

**CELEBRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY 2025 IN BUDONDO
SUBCOUNTY, JINJA CITY, UGANDA, AFRICA,
UNDER THE PROJECT KICK OUT PERIOD
POVERTY**

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Event Report: International Menstrual Hygiene Day Celebration - May 31, 2025

Date of Event: Saturday, May 31st, 2025

Venue: Budondo Playground, Budondo Subcounty, Jinja

Implementing Organization: Ecowarriors Initiative Uganda

Project Title: Kick Out Period Poverty Project

1. Introduction

International Menstrual Hygiene Day, observed annually on May 28th, serves as a global platform to advocate for the rights of women and girls to manage their menstruation safely, hygienically, with dignity, and without shame. In Uganda, period poverty remains a significant barrier to education, health, and overall empowerment for countless girls. Recognizing this pressing need, the **Kick Out Period Poverty Project**, orchestrated a comprehensive flagship event to commemorate this vital day on Saturday, May 31st, 2025. Held at the central Budondo Play Ground in Budondo Subcounty, Jinja, the celebration was designed as a powerful catalyst for change, aiming to raise extensive awareness, actively dismantle persistent societal stigma, and provide crucial, tangible support for dignified menstrual hygiene management (MHM) among girls within the Budondo Community and surrounding areas. The event successfully convened a diverse array of stakeholders, including community members, educational leaders, religious figures, and political representatives, underscoring the collective and multi-sectoral responsibility required to effectively address the pervasive issue of period poverty. This gathering exemplified a unified commitment to fostering an environment where menstruation is normalized and celebrated, rather than hidden or endured in silence.

2. Event Highlights and Activities

The day was filled with impactful and engaging activities designed to educate, empower, and inspire:

- **Reusable Pad Distribution:** A significant achievement was the distribution of high-quality, sustainable reusable menstrual pads to **400 girls**. This direct support aims to

ensure continuous access to hygienic products, reducing absenteeism and enhancing



Figure 1: Denis Omedi Serving Pads

- **Menstrual Bracelet Distribution:** To foster open dialogue and symbolize solidarity, **500 menstrual bracelets** were distributed to attendees, including both boys and girls. These bracelets serve as a visual reminder of the importance of menstrual health and encourage ongoing conversations.



Figure 2: A group of girls who received Menstrual Bracelets

- **Distinguished Attendance:** The event saw the presence of various influential community members, including:

- **Political Leaders:** Signifying the growing recognition of MHM as a policy priority.
- **School Teachers:** Reinforcing the crucial role of educational institutions in MHM advocacy and support.



Figure 3 Madam Alisa From Buyala PS addressing some of the challenges they face at schools as Senior Woman Teachers

- **Religious Leaders:** Underscoring the importance of engaging diverse community voices to challenge cultural taboos.



Figure 4: Pastor Sam, who blessed the day promised to include menstrual conversations in his preachings

- **Goodwill Ambassador's Presence:** Mr. Denis Omedi, the renowned Ugandan Crane footballer and our Goodwill Ambassador, was a prominent figure throughout the event. His active participation served as a powerful testament to the crucial role of men and boys in supporting menstrual equity.



Figure 5: Denis Omedi Serving Menstrual Bracelets to boys who accepted to have open conversations about Periods

- **Community Football Match:** A highly anticipated and unifying activity was the football game between the **"Kick Out Period Poverty" team and the local community team.** This lively match not only entertained but also symbolically reinforced the campaign's message of "kicking out" period poverty through collective action and unity.



Figure 6: The Community football team that faced the Kick Out Period Poverty Team

- **Interactive Group Discussions on MHM:** Facilitated group discussions were held for various audiences (girls, boys, parents, teachers) to delve into different aspects of menstrual hygiene. These sessions covered topics such as proper use and care of reusable pads, breaking cultural myths and taboos, the importance of supportive environments, and general reproductive health. This provided a safe space for questions and shared

learning



Figure 7 Girls in different Discussion groups

- **Men Leading MHM Education:** A pivotal aspect of the day was the active involvement of **male facilitators and educators who led some of the menstrual hygiene discussions**. This demonstrated a crucial step towards normalizing menstrual health and fostering male allyship in a public setting, challenging traditional norms and encouraging broader community engagement.



Figure 8 Mr. Magezi Calvin teaching girls about the Menstrual cycle using a Menstrual Bracelet

- **Inspiring Guest Speaker:** The event featured a compelling address from **Ms. Jovia Kusiima, the Vice Chairperson of the EU Youth Sounding Board in Uganda**. She delivered a powerful call to action, urging leaders from all sectors to consistently include menstrual advocacy in their speeches and policy discussions.



Figure 9: Mrs. Jovia Kusima giving her speech

- **Denis Omedi's Message:** Our Goodwill Ambassador, Denis Omedi, passionately appealed to everyone present, urging them to actively support young girls who face challenges related to their periods. His message emphasized empathy, understanding, and

practical assistance.



Figure 10 Denis Omedi calls stakeholders to support the girl child

- **Student Voices on Period-Friendly Facilities:** Crucially, students themselves had the opportunity to articulate their needs, specifically mentioning how a "period-friendly" toilet should look and function. Their direct input underscored the urgency for safe, private, and hygienic WASH facilities in schools.



Figure 11 Head girl from Trinity College addressing the challenges they face during Periods

- **Refreshments and Community Engagement:** Refreshments were provided to all children and attendees, fostering a welcoming and celebratory atmosphere that encouraged interaction and community bonding.



Figure 12 Some of the refreshments served on the day

- **Entertainment by Fellow Students:** To add a dynamic and celebratory element to the day, local students presented engaging performances, including songs, dances, and short skits. This showcased their talents and further fostered a sense of community and shared

purpose.



Figure 13 Student showing her dancing talent

Media Coverage by FUFA TV: The event received valuable media attention with the presence of **FUFA TV personnel**, who documented the activities and amplified the message of menstrual hygiene day to a wider national audience.



Figure 14MR. Mpologoma from FUFA TV giving remarks and the role of journalists

3. Impact and Achievements

The International Menstrual Hygiene Day celebration on May 31st was a resounding success, achieving several key impacts:

- **Enhanced Access to Products:** Directly provided reusable pads to 400 girls, offering a sustainable solution for their menstrual needs.



Figure 15 Some of the girls who received the reusable Pads

- **Increased Awareness and Dialogue:** The distribution of bracelets and public discussions, particularly involving male leaders and male educators, significantly contributed to breaking the silence and stigma around menstruation. **The interactive group discussions deepened understanding and encouraged open communication on**

various aspects of MHM among diverse audiences.



Figure 16 Boys Who received Bracelets and accepted to be game changers

- **Strengthened Advocacy Voice:** The presence and calls to action from leaders like Ms. Jovia Kusiima and Denis Omedi amplified the message of menstrual equity to a wider audience, including policymakers.



Figure 17 Denis Omedi Possing with the girls

- **Community Mobilization:** The successful football match demonstrated strong community engagement and a willingness to participate in activities that promote social change.



Figure 18 Celebrating the Kick Out Period Poverty Trophy with the goodwill ambassador

- **Empowered Student Voices:** Providing a platform for students to describe ideal "period-friendly" facilities reinforced a beneficiary-centered approach to WASH interventions.

4. Challenges Faced

While the event was a great success, it also highlighted and reaffirmed several persistent challenges that the "Kick Out Period Poverty" project continues to address:

- **Inadequate Period-Friendly WASH Facilities:** Despite the event's focus on solutions, the very articulation by students of what a "period-friendly" toilet *should* look like underscores the current pervasive lack of such facilities. Many existing school and public toilets lack privacy, proper disposal, and, critically, accessible water.
- **Water Scarcity at Facilities:** The broader challenge of limited and distant water sources at schools and health centers persists, making it difficult for girls to maintain proper hygiene, especially when using reusable pads. This infrastructural gap directly impacts dignified MHM.
- **Persistent Menstrual Stigma and Taboos:** While the event fostered dialogue and engagement, deeply ingrained cultural stigma surrounding menstruation remains a significant barrier that requires continuous and concerted efforts to fully dismantle.

- **Need for Sustained Resources for Maintenance:** Schools often lack the necessary cleaning supplies and financial resources to consistently maintain toilet hygiene, even after initial improvements, leading to potential deterioration of facilities.
- **Bridging the Advocacy-Implementation Gap:** Despite leaders' calls for advocacy, translating these verbal commitments into concrete policy changes and on-the-ground resource allocation remains a challenge.
- **Ensuring Comprehensive Reach:** While 400 girls received pads, the vast need across communities means that reaching all vulnerable girls with both products and education remains a significant logistical and resource challenge.

5. Recommendations

Based on the successes and the insights gained from the Menstrual Hygiene Day celebration, the following recommendations are proposed to build upon the momentum and address persistent challenges:

- **Sustained Advocacy for Policy Integration:** Continue and intensify advocacy efforts with political and religious leaders to formally integrate menstrual health and hygiene advocacy into their public speeches, policy agendas, and community outreach programs.
- **Investment in Period-Friendly Infrastructure:** Prioritize fundraising and partnerships for the construction of sustainable water sources (e.g., boreholes, rainwater harvesting) and the renovation/construction of truly period-friendly toilet facilities in schools and health centers, directly addressing the needs articulated by students.
- **Expand Reusable Pad Programs:** Seek further funding and support to scale up the production and distribution of reusable menstrual pads to reach a wider number of girls, ensuring consistent access to sustainable menstrual products.
- **Deepen Male Engagement:** Develop more structured and continuous programs specifically targeting men and boys to foster greater understanding, empathy, and active support for menstrual health, leveraging the success achieved with Denis Omedi and the positive impact of male educators at the event.
- **Empower Local Maintenance:** Implement training and provide initial resources for school staff and community members to ensure the long-term maintenance and cleanliness of improved WASH facilities.
- **Amplify Student Voices:** Create ongoing platforms for students to provide feedback on MHM initiatives and facilities, ensuring that solutions are relevant and responsive to their needs.

- **Cross-Sectoral Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships with other NGOs, CSOs, government bodies, and the private sector to create a multi-pronged approach to addressing period poverty comprehensively.

6. Conclusion

The International Menstrual Hygiene Day celebration on May 31st, 2025, was a vibrant and impactful demonstration of collective commitment to ending period poverty in Uganda. The direct support provided through reusable pads, coupled with powerful advocacy from prominent figures and the active participation of the community, reinforced the project's vision. The event not only addressed immediate needs but also laid a stronger foundation for sustained efforts to ensure all girls in Uganda can experience menstrual dignity, pursue their education without interruption, and live healthier, more empowered lives. Furthermore, understanding that climate change exacerbates water scarcity and hinders hygienic MHM, our continued efforts will explicitly link menstrual health solutions to climate resilience strategies, ensuring long-term dignity and well-being for girls in the face of environmental challenges. We extend our gratitude to all partners, leaders, volunteers, and attendees for making this day a resounding success.