

Towel for girls

'Towel for girls' is a project initiated by Favour Ade alongside Elizabeth Agbede, Odunayo Awe, Hephzibah Ite, Oritsejafor Emiko, Unuigboje Ohifeme, Semilore Adekoya and Ope-Adesanya Boluwaji. 'Towel for girls' is aimed at enlightening young women about their hygiene during their periods and also on the usage and disposal of pads. On achieving this goal, we also aspired to provide pads for young girls/women in our community and moving on, that young girls would not need to drop out of schools and the use of cloth or other unsanitary items will be abolished in our community. Our project, which we spent a total of 50 hours on, is categorized under the 3rd Sustainable Development Goal, 'Good Health and Wellbeing'.



Figure 1: Awareness and invitation of prospective participants to seminar.

Moving on, a total of 160,000 Naira was contributed by the members of the team to acquire materials needed, some of which were plastic boxes, flyers, sanitary pads, disposable pants, face masks and snacks although the venue, The Iloko Health Center, in which our seminars took place was given off for use without any payment. Talking about the seminars, we had a total of 2 highly interactive and informative seminars which were held on the 18th and 19th of February 2021. For the awareness of the Iloko members of the community, we went out on the 15th of February, 2021 to distribute flyers and inform them about the importance of the seminars.



Figure 2: Nurse Kelechi's informative presentation

Some of the highlights of our project were the amazing health talks made by Dr. Adeyemi, the school's doctor, where she spoke about menstrual cycles and menstrual flow, there was nevertheless the presentation made by Miss. Kelechi, the school nurse, who started off with a song in our native language 'Yoruba' titled 'Imototo' which means "cleanliness" just to lighten up the mood a little bit, she then went on with the explanation of pad usage and disposal. Another great highlight was the sharing of mini sanitary packs, which consisted of pads and disposable pants, to the over 150 attendees aged 10 and above of the seminars that were held. And to crown the project's highlight was the installation of pad boxes into, as a starter, 5 female toilets in our school. The pad boxes consisted of different brands of pad, disposable pant, plastic bags and tissue rolls.

During the course of the project, some but not all the challenges we expected to face we're difficult to battle, one of which was raising funds. It was a major challenge finding sponsors or donors for both monetary wise and otherwise. We even approached companies that produced sanitary products for support, both in-country companies and companies overseas, but it was to no positive result. Although we did not let it weigh us down, we decided to contribute materials for the project, as stated earlier. Another was the fear of theft of sanitary boxes, which we have spoken to the female staff and students of the school about, but it is still a thought we are sadly holding onto.



Figure 3: Distribution of Sanitary Packs to attendees.

Challenges we were able to overcome were the fear of 'no turn-ups' for the seminars due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but after reassuring the Iloko community members that all COVID-19 precautions will be adhered to, a large number of people showed up for the seminars. And as promised, face masks were handed out to everyone who did not have one handy and all attendees were made to wash their hands before entering the center. One other major challenge we faced was the school vacation, as we were stuck at home and could not carry on with the project in school, but thanks to technology, we were able to create a Whatsapp group chat for the members of the project and the leadership facilitator of our school Mrs. Folowosele, we were also able to create social media handles for our project which could be accessed on [instagram @ towelforgirls](#) and on [twitter @ towelforgirls](#), which I believe is a wonderful step we took. Another was finding a venue, which was surprisingly not as hard as we had thought as Miss Kelechi was able to get us a **2-day allowance to use the Iloko Health Center and as a cherry on the cake, for free.**



Figure4: COVID-19 Protocols taken during seminars.

While the project was ongoing, two students of the school gave testimonials to the impact of the project on them individually. Awe Odunayo said **"Towel for girls project has built a type of female activism in me and I am happy and ready to help my fellow females at any time and also happy to be of help to the Iloko community and also continue the project after I leave Olashore"**. Munira Saludeen said **"The towel for girls project has been so beneficial for me as a day came by so sudden and unexpected, I was on my period and was in deep need of a sanitary pad, but there was none with my friends, so on reaching the toilet to use a bulk of tissue to manage, I saw the pad boxes that I was previously informed about by the Towel for girls representative and that was how they saved me. IT is a very innovative idea they had!"** I, Favour, as well as the rest learnt how to make do with what I have even though it is not what I planned for. All in all, **the members of the Iloko community, the female staff and students of Olashore International School and the members of the Towels For Girls project have all in one way or the other benefitted from this project.** In terms of continuity, we plan on having a meeting with the higher authorities of the school to see if they can carry on with the project. But I speak for myself when I say that, I will continue this project wherever I find myself after Olashore.



Figure 5: One of the beneficiaries of our project.

