation. She gave a story of a church youth camp she attended. She said there was a girl who started her period for the first time and was dull in the camp while others were active and happy. Our student went closer to her trying to motivate her to be happy. While they were talking the girl cried and revealed that she was bleeding. Our student encouraged her to stop crying and told her that it is not anything bad but that the bleeding is her period and explained to her about menstruation and its importance and then gave her a pod (basic kit components).

In another school, there was a girl who attended our reproductive health education classes for the first time. She raised her hand first when Juliet asked for someone to explain what they have learned so far from these classes. She explained about puberty and self-awareness, surprising Juliet, who asked her where she learned this. The girl said her friend explained all to her; this friend is one of our pupils from a previous reproductive health education class.

Going without basic sanitation threatens girls’ education, health, safety, family, future, and dignity but as we continue with our Uman Talk Sexual Reproductive Health Education Program, girls will know who they are, how vital their safety is to their families’ future, to their communities and to their nation and world. They will go to school, stay productive and stay healthy.

**FGM/C education progress:**

Our team continues to educate students about FGM/C, addressing the myths and health concerns surrounding the practice. Girls who have already become victims of FGM/C regretted the act done to them. Girls who have not yet undergone the procedure were happy for the early education and promised that they will not become involved in it and wished for their parents to listen to them and stop the practice.