



## **For Immediate Release:**

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## **ODFL Helping Developing World Countries Deal with Coronavirus** Producing medical masks in Kenya and Nepal

*Livermore, CA*—U.S. nonprofit [One Dollar For Life](#) (ODFL) announced today its sewing centers in Kenya and Nepal are making masks for medical and emergency personnel in both countries. This is in response to the coronavirus pandemic sweeping the world.

Through local partners in Nyeri, Kenya and Dang, Nepal, ODFL operates sewing centers that make washable cotton sanitary pads for adolescent girls to help them manage their periods. The same seamstresses making those pads are now sewing coronavirus masks.

The change is in response to the global coronavirus pandemic. As of March 24, 2020, more 420,000 people had been diagnosed with coronavirus. More than 19,000 deaths have occurred.

A shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) in all countries has hampered detection and prevention of the virus. This includes protective masks of the type ODFL is making.

The masks are made of the same sturdy cotton cloth that is used in the manufacture of ODFL's Girls Equality Project kits. They can be washed, sanitized, and reused dozens of times. The masks cost approximately 30 cents apiece to produce in both countries.

ODFL's Nepal partner, Nepal Women's Community Service Center has already made 9,000 of the masks. More than 3,000 have been donated to the [Rapti Science Hospital](#) in Dang, Nepal.

ODFL's Kenyan partner, Kiini Sustainable Initiative (KISI), has worked with ODFL for nine years. It has built classrooms, latrines, water catchment systems, and other projects to help Kenyan people.

KISI operates the GEP Sewing Center in Nyeri, where masks are now being made. It is now producing 3,000 masks for the Nyeri County Community Services agency which serves the county population of 760,000.

Robert Freeman, Executive Director of ODFL commented, "The virus has shown us just how interconnected the world is—in a negative way. Making masks for each other uses a positive dimension of that interconnection to help solve the problem."

The nonprofit is in discussion with several hospitals in northern California to bring the masks to the U.S. Because of their low cost to make and their reusability, they cost far less than the current price of one-time-usage paper masks.

The Palo Alto Kiwanis Club has agreed to sponsor importation of 1,000 of the masks for local hospitals to distribute to low-income and indigent patients who cannot afford commercial masks.

Brenda Birrell of ODFL is Technical Director of the project. She designed the pattern and instructions for seamstresses to use in making the masks. She also oversaw creation of the ODFL sewing centers.

According to Birrell, "The technical demands of making the masks are not high, but the demand for quality is." Birrell consulted with U.S. medical authorities when designing the mask. The design includes a core of tightly-woven hypoallergenic cotton to act as a barrier against virus.

One Dollar For Life was started in 2007 by a high school teacher in California. He wanted to show his students the power they had to bring goodness into the world. The cost? One dollar, hence the organization's name. It has since expanded to include donations in any amount from adults as well.

Since its founding, in 2007, ODFL has since built 132 small-scale infrastructure projects in sixteen developing world countries. [These include](#) classrooms, medical clinics, science labs, computer labs, water wells, and other projects that improve life chances for some of the poorest people in the world. Over their expected lives, these projects will help more than 300,000 of the poorest people in the world.

The nonprofit has raised money from private foundations to cover its operating expenses such as phones, website, literature, etc. It is entirely volunteer-run. As a result, 100% of every dollar donated by an individual goes to the donor's designated project.

**Photos:** (click on active link to get electronic JPG version)



[Making masks in Kenya](#)



[Making masks in Nepal](#)



[Finished Masks](#)



[Mask in use](#)



[Kenyan doctor with mask](#)