**Period Poverty News Report**

***Written by Reewa Bennett***

Period poverty is when women have a lack of feminine hygiene products because they cannot afford them. It is not talked about enough as there is a certain stigma around it but today, we are going to discuss it.

In Kenya around 50% of school-age girls do not have a way to get feminine hygiene products. In fact, 1 in 10 girls in Africa do not attend school because they have no means of obtaining menstrual products or because there are not any secure, private toilets in which they can go to at their place of education. Plus, in India about 12% of its 355 million menstruating women are not able to pay for feminine hygiene products. (Source: [www.actionaid.org.uk](http://www.actionaid.org.uk))

Here is what Mrs Yates, a member of the wellness centre staff, had to say about period poverty:

“Feminine hygiene products are labelled as a luxury and these can be very expensive and lots of households can’t afford to provide these for their children. This has an impact on the girls themselves because they feel guilty or unable to ask for these items. They can add up to quite a lot of money and I feel as though this makes people feel very vulnerable and very susceptible to bullying or impacts their mental health. These products should be available for all girls to use... [Period poverty] really impacts their self-confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem.”

However, there are people out there helping. Free Periods is a not-for-profit campaign group started by Amika George. It is an organisation by a teen, for teens, someone who was tired of seeing so many young girls suffering because of a natural process. This organisation helped push the Government to implement changes such as the period scheme in schools. In the UK 1 in 10 school age children cannot afford menstrual products. (Source: [www.freeperiods.org](http://www.freeperiods.org))

Another organisation helping to tackle period poverty on a more global scale is Period Poverty UK. This is a team fundraising money for menstrual products for women who do not have access to them. Since 2013, the team has donated over six million pads for women in crisis. (Source: <https://periodpoverty.uk>)

The Government have been trying to make a difference too. In 2019 the period poverty taskforce met for the first time and Penny Mordaunt launched new funds to help tackle period poverty globally. Then fast forward to 2021 and the period product scheme was available for schools and colleges in England. (Source: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

On the Government Website it says: “The period product scheme is available to all [state maintained schools](https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school) and 16 to 19 education organisations in England.” It also says: “The scheme does not cover: learners on higher education qualifications”

Although the Government are helping, they are still not doing enough to support women in crisis. The period product scheme only applies to school children. What about all the adults that cannot afford these products?

As you can see, period poverty is still quite the issue within the UK and all over the world. However, there are people helping there and you can too by donating to organisations and charities such as the ones mentioned or just spreading awareness with those around you. Together we can break the stigma around period poverty and make essential products like these available to every woman everywhere.