

IRFF UK: Period Education in Schools

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May 27, 2025



Tackling Poverty Through Menstrual Health Education in Africa

Menstruation is a natural part of life - yet in many communities across Africa, it remains a source of stigma, shame and disruption to a girl's education. At IRFF UK, a [charity for Africa](#) based in the UK, we believe that period education in schools is essential to breaking cycles of poverty and ensuring that every child, regardless of gender, can attend school with dignity and confidence.



Why Period Education Matters

Across many African nations, young girls often begin their periods without ever having received proper education about what menstruation is or how to manage it. This lack of knowledge can lead to fear, confusion, and shame - and in many cases, causes girls to miss school or drop out entirely.

By providing period education in schools, we help:

- Break taboos and social stigma
- Empower girls with knowledge and confidence
- Promote hygiene and health
- Keep girls in school and on equal footing with boys

The Reality in African Schools

While the UK curriculum now includes basic menstrual health education, access and quality still vary. In contrast, many African schools lack any structured menstrual education at all. Girls often rely on friends, siblings, or trial and error - and cultural silence around menstruation means these conversations are rare.

At IRFF UK, we work to change that by providing:

- Age-appropriate menstrual health education sessions
- Hygiene training and awareness
- Reusable and sustainable sanitary products
- Resources for teachers and community leaders to deliver accurate and sensitive education

Learn more about our work as a charity for Africa supporting menstrual health across the continent.

Where We Work and What We Do

Our programmes operate in several African countries where period poverty is closely tied to broader issues of poverty, education, and gender inequality. Through local partnerships, we deliver:

- Workshops in schools and youth centres

- Education materials in local languages
- Teacher training to sustain knowledge beyond our visits
- Integration with broader health and hygiene initiatives

By embedding menstrual education into our community projects, we help build stronger, healthier, more confident young people.

How Period Education Helps Fight Poverty

[Period poverty](#) isn't just about a lack of products - it's also about a lack of knowledge and dignity. When girls understand how to manage their periods:

- They are less likely to miss school
- They gain self-esteem and independence
- Their chances of staying in education and escaping poverty dramatically increase

The ripple effects are huge. Educated girls become empowered women who can support families, contribute to their communities, and help lift future generations out of poverty.

Discover how we also tackle period poverty directly through our [period poverty charity](#) initiatives.

Why Comparison Matters: Lessons from the UK

While IRFF UK does not focus on UK-based education programmes, comparing the situation can be helpful. In the UK, where basic menstrual education is part of the curriculum and sanitary products are more widely available, school absenteeism due to menstruation still occurs - especially in low-income communities.

Now imagine the impact in communities where:

- There is no education or awareness
- Girls use rags, leaves, or nothing at all
- Cultural stigma makes it dangerous to talk about periods

The comparison highlights how essential period education is - and how much more urgent the need becomes in under-resourced communities.

Get Involved

You don't need to be on the ground in Africa to make a difference.

Support Our Mission

- [Donate](#) to fund education sessions, reusable sanitary kits, and training.
- Fundraise through your school, workplace or community group.
- Spread awareness by sharing our message and supporting menstrual equity worldwide.

Partner With Us

We work with schools, NGOs, local organisations and community leaders. If you'd like to collaborate or support one of our programmes, we'd love to hear from you.

Period education in schools is not just a health topic - it's a human rights issue. At IRFF UK, we're proud to lead this work across Africa, helping communities gain knowledge, break taboos, and build a brighter future for all.