

Priest supplies schoolgirls with sanitary pads

MUKONO

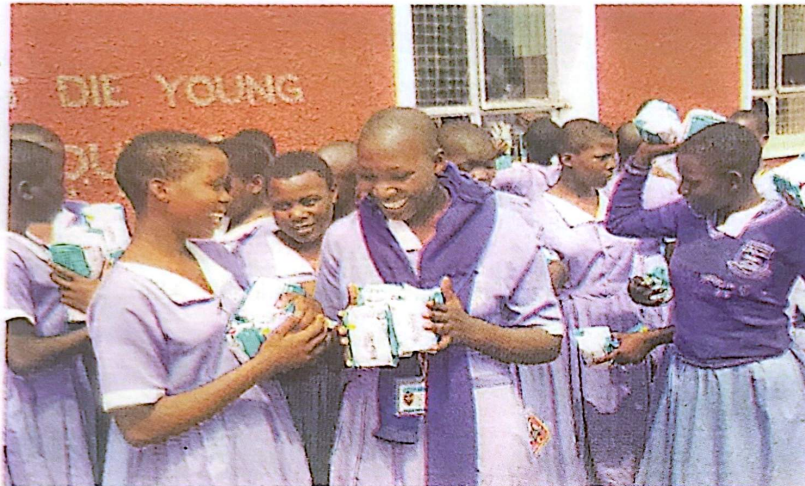
By Henry Nsubuga

Pupils in 15 government-aided Catholic Church-founded schools in Naggalama parish in Mukono district have a cause to smile after receiving a consignment of sanitary pads, maize flour and scholastic materials, worth sh25m, from the parish priest, the Rev. Fr Ignatius Ndawula.

Ndawula, who got the donation from his friends in America, said he intervened because pupils from these schools have been performing poorly as a result of failure to have lunch at school and the lack of scholastic materials.

"Girls were always absent whenever they were in their menstruation periods, which affected their performance. I intervened last year and there is some improvement," Ndawula said.

Girls received four packets of sanitary pads each, whereas the rest of the children received between three to six books, two pens and two pencils each.



Excited pupils of St Joseph's Mixed Primary Schools holding their sanitary pads. Photos by Henry Nsubuga

Ndawula added that due to his intervention, pupils are more active in school, which was not the case before.

"In some schools, teachers could go a week without lunch," he said.

Mary Josephine Nabuyungo, the

headteacher of St. Joseph's Mixed Primary School in Naggalama and the head of the Catholic Church

schools in Lugazi Diocese, delivered the consignment. She said each of the

13 schools received 200kg of maize

"Our girls have been using toilet paper, pieces of old clothes and banana fibers, which are unhygienic." Teacher

flour from Ndawula.

The senior woman teacher at St Bazzeketta Primary School Namyoya, Joyce Nabidde, said because the girls are not used to modern sanitary pads, some of them were shy while receiving them, not knowing that they will improve their wellbeing and hygiene.

"Our girls have been using toilet paper, pieces of old clothes and banana fibres, which are unhygienic and not recommended by health workers."



Rev. Fr Ignatius Ndawula

As a result, they always missed school during menstruation because their friends make fun of them," Nabidde said.

Nabuyungo said they wonder why some parents send their children to school without books and pens.

"It is a hard task to request parents to feed their children while at school. A parent will refuse to pay sh10,000 for the child to have lunch at school and use sh15,000 to go to the office of the resident district commissioner to report a teacher," she said.