

Interim Progress Report

Organisation name: The BARKA Foundation

Project title: Afric'up: Ya Soma

Grant amount: \$34,991

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2. Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve

Afric'up is a pilot project which aims to strengthen the skills of women leaders in Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) and to introduce menstrual cups as a new, sustainable and effective product for menstrual health. The outcomes we strive to achieve include the breaking of the silence around the taboo subject of menstruation, an increase in awareness about menstrual health and hygiene, and to distribute cups to 1200 women and train them sufficiently to achieve 'cup confidence'. A monitoring system will make it possible to assess the impact and effectiveness of this intervention and to draw appropriate lessons for the future and possible scaling up.

Afric'up seeks to directly impact:

- 1,200 women and girls who benefit from using the menstrual cup and also by increased MH awareness
- 14 local associations, which benefit from the project's trainings to build the capacity of 2 members from each association on MHM and more broadly the challenges of sexual and reproductive health, and who become experts (and Ambassadors) in the use of the cup.

Indirectly, the project will serve to help lift taboos around menstruation and lay the foundations for reflections on future national health and menstrual hygiene programs. Questionnaires will be used to measure the impacts at 6 months, in order to compare them to the initial situation of the women beneficiaries. The information collected will focus on the use of the product distributed, new practices in health and menstrual hygiene, and the impacts / changes in the lives of these beneficiaries. The final capitalization workshop will share the results.

3. Has funding changed for this project?

Yes, we received an additional 25,000\$ grant from International Foundation (IF) to cover expenses not funded by DFW.

4. Is your organisation or project situation different than presented in the approved proposal?

Yes, slightly. Please check part 6.

5. Have the number of beneficiaries changed?

No.

6. What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching the challenges?

We encountered difficulties in mobilizing the representatives of the Ministry of Health. They required many steps before being able to collaborate. Faced with these obstacles, the representatives of BARKA obtained an audience with the Minister of Health. The latter approved the implementation of the project, subject to obtaining these 3 documents:

1. Establish a collaboration agreement (Convention) between the Ministry of Health and BARKA
2. Seek approval from the ethics committee to collect menstrual health data from beneficiary women
3. Submit a Marketing Authorization dossier for the SIRONA menstrual cup, considered a medical product, in order to be approved at the national level for sale and distribution within the country.

All these steps take time and struggle to progress, despite multiple reminders to the officials of the Ministry of Health. To date, the agreement of the ethics committee has been obtained (2). The process continues for points 1 and 3 (both the Convention and the dossier to authorize cups have been submitted but we have been waiting more than 6 months for a response).

Under these conditions, the project had to be slightly revised:

1. The launch workshop was postponed due to lack of support from the Ministry of Health; it did not seem wise to start advocacy in the absence of this key Ministry.
2. Communication activities, as well as advocacy with stakeholders, were carried out on a small scale.
3. The public CSPS (local community health centers) could not be part of the beneficiary structures of the program, for lack of official agreement from their supervisory Ministry. The number of women's associations has therefore been increased to guarantee a number of trained women equal to the initial objective.
4. In order not to delay the implementation of the project, Menstru'elles was asked to be in the front line for the holding of these workshops with the associations, considering that it is legally authorized to carry out these actions as a social enterprise, whereas BARKA Foundation is an NGO and adhere more strictly to the Ministry's guidelines.

7. Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?

No, our objectives have remained constant despite the setback, primarily because of the innovative solution we found to have Menstru'elles lead the training and for BARKA to have more of a role behind the scenes. For the 6-months period, our objectives were as follows:

- Stage 0: Pre-advocacy, engaging stakeholders (NGOs, government ministries, religious leaders), and forming partnerships with CSPS' and MH Associations where we will source our participants
- Stage 1: Comprehensive training with 30 community health workers; after the training they'll use the cup for 4 months to achieve "cup confidence"; BARKA and Menstru'elles staff will provide support as needed

8. What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objective.

Considering the challenges mentioned before, we have been able to run those activities:

- Stage 0: from March to May (3 months)
 - Meetings with the Ministry of Health in Burkina Faso and the officer in charge of MHM.
 - Meeting with Mogho Naaba, the King of the Moussi people (most representative ethnic group in Burkina Faso) to engender wide support
 - Information shared with 30 stakeholders about the Afric'up project. [See annex 1 for the list of stakeholders.](#)
 - Onboarding of community health workers from 14 associations working in Menstrual Health, each of them designating 2 women as MHM ambassadors. [See annex 2 for the list of participants.](#)
 - Reception of Sirona cups from India

- Stage 1: from June to September (4 months)
 - Design and organization of the 1st training. [See annex 3 for the agenda.](#)
 - Training of 29 women on MHM and cup utilization; distribution of individual cup kits
 - Individual mentoring of every woman during next 4 months to achieve “cup confidence”
 - Creation of a WhatsApp group with participating women to provide a live forum for them to share questions, comments and feedback on cup use. [See annex 4 for quotes.](#)

9. Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing the project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?

No, although the monitoring and evaluation may take longer than originally proposed because some associations had to take more time to arrange their community-based trainings due to bureaucratic structures and the necessary approvals that took time to ascertain.

Photos:

We confirm that DFW and BARKA have the rights to use all photos provided.

Photos provided include highlights from our advocacy efforts as well as both trainings of the Cups Ambassadorices (the initial training in which cups were introduced, and the 2nd training which focused on how to provide their own trainings to their communities).

Message to donors:

We want donors to know that despite challenges we faced, the project is progressing extremely well and now that the community health workers have been sufficiently trained on cup use, they are now set to reach the wider community of 1200 women. The project has received widespread support from stakeholders, the participating health workers have fully embraced the cup as an ideal menstrual health solution, and BARKA is progressing in the long and complicated road to go through the necessary steps to approve cups at the national level and integrate cup programming into the national plan for menstrual health and hygiene. We are on track to achieve all our proposed goals.

Detailed list of expenses: A full budget reconciliation of actual vs. budgeted expenses will be submitted as a separate document. This project is on budget.

In addition to the Annexes below, there is an additional document (Annex 5) that was created by our Monitoring & Evaluation lead, Jennifer Rubli of Femme International. Jen was key in helping design the Trainings and co-led the 1st training in Ouagadougou, as well as being in charge of monitoring and evaluation. The title of the document is Afric’up Trainers Baseline Report and establishes the level of knowledge of menstrual health and hygiene of our trainers/Ambassadorices BEFORE receiving the first training. This will be compared to a 2nd report of their knowledge AFTER receiving the two trainings. 50% of our 1200 community beneficiaries will also fill out a survey both BEFORE and AFTER they’ retrained how to use the cup.

Annex 1: List of the MHM stakeholders in Burkina Faso informed about Afric'up

Structures par ordre alphabétique
1. Action Contre la Faim (ACF)
2. ADAD - Association des Aides ménagères et Domestique
3. AFEEJ - Association Flamme d'Espoir pour l'Emergence des Jeunes (AFEEJ)
4. Ambassade de France – Service de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle (SCAC)
5. AMPO – Association de Managré Nooma pour la protection des orphelins
6. AMMI - Appui Moral, Matériel et Intellectuel à l'Enfant
7. APIFF - Association pour la promotion des Initiatives en Faveur des Femmes et des filles
8. ASEFF - Association Sagltaaba pour l'épanouissement de la femme et de la jeune fille
9. Association des Mères Educatives
10. Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
11. Enabel – Agence belge de développement
12. Fondation KIMI
13. Helvetas
14. Iamaneh Suisse
15. ICCV/Nazemsé
16. Jeunes Ambassadeurs SR/PF
17. KAMY – Association
18. Marie Stopes
19. Médecin du Monde – Espagne
20. Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation
21. Ministère de la Femme, de la Solidarité nationale, de la Famille et de l'Action humanitaire
22. Ministère de la Santé
23. OMS
24. ONIDS
25. Plan International
26. SNV
27. Suplamar – Association
28. UNICEF
29. UNFPA
30. WaterAid

Annex 2: list of association selected for the training 1

N	ASSOCIATION	PRESENTATION	CONTACTS	LOCATI ON
1	KAMY	The association KAMY works for the promotion of women's and girls' rights. KAMY has five areas of intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-formal education for women (literacy) - Promotion of women's talents - Women's health - Financial empowerment of women - Women's rights 	70 85 79 79 yellika01@gmail.com	Périphérie de Ouaga

2	ICCV/Nazems é	Created in 2002, ICCV works in the field of health, education, food security and socio-economic support for women. ICCV also manages a health and social services center and operates in Ouaga, Koubri and Komsilga. ICCV has already worked in the past with Menstru'elles (training and distribution of 200 cups for the women of the community)	60 20 19 25 coordination@iccvnazemse.org	Ouaga, Koubri and Komsilga
3	SUPLAMAR	Suplamar works in the education of young girls and in the reintegration of marginalized women. Its experiences in Menstrual Health are as follows: - December 2018: Awareness sessions at the Lycée privé les patriotes II located in Loumbila. - March 2019: Awareness sessions at the Lycée départemental de Loumbila. - January 8, 2020: "Operation: sanitary napkins" at the Lycée départemental de Thyou. In addition to an awareness session on menstrual hygiene, 150 girls also received sanitary pads. - 2018-2021: Continued awareness on social networks and with live events (Ex.: May 28th, 2021, in Ouaga with Menstru'elles: "Changeons les règles à l'école" with +500 girls)	70 38 09 20 roxylank@gmail.com	Ouaga
4	FONDATION BARKA	Project lead ; BARKA has provided two MH project leaders to expand the impact of this project in Fada N'Gourma, the capital of the Eastern region.	06 42 63 63	Fada
5	APIFF Koudougou	Association for the Promotion of Initiatives in Favor of Women and Girls. APIFF works : - for the personal development of women and girls - on the health and well-being of women and their families	70 07 31 83 kaborebibata1234@gmail.com	Koudougou
6	ONIDS	Organization made up of young people, committed to the health of girls and women as well as all vulnerable groups. Conducted extensive programs on all SRH issues. ONIDS is a leading organization in GHM. The president has a VERY large network and does high level advocacy. She is also in charge of advocacy for Médecins du Monde France.	70 12 40 45 cecile.thiombiano@onids.org clementine.tarnagda@onids.org	Ouaga
7	ADAD	Association of Domestic Workers and Housekeepers. ADAD was created in 2012 to protect housekeepers and domestic workers. ADAD has a listening and awareness center.	addadburkinafaso@gmail.com	Ouaga
8	ASEFF	ASEFF was created in 2002 by a group of 06 women. Its mission is to help the population of Tampouy to benefit from awareness on health. ASEFF works in the field of SRH/FP and	aseffi@yahoo.fr	Ouaga (Tampouy)

		nutrition. In 2005, the ministry asked to build a health center and in 2013 their health center was established as a medical center.		
9	AMPO	AMPO works in Burkina Faso with children in poverty through multi-faceted actions in areas such as health, pre-vocational training, educational support and economic support.	76 41 13 35 ppfilles@ampo.info	Ouaga
1 0	AMMI	AMMI: Moral, Material and Intellectual Support for Children. AMMI's areas of intervention : - Mother and child health - Empowerment of women, entrepreneurship - Environment AMMI is represented in Ouagadougou and Koudougou. It is one of the first associations to promote reusable pads.	rbeloum@yahoo.fr	Ouaga et/ou Koudougou
1 1	JEUNES AMBASSADE URS SR/PF	The Young Ambassadors for Reproductive Health and Family Planning network is a group of associations working in the field of sexual and reproductive health.	seraphinbf@yahoo.fr; preciousarocube@gmail.com	Ouaga
1 2	AFEEJ	Association Flame of Hope for the Emergence of Youth (AFEEJ)	ninafaso@yahoo.fr	
1 3	ASSOCIATION DES MÈRES ÉDUCATIVES	In order to strengthen the role of parents, and particularly mothers, in the educational process in Burkina Faso, associations of mothers educators (AME) have been created. The very first The very first AMEs were created in 1992 in the province of Sissili. Their success and effectiveness led the political and administrative authorities to propose their dissemination throughout the country. Among the objectives of the AMEs, there is the search for a better involvement of women in the management of the school community alongside men. The implementation of AMEs also aims to enable mothers to intervene in a specific way in the schools, in the education and training of their children in general and girls in particular. It is therefore a framework designed to ensure a constant and close link between the school and the educating mothers.	70 31 41 69	

1 4	Association Menstru'elles	<p>Alongside the social enterprise "Menstru'elles by Sisterhood", the association Menstru'elles has the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disseminate positive knowledge about menstruation for women and men, thus fighting against misinformation and taboos about menstruation; - Promote and distribute health and menstrual hygiene products that are healthier, more comfortable and better for the environment; - Contribute to the sensitization of stakeholders and advocacy actions to generate commitments and attract more funding for menstrual health and hygiene (organization of events, workshops, conferences, meetings...); <p>Manage programs that aim to bring the most vulnerable out of menstrual insecurity, with the support of individual, public and private partners;</p>	57 34 34 13	
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Annex 3: Agenda of the 1st training

Training workshop

Objectives: Training women from associations in menstrual health and hygiene and the use of the menstrual cup in Burkina Faso

Date: Friday 4th and Saturday 5th, June 2021

Place : Maison de la Femme, Ouaga

Day 1	
Time	Agenda
8.30	Welcome and installation of participants
9.00	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcoming remarks ▪ Presentation of the objectives ▪ Presentation of Femme International, BARKA and Menstru'elles ▪ Individual presentations of the participants ▪ Presentation of the training program ▪ Sharing of expectations and collaborative definition of interaction rules
10.00	Coffee break
10.15	Part 1: the body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The body from childhood to adulthood (female, male) ▪ Anatomy (internal, external) ▪ Virginity and the hymen
11.15	Part 2: The menstrual cycle

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A word from everyone about menstruation ▪ Getting your period - from puberty to menopause ▪ Understanding my body, understanding my menstrual cycle ▪ The myth of "safe days"
12.45	Lunch break
13.45	Part 3: Health during the menstrual cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS) ▪ Vaginal discharge ▪ <i>Group Exercise: Tracking Your Cycle</i> ▪ Managing your period: preparation, practice, products, advice ▪ Possible diseases associated with the menstrual cycle (endometriosis, PCOS...) ▪ Possible causes of missed or delayed periods ▪ Menopause ▪ Heavy periods ▪ Summary of reasons for seeking medical advice
15.45	Exchange on the myths and realities of the menstrual cycle
17.00	End of the first day

Day 2

Time	Agenda
8.30	Welcome of the participants
9.00	Discussion - Reminder of key points from Day 1 Part 4: Menstrual hygiene products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disposable products: use, advantages and disadvantages ▪ Reusable products: use, advantages and disadvantages
10.00	Coffee break
10.15	Part 5 : discover the menstrual cup <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Users' testimonials ▪ Introduction to the menstrual cup ▪ Positioning the menstrual cup ▪ Using the menstrual cup ▪ Removing the cup
10.45	Part 6: hygiene rules with the cup <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sterilization ▪ Hand washing ▪ Cup storage ▪ Scientific studies on cup and hygiene (toxic shock syndrome and urinary tract infections in particular)
11.15	Part 7: discussions around the cup and summary on the advantages / disadvantages of all existing products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group work: Is it suitable for all? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High school student without proper sanitation? ○ A person who is not sexually active? ○ A person with heavy periods? ○ A woman who has been excised? ▪ Potential barriers in the community
12.15	Lunch break

15.45	Part 8 : Experience sharing from Menstru'elles
16.45	Part 9: Menstrual Cup Distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication and support over the next 3 months ▪ Reminder of possible next steps and timeline for action ▪ Providing women with kits ▪ Certificate distribution ▪ Family photo
17.00	Closing of the workshop

Annex 4: Quotes from participants in the training (FROM THE WHATSAPP GROUP)

Bonjour la famille et bon début de weekend sous une pluie merveilleuse. Je viens vous informer que j'ai utilisé ma cup hier et je n'ai pas trouvé de difficulté pour la mettre et même pour la retirer. La cup est géniale pour moi. Maintenant mon inquiétude est ce que à la longue, il n'y aura pas de problème ? Merci et excellent weekend à tous.

Hello family and good start of the weekend under a wonderful rain. I just wanted to let you know that I used my cup yesterday and I didn't find it difficult to put it on or even to take it off. The cup is great for me. Now my concern is that in the long run, there will be no problem? Thank you and have a great weekend.

Bonjour la famille ; vous allez toutes bien j'espère ! Première utilisation de ma cup bien réussie : pas de douleur ni de fuite ; je ne sens même pas la cup et j'ai une si grande sensation de liberté 🙌🙌🙌

Hello family; you are all doing well I hope! My first use of my cup is going well: no pain, no leakage; I don't even feel the cup and I feel so free 🙌🙌🙌

Mon binôme de formation a aussi utilisé et elle est plus que satisfaite... vive la cup



My training partner also used it and she is more than satisfied... Hurray for the cup 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌

Contente de vous annoncer que j'ai utilisé pour la 1ère fois la cup hier et pas de problème majeur. Grâce à cette plateforme et à l'expérience des unes et autres qui ont déjà utilisés, j'ai pu le faire sans problème et zéro douleur à mon niveau.

I'm happy to announce that I used the cup for the first time yesterday and no major problems. Thanks to this platform and the experience of others who have already used it, I was able to do it without any problem and zero pain.

Salut à toutes ! [...] J'ai utilisé la cup et suis très contente du produit et le trouve très pratique et génial. Koudougou vous salut !!

Hi everyone! [...] I have used the cup and am very happy with the product and find it very practical and great. Koudougou greets you!

Bonsoir la famille ; première utilisation de ma cup bien réussie pas de fuite ni de douleur. Grâce à l'expérience des unes et des autres, j'ai pu l'utiliser. Je suis satisfaite. Vive la cup.

Good evening family; first use of my cup very successful, no leakage or pain. Thanks to everyone's experience, I was able to use it. I am satisfied. Viva la cup.

Bonsoir la famille ; moi aussi j'ai utilisé pour moi, je suis très satisfaite

Good evening family; I also used for me, I am very satisfied

Bonjour braves dames ! Vous allez bien ? Moi je suis très contente de la coupe ! Elle me va très bien et je l'utilise sans problème. Je suis très à l'aise avec.

Hello brave ladies! How are you doing? I am very happy with the cup! It fits me very well and I use it without any problem. I am very comfortable with it.

Bonsoir ; vous allez toutes bien j'espère ! J'utilise ma cup depuis fin juin avec une grande satisfaction ; pas de douleur, pas de fuite, ni gêne.

Good evening; I hope you are all well! I have been using my cup since the end of June with great satisfaction; no pain, no leakage, no discomfort.

Une amie à qui j'ai donné une cup dont je disposais (je l'avais reçue lors d'une formation) avait une gêne à cause de la tige mais tout va bien depuis qu'elle l'a coupée. Je suis plus que satisfaite surtout que j'habite une cour commune ; ce n'était pas du tout aisé d'aller jeter les couches dans le WC externe.

A friend to whom I gave a cup (I had received it during a training) had a discomfort because of the stem but all is well since she cut it. I am also more than satisfied, especially since I live in a common courtyard and it was not at all easy to throw the pads in the shared toilet.

CONVERSATION ON THE WHATSAPP GROUP WITH P. WHO HAS ENCOUNTERED SOME DIFFICULTIES.

NB: ADDITIONAL ADVICE WAS GIVEN BILATERALLY AND TO ENSURE SHE WAS USING THE CORRECT SIZE.

Bonsoir tout le monde j'espère que vous allez bien ; ok dieu merci. Moi aussi, ça va, c'est juste pour vous dire que j'ai utilisé ma cup mais ça fait mal ou bien ? Comme c'est la première fois, c'est pour ça que ça fait mal ? Je ne sais pas. Vous pouvez m'expliquer ?

Good evening everyone I hope you're doing well; ok thank god. I'm fine too, just to let you know that I used my cup but its, right? Since it's my first time, is that the reason why it hurts? I don't know. Can you explain it to me?

Bonsoir, il faut bien la plier avant de l'insérer, pour réduire le diamètre. En plus il faut vérifier qu'elle est bien ouverte et que tout est à l'intérieur, sinon elle vous fera mal si elle

est mal placée. N'hésitez à nous revenir. On est là pour vous aider à l'utiliser. Réessayez !
Courage ! 🤔 🤔

Good evening, you have to fold it well before inserting it, to reduce the diameter. You also have to check that it is well opened and that everything is inside, otherwise it will hurt if it is badly placed. Don't hesitate to come back to us. We're here to help you use it. Try it again! Cheer up!!! 🤔 🤔

Je l'ai bien inséré et il n'y a pas de fuite parce que le sang ne me touche pas, mais je ne sais pas pourquoi maintenant ça me fait mal.

I inserted it well, there is no leakage, but I don't know why it hurts.

Peux-tu essayer de couper de moitié la tige ? C'est peut-être cela qui te gêne à la vulve.

Can you try cutting half of the stem? Maybe that's what's bothering you at the vulva.

Je voulais juste vous dire que la cup je l'ai bien utilisée et c'est très bien. Maintenant ma seule inquiétude, c'est pour la retirer. A la longue, est qu'il n'y aura pas de problème d'élargissement du vagin ? A par cela, il n'y a pas de problème.

I just wanted to let you know that I have been using the cup and it is very good. Now my only concern is to remove it. Also, in the long run, won't there be a problem with vaginal enlargement? Apart from that, there is no problem.

Bravo de l'avoir utilisée. Juste vous rassurer que la cup n'élargie pas le vagin et pas de conséquences à long terme. Il faut toujours pratiquer les mesures d'hygiène c'est à dire se laver toujours les mains avant toute manipulation de la cup. Bon courage et encore bravo 🙌 🙌 🙌

Congratulations on using it. Just to reassure you that the cup does not enlarge the vagina and no long-term consequences. You should always practice hygiene measures i.e. always wash your hands before any handling of the cup. Good luck and again bravo 🙌 🙌 🙌