



# April 2023 Featured Project

Menstrual hygiene kits help girls in Sub-Saharan Africa succeed



TOGETHER WOMEN RISE

# Introducing The MoonCatcher Project

Mission: to optimize girls' lives worldwide by removing barriers related to menstruation

Serving Uganda, Malawi (including a vocational school for deaf students), and Kenya



# About Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda

- At least 1 in 10 girls miss school because of their periods
- Girls miss as much as 20% of the school year; many drop out
- High rates of child marriage and fertility
- 1 in 5 women endure sexual or physical violence



# Life Challenges for Women and Girls Served

- Menstrual hygiene products: unavailable or unaffordable
- Misconceptions about menstruation: widespread
- Culture of silence about menstruation: gender inequality, discriminatory social norms, cultural taboos, poverty, lack of basic services like toilets and sanitary products
- Worse in rural areas



# Sustaining Africa Projects

Sewing cooperatives produce and distribute 15,000 free MoonCatcher Menstrual Management Kits

Each kit includes:

- carrier with waterproof barrier that expands as girl grows (no underwear needed)
- 3 washable absorbent pads
- waterproof bag to store used pads
- calendar to track cycles
- visual instructions on caring for kit



# The Project

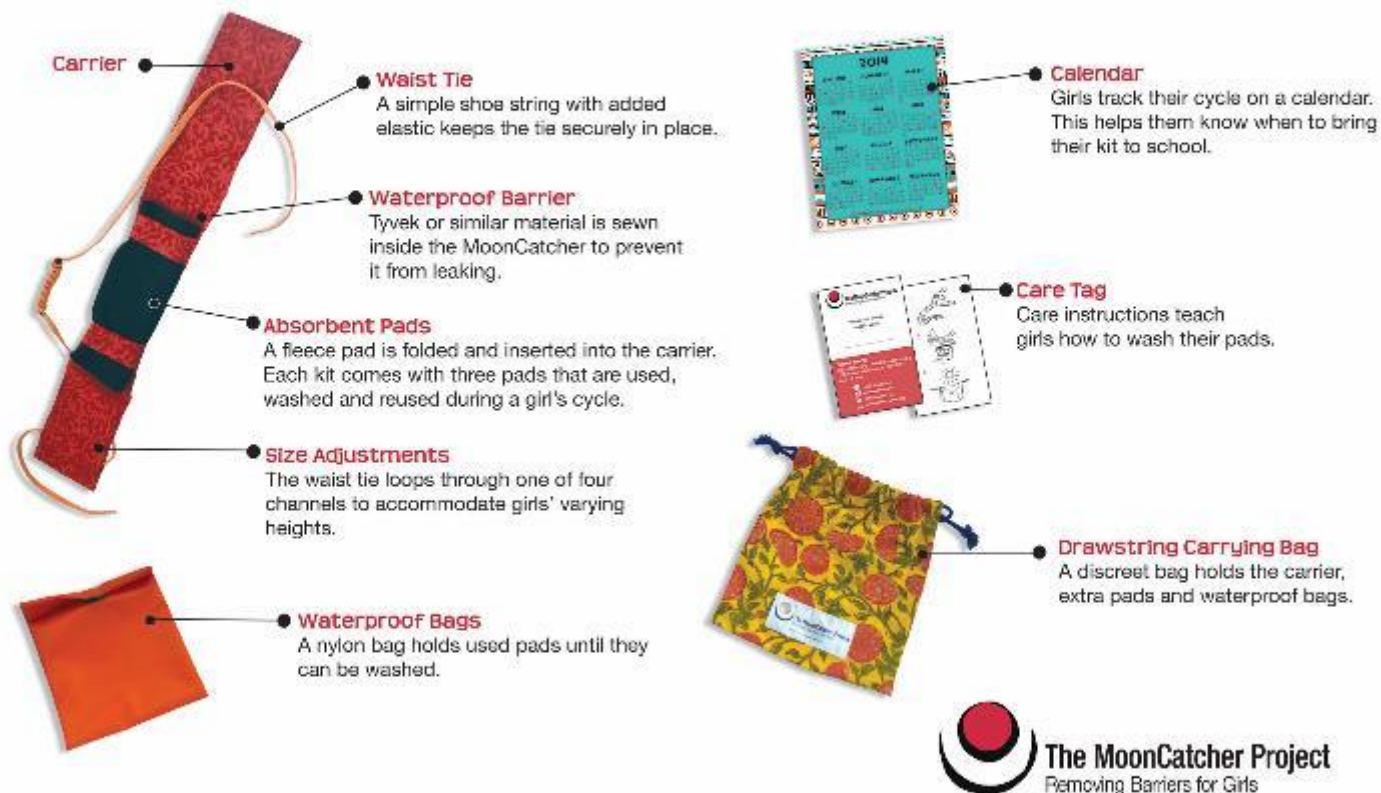
Coordinators distribute kits and provide reproductive health curriculum to regional schools; curriculum also adapted for boys, too

Students learn to use and care for their kit, plot cycles, envision and articulate goals

Budget: \$43,000 15,000 kits: sourced locally - fleece, shoelaces, cording, fabric (for carrier and drawstring bag), elastic, Velcro; Sent from US: calendar, Tyvek (donated), waterproof nylon

**DIRECT IMPACT: 15,000 GIRLS; INDIRECT IMPACT: 43 TAILORS, 3 COORDINATORS, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

# Anatomy of a MoonCatcher Kit



# About The MoonCatcher Project

- Created in 2011 to help keep girls in low-income communities from missing school due to their periods
- Founder Ellie von Wellsheim designed a reusable, washable pad that can be worn without underwear (a luxury in many communities)
- More than 100,000 kits have been manufactured by MCP tailors and volunteers and distributed around the world
- Conversations with teachers led to developing reproductive health curriculum, originally taught to girls, now also educates boys regarding menstruation and reproductive health





# Discussion: Share Your Thoughts

1. How might family dynamics change when girls are no longer hindered by monthly periods?
2. What are the advantages of including curriculum specifically for boys?
3. How do you think this project promotes gender equality?



