



**“HERE FOR CHILDREN”**

**PUSH COMMUNITY INITIATIVE ANNUAL REPORT, 2020**



**Figure 1** Girls supported to make sanitary pads show their products to the SPSWO, Mbale

## **FOREWORD FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON:**

At Push Community, it is our culture to account to our stakeholders including beneficiaries, Government, Development partners and staff. We take responsibility for the failures and attribute success to team work and stakeholder engagement.

It gives me pleasure to share Push Community Initiative’s first Annual Report since her inception in 2019. As you may note, PCI is just one year old now. We are delighted that within our infancy stage, we were able to secure funding and deliver on some of our mandate and strategic objectives.

As an organization, we strongly believe and understand that we are: “Here for Children” and will work towards pushing for the best interest of all children within our reach and capacity.

This Annual Report, January –December, 2020 is one of the ways of accounting to our very much appreciated stakeholders and development partners. The report provides an account of the successes, challenges and lessons learnt in the year 2020.

As you are all aware, the year 2020 will be remembered in the history of development work due the global COVID-19 pandemic. It is therefore my humble pleasure to share the milestones achieved in 2020 despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. We shall continue to seek for your generous financial, technical and moral support to reach greater heights as we serve vulnerable children in the year, 2021.

Thank you very much.

TAAKA JANEPHER,

**BOARD CHAIRPERSON.**

## MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY MANAGER

Global Peace and development cannot be achieved by actions of any single organization, government or individual but it is from concerted efforts of various entities world over. PCI has joined a team of global actors to promote global peace and development through her interventions with vulnerable children and communities in Eastern Uganda.

In the past year 2020, PCI interventions benefited 200 beneficiaries majority of who were adolescent girls and youth (12-24 years). I wish to join the board chairperson in thanking all stakeholders for your contribution towards this achievement despite the effects of COVID-19.

In the year 2021, we hope to reach more female adolescents and youth with skills and knowledge for empowerment. We will continue to work with District and likeminded partners to identify vulnerable girls mobilize resources and support them.

On behalf of Push Community Initiative management and on behalf of beneficiaries and with much pleasure, I do extend our sincere gratitude to the Rights Now Foundation for the support and partnership during the year 2020. We also extend our gratitude to the Mbale District Local Government for providing an enabling environment which enabled PCI to successfully implement the S4E project in Bufumbo.

Yours Faithfully,

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W. MASSA KENNETH.

**COUNTRY MANAGER.**

## **1.0: PCI Background:**

Push Community Initiative (PCI) is an indigenous Child focused Non Governmental Organization established in 2019. It is registered with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau as a Company Limited by Guarantee under Certificate **No.80020002072151**, the Uganda NGO Bureau under **Reg No.5101** and **Permit No.549**.

### **1.1. Our vision:**

“Empowered and productive community safe for children”

### **1.2. Our mission:**

“To protect children from all forms of abuse through interventions that overcome poverty, ignorance, disease and social injustice”.

### **1.3. Our Core Values:**

- Compassion and Love for children ,
- Time management,
- Accountability
- Professionalism

## **2.0 . Office and office set up, registration and operations:**

With support from the Board of Directors, PCI opened up her Headquarters in Jinja on Plot 2411 Kyamagwa and a field office in Jewa Town Council in Mbale District. In addition, a Post Office Box number 1655 and organizational website: [www.pushcommunity.org](http://www.pushcommunity.org) were opened up. The offices both in Jinja and Mbale were equipped with furniture and other office basics.

### **2.1. Organize and maintain Field office in Bufumbo**

The field office in Bufumbo was renovated, painted and installed with electric power. It is now fairly good and beneficiaries are happy. Hand washing facility was provided, masks distributed to trainees and staff in line with COVID-19 Ministry of Health Guidelines. The office was also equipped with additional furniture to facilitate the trainings and a sign post installed.

## **3.0. Programme Implementation:**

On 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 PCI received funds from STIFTELSEN RIGHTSNOW Foundation to implement the Skills for Education (S4E) project in Bufumbo Sub-county in Mbale District.

- **Project Goal:** To contribute to improved and equitable access to quality Basic Education in Uganda.
- **Project Purpose:** To facilitate the menstrual hygiene needs of 500 vulnerable girls (8-18 years) to stay in school through training and support on making sanitary pads using local materials and promoting art and craft for income generation by 2021

The project was launched on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2020 in Bufumbo Sub-county in Mbale District.

### 3.1. Launch of the S4E project

The process started with PCI engaging the Mbale District leaders and other stakeholders (Chief Administrative Officer-CAO, District Community Development Officer-DCDO, Senior Probation and Welfare Officer-SPWO, Bufumbo Subcounty Chief, Bufumbo Local Council III Chairperson and Parish chiefs) to embrace the project. Letters of introduction were shared with relevant offices and courtesy calls made to the respective offices leading to the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Push Community Initiative and Mbale District Local Government. The project was then launched on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 at Jewa Church of Uganda.

### 3.2. Procure equipment and training materials for Sanitary Pads making:

To facilitate the training of adolescent girls on making sanitary pads for menstrual hygiene management, equipment and tools were procured from Kampala and delivered to Mbale field office between 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. All the equipment were engraved as a safety measure and for easy identification.

The list below shows the equipment and materials procured:

Training Equipment	Qty
Electric overlock machine	1
Manual straight machine	5
Button Press Machine	1
Button hole machine	1
Sweater knitting machine	1
Pair of scissors	10
Plastic Pins - 1 Big Packet of 144 pcs	1
Pad wood cut shapes	10
Sewing threads in rolls	10

Velkro	10
Tape measure	10
Holding pin sets	10
Sewing needles per set	10
Tailor chalk in boxes	2
Loading and off loading	1
Fleece in metres	32
Polythene in rolls	2
Flannel in rolls	2
Poplin cloth in rolls	2

### 3.3. Train project Beneficiaries on making sanitary pads:

PCI is aware that menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is an essential aspect of hygiene for women and adolescent girls between menarche and menopause. Quite often, young adolescent girls tend to be less prepared for MHM and suffer from anxiety, apprehensions, fear and shame during their menses. Despite being an important issue concerning women and girls in the menstruating age group MHM is often overlooked by caregivers, parents and other stakeholders contributing to increased defilement and school dropout.

During the reporting period, PCI organized two trainings on making reusable sanitary pads. The first training was for three days and was attended by 60 participants. The training was conducted between Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020 at Jewa Church of Uganda, Bufumbo Sub-county. The second training lasted two days from 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 also organized at Jewa Church of Uganda. The training was attended by 50 adolescent girls.



*Some of the supported girls engaged in making sanitary pads in Mbale.*

Overall One Hundred (110) people have been trained on Making reusable sanitary pads ( 90 adolescent girls - 8-18 and 20 adults(para-social workers).The para-social workers are helpful in mobilizing the community and cascading the information on reusable sanitary pads and menstrual hygiene management.

### ***3.4. Beneficiary selection and Registration:***

PCI developed a tool which guided in the identification and selection of the beneficiaries. Key elements on the tool included, age, sex, education level and whether the child was orphaned or not. The form was shared with the local council leaders at parish level (LC2) who supported in the selection of beneficiaries. Due to the high demand each parish was allocated a specific number

### ***3.5.Trainers***

PCI head hunted and signed M.O.U with an Independent consultant Mr.Ngobi Joshua from Women Rights Initiative (WORI) to train the girls in the first phase. WORl and her staff are known for making durable pads for over 5 years and are PCI good partners. The second phase training was facilitated by PCI staff and selected adolescent girls who had attended the first training.

### **3.6. Key results:**

-Overall 110 participants (90 girls and 20 adults) were trained on hand sewing and machine sewing of sanitary pads.

-PCI used the opportunity to raise awareness on her interventions in Bufumbo and Uganda

- 30 girls ( 15 from the MHM training) enrolled for 9 months artisan training which started on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.

### **3.7. Enroll girls for artisan 9 months tailoring training:**

Parents and beneficiaries requested to be trained in professional tailoring due to the COVID-19 challenge which has made many of the girls redundant at home and exposed to a number of risks. In response PCI recruited one community person to take charge of the tailoring training. The officer is currently working with 2 volunteers to conduct training for 30 girls enrolled for the 9 months. To be able to fit in the available training equipment and resources, the daily training is scheduled in sessions (Morning-10 girls, afternoon-10 and evening session 10 girls). To facilitate the trainers, PCI requested parents to contribute at least 500=(five hundred UGX shillings) per day. To many of the parents/caregivers, this is much money and they could not afford. By the end of December, some Five girls had dropped out and only six caregivers had made some contribution.PCI intends to mobilize funds and engage the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) to examine and award the trainees with certificates at the end of training cycle.





**Some of the beneficiaries enrolled on tailoring skills training in Mbale.**

#### **4.0. Project Support supervision and Monitoring:**

The Project Coordinator and Program Manager were in Mbale to support the volunteers in implementing the project. They played a key role in developing the tools for beneficiary identification and activity reports, supported in mobilization of the beneficiaries and engaged relevant stakeholders to embrace the project which made the project launch and training a success.

Observations from the monitoring show that the community has embraced the project and tailoring training is going on well. There is high demand for skills in tailoring and this is because it is the only skilling opportunity available in the community. The use of washable sanitary pads has been adopted but care givers and beneficiaries expressed that it is difficult to find local materials to make a fine sanitary pad thus requesting PCI to avail them with some materials so that they continue with hand sewing of the pads.

#### **4.1. Project Impact/Change:**

120 vulnerable girls of school going age provided with menstrual hygiene management materials (reusable and washable sanitary pads). These include 90 girls who received 3 pieces of sanitary pads each at the end of the

training and 30 girls who received the pads on joining the tailoring classes. Our volunteers also distributed over 100 pads to women and girls during community mobilization and information sharing. PCI has plans to reach out to selected beneficiaries in the coming year to document their stories about the use of the pads.

50 girls have been trained as trainers of trainees in making handmade sanitary towels for sustainable management of menstrual hygiene needs. Some the TOTs also joined the professional tailoring and have attended the training for three (3) months now. These are able to make the sanitary pads using sewing machine in addition to hand making.

#### **5.0. Finance Accounting System:**

PCI is in the process of establishing a strong finance and accounting system. During the reporting period, the organization procured and established QuickBooks accounting software to support the finance department and produce quality financial reports.

#### **6.0. Human Resource:**

During the reporting period, PCI recruited one security guard to keep the field office in Bufumbo where the sewing machines and sanitary pad making workshop is established, one Artisan trainer to train girls in professional tailoring at Bufumbo field office, 2 Volunteers were recruited to support in the mobilization and information dissemination on sanitary pads.

At the head office in Jinja, PCI recruited one technical volunteer to support the administration function to enable the program manager to engage with stakeholders, increase resource mobilization and conduct support supervision to the field office in Mbale.

#### **7.0. Partnership:**

At PCI we believe that no single organization has capacity to prevent and respond to child abuse, exploitation and violence in Uganda. This can only be achieved through collaborative efforts and partnerships with the Government, the community and relevant NGOs.

In the reporting period (2020), PCI signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Mbale District Local Government for strengthened collaboration and partnership in prevention and response to child abuse. The MOU stipulates the role of Mbale District Local Government: provide policy guidance related to the project, supervise and monitor the implementation of the project, support in the identification of project

beneficiaries, support in community and stakeholder mobilization and ensure general community security and safety for smooth implementation of the project.

Indeed the Government has been supportive in its role. During the project implementation, we received support from the Probation and Social Welfare Officer in form of linkages, policy guidance and officiating project trainings. The Bufumbo Community Development officer has been supportive in linking PCI to the government program of the “Emyonga” which is aimed at increasing skills and knowledge among youths for employment creation.

## **8.0. Resource Mobilization:**

In the reporting period, the organization pursued a multi-sectoral approach to resource mobilization. The community contributed resources in terms of voluntary mobilization and information sharing. In Mbale, Jewa Church of Uganda provided the training venue and facilities during the training of girls on sanitary pads making. In addition, one of the community members provided office space for the field office in Bufumbo.

Overall, PCI resource mobilization involved mainly proposal writing. However, due to the Global Challenges posed by COVID-19, the organization managed to attract only one donor: Rights Now Foundation who funded the S4E project to enable training of adolescent girls on menstrual Hygiene management and sanitary pads making. Under the leadership of the Programme Manager, PCI will continue to mobilize resources both from within the country and from International development partners.

## **9.0. Challenges:**

- COVID-19 has continued to pose a number of challenges including cost of doing business and implementing the ministry of health standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Many of the target beneficiaries were affected by COVID-19 economically, socially and emotionally. Many of the targeted children stayed at home due to closure of schools and have since engaged in child labour and other risky activities likely to negatively impact on their growth and development.
- The implementation of most activities was affected. The affected included those which required direct engagement with the community and stakeholders.
- Similarly, majority of the proposals submitted for funding received regrets since the potential development partners were also affected by COVID-19. This state of affairs affected the entire organization and beneficiaries.

## **9.1. Action plan to address the challenges:**

Many of the challenges faced by the organization revolved around the Global pandemic of COVID-19. The organization like many others will review her operations to exist in the new normal environment posed by the pandemic.

### **10. Sustainability:**

PCI is in the process of developing project models that are impactful and self sustaining. This is because the COVID-19 pandemic effect provided lessons to the organization to reduce on donor dependence.

The S4E project is self sustaining in that after the training; beneficiaries are able to make handmade washable pads by themselves using local materials

Using the acquired sewing machines and other equipment, PCI has opened up a sanitary making workshop at her field offices in Bufumbo where selected girls come to sew the pads. The pads are then packaged and taken to nearby shops and health facility for sale, the money is collected and used to buy materials (inputs) for production. The team (volunteers and beneficiaries) also introduced making of masks in response to COVID-19. The masks are as well sold at a subsidized fee and the proceeds are used to facilitate volunteer and beneficiary welfare while at the office.

The trained Community volunteers (Para-social workers) and adolescent girls are working as TOTs to train additional girls and women in the community on hand made washable sanitary pads thus increasing coverage and sustainability.

### **11. Lessons Learnt:**

There is huge demand for empowerment skills in the community most especially by women and girls. This was observed when the mothers and older women expressed interest to join tailoring training and art and craft. The women also want the washable sanitary pads for themselves yet PCI target is adolescent girls. This high demand is attributed partly to the economic challenges women and girls face resulting from irresponsible household heads or spouses.

Respect for legal procedures and engaging the District stakeholders contributes to smooth project implementation. This was realized when on signing the MOU with Mbale District, the Probation officer pledged her full support for the project and actually invited PCI to a stakeholders meeting which provided platform for a young organization like PCI to be known in the entire District and Mbale City in a short time.

## Children's voice:

~~No~~ ~~20/10/21~~

RE: PCI TRAINING FOR THREE DAYS

Greetings to the probational officer - Thanks for the good work you are doing to push our communities a step ahead most especially the girl child.

We are pleased to report to you that within this three days, we have seen PCI doing a very good work especially to girls. The training has been successful and we are happy to report to you that skills like pad making and tailoring have been instilled.

However the programme began on Monday with the Reverend appreciating the PCI for coming into our community and gave them a go ahead to do the work.

However he summarised by giving a prayer. The chair person encouraged us to be attentive and we ask questions where necessary.

The time keeper encouraged us to be punctual and follow the programme as it goes.

The training on Monday began at 9:00 am and ended at 5:00 pm with two meals.

On Tuesday, the training commenced with physical exercise for 30 minutes after that the training of with which we had our two meals then on Wednesday we started with a prayer and we went for breakfast.

In conclusion, 60 girls have successfully benefited and all have been registered through filling the PCI forms. I once again thank you for the recommended work you have done in this community and I pray

Yours Sincerely  
Winnie the  
Beneficiary.

**0. Photo Gallery:**



Figure 2 Left are Participants during training session and right are samples of sanitary pads made and presented to the Mbale District SPWO



Left to right, beneficiaries using some of the sewing machines procured with funding from Rights Now



Figure 3: Above are some of the participants during the training at Jewa Church of Uganda, Bufumbo Subcounty, Mbale District.



Some of the beneficiaries engaged in tailoring skill at PCI Bufumbo skills center.