

Lasallian Women of Hope fosters educational access for girls and young women globally

Imagine having to choose between your dignity and your future. In 2016, we discovered that at Mwangaza College in Nakuru, Kenya, **many young women resorted to situational prostitution to afford the personal hygiene products** needed to attend class during their menstrual periods.

For the right to education

The inability to purchase menstrual hygiene products is a widespread phenomenon known as “period poverty.” **To defend their right to education, the Lasallian Women of Hope program was created**, providing hygiene supplies and teaching how to make reusable tampons.

“Specifically, **Lasallian Women of Hope delivers creative, effective and durable solutions to educational inequalities for girls and young women throughout the Lasallian global educational community**,” states Ms Maryann Donohue, co-founder of this original initiative, which for a decade has been concerned with “providing the means to implement culturally sensitive health and menstrual education programs, as well as women leadership and empowerment programs”.

Ten years of female empowerment

Over the course of 10 years, Lasallian Women of Hope has developed numerous projects in various Lasallian educational works in **Kenya, Haiti, India, Madagascar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Democratic Republic of Congo** and **South Africa**, promoting women’s empowerment at the local level and generating sustainable solutions to mitigate the obstacles that prevented thousands of girls and young women from accessing education.

This year, 2026, the “**Stay in School, Stay Confident**” project at Mount La Salle in Naka, Nigeria, addresses the need to restore dignity to young high school girls through proper education and support for menstrual health management.

Similarly, through the menstrual hygiene project for young women taking place in Tsholofelo, South Africa, it is possible to see how **“improvement in understanding menstrual health and hygiene supports better attendance in school**, improved self-confidence and attitudes towards their bodies and acceptance by others”.

Education and culture of care

In line with this approach, January 2026 saw the launch of the **WASH (Water, Sanitation and Health)** Project at the St. La Salle Pudumanam Industrial Institute in Dindigul, India, which includes a five-month course for more than 150 girls and young women on personal health care and menstrual education. In May 2026, a new sanitation complex will be inaugurated, improving hygiene and health conditions for the school community, as part of the celebrations for the school’s 25th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of Lasallian Women of Hope.

“We learned many important things about health, hygiene and medical care,” declares Monica Rani, a student at St. La Salle Pudumanam Industrial Institute. **“These sessions helped us understand how to take care of our health in a better and more natural way,”** adds the young Indian Lasallian.

Similarly, young student Abinaya, who is also part of the same Lasallian institution, says that “awareness given on menstrual health was especially useful to us, as it **guided us on how to manage our health confidently and responsibly during that time.**” “I am truly happy and grateful to be a part of this wonderful Lasallian Family,” she concludes.

We invite you to watch our story: Lasallian Women of Hope.

Lasallian Women of Hope is part of the 1LaSalle solidarity projects. Together, as the Lasallian Family, we can help more and more girls and young women overcome “period poverty” and have permanent access to quality education. We invite you to support this solidarity initiative through our non-profit organisation, the La Salle Foundation.

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