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Global Uplift and Rotary Clubs Help Developing World Girls
Save a Girl[™] Program helps African and Asian Girls Stay in School

Livermore, CA—The Global Uplift Project (TGUP) and San Francisco Bay Area Rotary Clubs from Rotary District 5170 are working to help 11,000 adolescent girls in Africa and Asia stay in school. Girls dropping out of school might be the greatest *preventable* human tragedy in the world, the two parties say.

The collaboration is providing adolescent girls in developing countries with washable, reusable sanitary pads. The pads, in a kit called *Save a Girl*[™], help the girls manage their period so they can stay in school.

According to UNICEF, more than 20,000,000 adolescent girls drop out of school every year because they cannot manage their period. The number might be as high as 50,000,000. The cost to aggregate human potential is incalculable, says the agency.

The Global Uplift Project has created a washable, reusable sanitary pad that costs \$6 to make and lasts three years. [More than 46,000 SaG kits](#) have been distributed so far, in nine developing world countries. This is the kit that TGUP and Rotary District 5170 are making available and giving free of charge to girls in Africa and Asia.

According to Brenda Birrell, TGUP's Director of *Save a Girl*TM Programs, "When a 12- or 13-year old girl drops out of school, it is almost always catastrophic. She might be sold as a child bride. Or, sold into the sex trade. In no case is she able to realize her human potential. The tragedy is that this is entirely preventable."

TGUP is partnering with Rotary District 5170 in the San Francisco Bay Area to help address this problem. The District stretches from Santa Cruz in the south up to Palo Alto on the Peninsula, east to Livermore and as far north as Oakland. It includes 62 clubs and more than 3,800 members.

Mrs. Savita Vaidhyathan, Rotary District 5170 Governor, said that the project is part of the District's *Independence Through Menstrual Hygiene* campaign and Rotary International's #Empowering-girls initiative.

"Keeping adolescent girls in the developing world in school might be the single most effective thing we can do to improve the human condition," she said. "A period should not be a full stop for a girl's education." The data seems to back her up.

The World Bank says that better educated girls exhibit a wide array of pro-development characteristics. They delay sex longer, have fewer partners, and are more likely to use birth control. They marry later, see that their children are better educated, and have better vocational options for their entire lives. The benefits are passed on to future generations.

Said TGUP's Birrell, "Keeping an adolescent girl in school for \$2 a year might be one of the highest returns on human investment in the world. It is surely one of the most humane."

TGUP makes the *Save a Girl*TM kits in sewing centers it operates in Kenya, Tanzania, and Nepal. The centers employ seamstresses who make \$1.87 per kit. That gives them an income of almost \$9.00 a day, or 40% more than the national average in their countries. As part of the collaboration with District 5170, TGUP is opening new sewing centers in India and West Africa.

Rotary International is the largest civic service organization in the world. It has 1,200,000 members in 45,000 clubs worldwide. Together, its members provide more than 3,000,000 hours of community service annually. It is one of the largest suppliers of volunteer community service in the world.

Additional Resources:

- [Short video](#) on *Save a Girl*TM and the TGUP/Rotary District 5170 collaboration
- "[Think Piece](#)" explaining the deeper issues surrounding menstruation and the plight of developing world girls.
- TGUP [Media Backgrounder](#)