

Keeping Girls In School And Supporting Women In Malawi

PWNC's Period Project

This Presbytery has had a more than 15-year relationship with the Nkhoma Presbyterian Synod's Hospital and Ebenezer School in Nkhoma, Malawi. The Presbytery helped start the school, which is pre-K through middle school students, with more than 300 girls and boys. Nkhoma Synod also has numerous secondary schools with thousands of students. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world.

As people of faith, we are concerned for girls and women. Keeping girls in school is important to give them a chance to thrive and grow and get out of poverty. Education is one way out of poverty in Malawi, where the school attrition rate for girls is high and the consequences of girls leaving school early could be disastrous for their future. We know this struggle from our experience at Ebenezer School and from our partners.



Teenage girls stay away from school during their period because they do not have the needed menstrual products, which are not available or affordable in most of Malawi. Staying out of school means the girls get behind in their studies and are not able to keep up at the grade level. Often these girls drop out of school.

Consider for a moment your daughter, sister, granddaughter, mother, or wife was without access to feminine hygiene supplies. That is the condition of many girls and women in Malawi. Girls are often shunned during their monthly cycle.

Reusable washable menstrual pads could help girls stay in school and women better control this part of their lives. Dr. Barbara Nagy, a former mission co-worker in Nkhoma Hospital, requests that groups in PWNC make reusable, washable sanitary pads for girls and women that can be taken to Nkhoma. The Presbytery's Malawi Mission Committee is also asking people to make these pads.



Each girl would receive a supply of pads, underwear, and soap. Some people might want to make a small, flat bag in which to put the items for storage when not needed.

If any churches or individuals are interested in this project, you can click below for instructions and patterns. There are two different kinds of pads you can choose to make: [The Pad](#), with water proofing designed by Janet Leissner, and [Luopads](#) (Freedom Pads), given to us from Trinity Presbyterian Church and Vickie Hugger. We have some of both of the pads at the office in case you would like to look at them.

We have some of the needed supplies. Below is what is needed, what we have on hand, and how you can go about obtaining the other items.

Packaging: We will be putting “pads with water proofing” in packages of six in quart size Ziploc bags and the “Luopads” in packages of six to eight pads. In both packages, we will include 4 safety pins.

Snap: We have many snaps that we can get to you and also the tool needed to put them on the pads. Get in touch with Bobbi White (828/674-8671).

Towels: We also have towels that you can use. Get in touch with Bobbi White (828/674-8671) if you need some of these. These towels will have to be washed.

PUL Fabric: This is the material used for waterproofing one of the pads. It can be ordered online from JoAnne’s. You have cannot afford to order this material, please get in touch with Bobbi White (828/674-8671).

Cotton Flannel Material: Be sure to wash in hot water and that it will absorb water.

You can also support the project with funding for materials or logistics through your church or the Presbytery.

This project is a work in progress as the final details are still developing. For more information, contact Connie Button, cmbutton@yahoo.com/252-904-9736, or Bobbi White, bobbwhite02@gmail.com/828-674-8671.