

Mukuria Wins Adelina Award

NAIROBI, KENYA, Dec. 6, 2013 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Megan White Mukuria, founder of ZanaAfrica, is the latest recipient of the Adelina Award, a prize awarded for exemplary accomplishment in the areas of humanitarian assistance, environmental improvement, education reform, sustainability, and disaster relief, according to John Toomey, Eula Laki and Lydia Ramos of Friends Beyond Borders and the World Mind Network, co-chairs of the Awards Committee.

Mukuria's organization provides a holistic and sustainable solution to keeping Kenyan girls in school by providing them with locally made sanitary pads.

In Kenya, one million girls miss up to 1.5 months of school because of their period, and the drop-out rate is twice that of boys starting at puberty. Considering that staying in school means girls are four times less likely to contract HIV, five times less likely to become teen mothers, and can earn 10 to 20 percent more, it becomes clear that it is necessary to work on keeping these young women in the classroom.

Mukuria believes that pads for girls, though crucial, are only one part of the equation. Her group is developing a new, more affordable pad that can be distributed widely to meet women's needs and offer a sustainable and scalable business model. They are reinventing the pad-leveraging agricultural byproducts, streamlining the process, and creating a high-quality, radically affordable pad that helps solve an environmental problem rather than creating one.

They have also designed engaging comics to provide critical health education to girls in a way that is fun, standardized, and easily sharable. Young women can better take control of their lives and livelihoods and inspire those around them to do the same.

65 percent of women and girls in Kenya cannot afford pads. This means that over 850,000 girls miss 6 weeks of school every year and women miss valuable work hours. The problem is worse across East Africa with 4 in 5 unable to afford pads.

Reusable pads and rags are the alternatives, but can be unhygienic, leading to long-term health complications. They also cause embarrassing leaks. Girls would rather stay home than risk such humiliation.

ZanaAfrica's mission is to produce the lowest-cost, most eco-responsible sanitary pad in the world and to provide large-scale, cascading impact to women and intermediary partners through distribution.

By 2020 ZanaAfrica will directly support 3 million girls and women with pads, to sustainably win back 5 million school days, 2 million work hours and \$1 million to reinvest in their families. They will equip 23,000 saleswomen to earn an additional \$100/year.

For more information go to <http://www.zanaafrica.org/>.

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