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Lunapads offers sustainable solution for schoolgirls in Africa

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lunapads International, a Vancouver-based company specializing in eco-friendly feminine hygiene products, has partnered with Goods 4 Girls, a Seattle-based non-profit organization, to distribute washable menstrual supplies to schoolgirls in Africa.

The initiative comes in response to Procter & Gamble's recent "Protecting Futures" TV ad series, which highlights the need for feminine hygiene products among schoolgirls in Africa, who often miss class due to a lack of supplies. P&G has stepped in with a promise to supply girls in selected communities with up to 5 years' worth of supplies, as well as disposal units and incinerators to manage the waste.

In Kenya alone, over 800,000 schoolgirls are too poor to afford the sanitary pads they need to stay in school during their menses.

Goods 4 Girls (www.goods4girls.org) is the brainchild of Deanna Duke, known online as eco-blogger "Crunchy Chicken" (<http://chrunchychicken.blogspot.com>), who earlier this year, observed that while P&G's intentions were sound, supplying the girls with disposable pads did not constitute a sustainable solution to the problem. She went on to approach aid organizations working with girls, as well as washable pad manufacturers including Lunapads (www.lunapads.com), to create a more eco-friendly alternative.

While the project has only been active since February 15, 2008, the response from followers of Duke's blog and Lunapads customers alike has been inspiring. "Our customers are committed environmentalists who care deeply about this issue, but don't see disposables as the inevitable answer," explains Lunapads co-owner Suzanne Siemens. "Our position is essentially, why throw things away unnecessarily, especially in communities that don't have the capacity to cope with the waste?" Lunapads last at least 5 years.

Lunapads has long been aware of the urgent need for menstrual supplies in the developing world and in the past 5 years has donated hundreds of pads to girls and women in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda, Mali, Ecuador and Mexico, among others. "What's different about working with Goods 4 Girls", says Lunapads designer and co-owner Madeleine Shaw "is that now we can offer our customers the ability to participate directly. It's really exciting and is getting a huge response."

Lunapads customer Brittany, writing in the Lunapads blog, concurs: "I am so thrilled that action is being taken to help supply women and girls with sustainable, reusable products. I love Lunapads; I love sharing the concept with my friends and family, and I am so glad that these organizations are working to better the lives of these girls in such a selfless way. Kudos!"

The donations take the form of specialized, discounted kits (priced at \$29.99 and \$39.99) that are purchased by Lunapads' customers and sent directly to Goods 4 Girls, prior to being sent overseas. To date, over 50 kits have been sent since the products' launch on March 5th, 2008. Current recipients include the Kabondo Poverty Alleviation Organization in Western Kenya, and the Pearl Children Care Center in Eastern Uganda.