

**GIRLS FLOW FREE**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2020**

REGISTERED CHARITY, 1187570



## About Girls Flow Free

**Girls Flow Free (GFF) was established and started operating in May 2019. GFF delivers intervention through menstrual hygiene and health education and the provision of free menstrual supplies to improve lives for girls and women in deprived communities in Ghana.**

In just over a year and a half of founding Girls Flow Free, without any funding or grants, we have grown from a small classroom, in one town, and now operate in 9 regions of Ghana including two of the most neglected and poor regions of Ghana. We have reached over 5000 school children and 1000 women with menstrual health and hygiene education with 8700 menstrual pads given.

## The communities we serve

- Deprived communities in poor regions of Ghana
- Communities that are hard to reach with poor road network
- Most households live on less than £1 a day.
- High incidence of teenage and unwanted pregnancies
- Children's health and education are significantly affected





## How we do it

**Girls Flow Free runs 3 intervention programs, all guided by the menstrual needs of girls and women communities:**

**SCHOOL/COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** We partner with local government schools, local government health agencies to educate girls and women on menstrual health and hygiene. The sensitisation program creates awareness in the community on MHH, gives girls and women knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, how to manage their periods in dignity, to make informed choices on menstrual products and sexual health. This monthly outreach program responds to requests made to us from community leaders/teachers/ women groups. We get these nominations from our website.

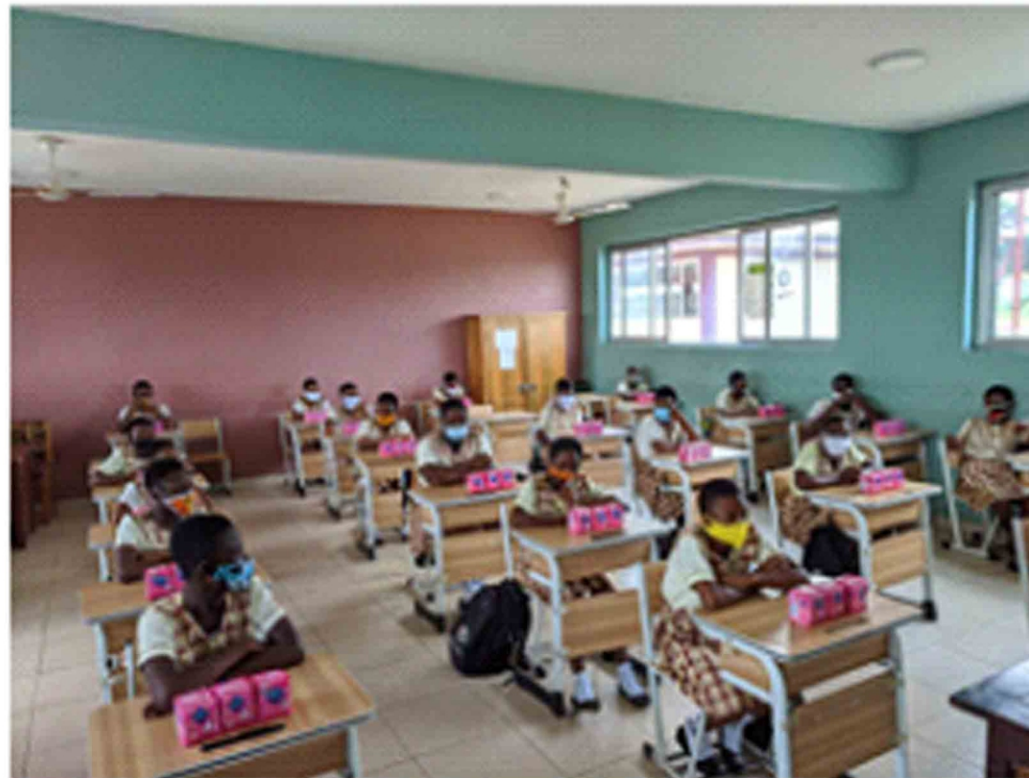
**BENEFICIARY SCHOOLS:** In communities where families face severe poverty and challenges in providing daily needs it becomes extremely difficult for parents to provide menstrual pads for girls every month. GFF works with schools to provide menstrual pads for girls each school term to increase pupil attendance and enable the completion of basic education. By providing menstrual pads on a termly basis to girls, we are reducing the risk of teenage and unwanted pregnancy, transactional sex for pads, sexually transmitted infections like HIV, urinary tract infections, and long term likely occurrence of infertility.

**SHADES OF RED:** This is an annual menstrual health and hygiene sensitisation program that brings children from basic schools to receive education on MHH. Shades of Red is designed to take MHH education to hard to reach communities where GFF does not have coordinators to provide community outreach. Shades of Red seeks to support and kickstart community groups to continue the awareness program we start in their communities. We provide support, training to community groups for their success in an extremely challenging economic environment.





COVID-19 worsened the plight of girls in accessing safe and hygienic menstrual products. There was a surge in the demand for menstrual pads. At a time when 50% of small international development charities were predicted to close, we are incredibly proud and grateful that given our short time of existence, we have been able to work dynamically through the crisis. During the lockdown in Ghana, we reached **170 schoolgirls** from the **Northern and Ashanti Regions**. On the partial return to school for final years to write BECE final exams on **29th July 2020**, we reached **1005 school girls** from **42 schools in 9 regions** in Ghana with menstrual pads. This was captured and published by the Ghana News Agency. We worked effectively through the COVID-19 crisis to help girls to stay in school at a crucial time of their education, increased their prospects of continuing to Senior High School, and protected the organisation.



The founding principle of GFF is to eradicate period poverty and barriers to girls' achievement because of menstruation. We place great value in listening to the voices of girls and taking focused action to provide opportunities for them to have their menstruation in dignity. In 2021, we were committed to keeping the menstrual needs of our beneficiaries at the heart of every single decision that we make. Listening to the experiences of girls during the pandemic, we fully understand what is needed for the 'new normal' and are perfectly placed to carry out excellent work to build the confidence of girls in managing their menstruation.





### **Objectives: January 2021 to June 2021**

- Continue to respond to community needs by providing monthly outreaches to girls
- Equip our beneficiaries with skills in making their own reusable pads
- Acquire laptops, printers and mobiles phones to facilitate remote work.
- Pay country director on a part-time basis to devote more time to the organisation.
- Provide focused professional development training to our coordinators and volunteers in Ghana, upskilling and capacity building so they can take on increased responsibility
- To reach more girls and add on beneficiary schools

### **Objectives: July 2021 to December 2021**

- Successful launch of Zongo Outreach in the deprived community of Tamale Municipality.
- Continue to imbed and improve supporting beneficiaries to ensure they have the best possible access to MHH education and menstrual pads.
- Continue to improve processes and procedures to make our work increasingly effective, efficient, and transparent
- Build capacity and sustainability, including introducing reusable pads to communities who can use them without challenges and increased risk.



## The Future

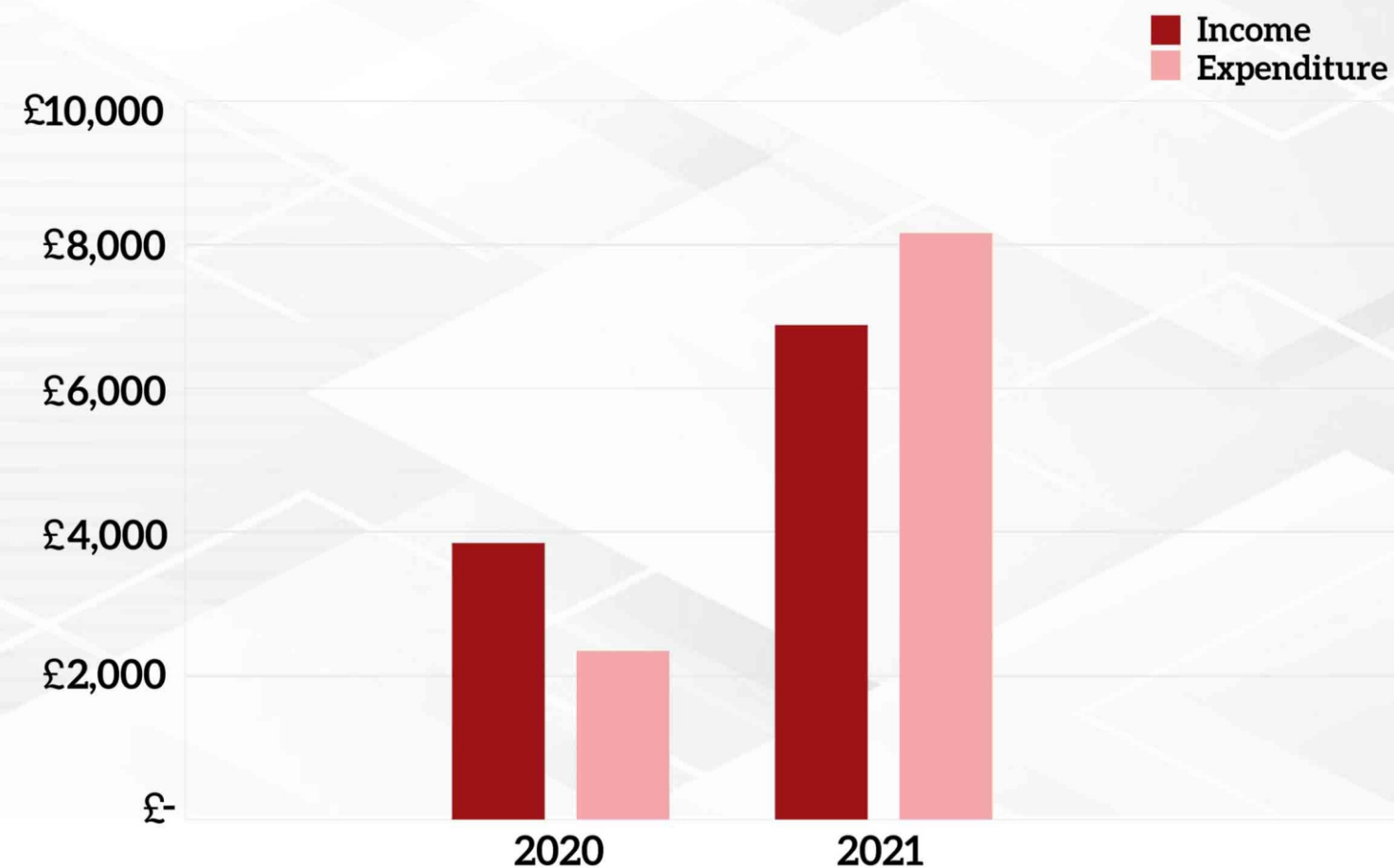
The pandemic has been a learning curve for us, and as a result, we feel significantly better armed to work in a competitive, constantly evolving world. We are more effective and efficient than ever before – and we have undoubtedly proven our resilience. We hope to add on at least 1 new region, two more schools and new volunteers recruited. We plan that, by 2025, every region in Ghana will be able to access our programs. We are excited about the future and seek flexible donors who wish to invest in a small organisation doing lifesaving, community leadership and development work in the poorest communities in Ghana.





## Finances

As a new and growing charity prudent financial management is our bedrock making sure the little we have is prioritised to meet our main charitable purpose. Even with the personal contribution of the Board of Trustees and taking up some extra costs, we do have a deficit. We are very positive about the future that our first funding will help us clear the deficit and set us on a straight course. Looking forward to investing significantly in relationship building and volunteer fundraising capacity, we plan for income to meet expenditure (as a minimum) over the next 5 years.





## Organisational Structure

GFF has an outstanding and diverse team of trustees, coordinators and volunteers, all of whom are committed, skilled, and passionate about girls education and their menstrual health. Our volunteers are mostly teachers and health care workers, who live in the communities we work and so have knowledge on the needs of girls. We have 10 volunteers, local people doing brilliant work in their language, making real change for their communities. Our UK board of trustees is talented and dedicated. Having lived most of our adult's lives in Ghana, our input and dedication to make Girls Flow free are dependent on the hardship we know girls are facing because of period poverty. Professional development, local leadership, and capacity building are a priority for us to increase the capacity of coordinators and volunteers in the best possible way.





# Get Involved

We are a volunteer-led organisation. Your knowledge, expertise and time will make an invaluable contribution to our team.



Email: [Girlsflowfree@gmail.com](mailto:Girlsflowfree@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.girlsflowfree.org](http://www.girlsflowfree.org)

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