

PH EMBASSY EMPOWERS KENYAN GIRLS THROUGH HYGIENE KITS DONATION



Nairobi PE's Third Secretary and GAD Focal Point Officer Louie Dane Merced and Cultural Officer and GAD Alternate Sherlyn Roxas (both wearing black) joined the students for a photo after the distribution of hygiene kits.

KAJIADO, KENYA, 28 October 2022 – The Philippine Embassy in Nairobi, in coordination with Sr. Felly Covacha of Carmelite Missionaries-Nairobi, donated 100 feminine hygiene kits to students of Our Lady Queen of Mercy Academy in Kitengela, Kajiado County on 28 October 2022 on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child (IDG) and as part of the Embassy's Gender and Development (GAD) program in Kenya.

The Embassy's outreach activity, which began last year, aims to raise awareness among young girls, as well as boys, about menstrual health, while also contributing to the well-being of underprivileged girls in Kenya who cannot afford to purchase sanitary products and thus miss up to one week of school activities and lessons each month.

Third Secretary and Embassy's GAD Focal Point Louie Dane C. Merced gave an overview of the International Day of the Girl Child. He also expressed his hope that

through the donation, the girls can study better at school without having to worry about their menstrual periods, thus they can invest more in their future.

He emphasized to both young girls and boys that menstrual period is a normal function of the female body and that they should not be ashamed or afraid of it. He also encouraged the boys to become partners in empowering girls for a better school and community.

Ms. Christine Mutambu, the Academy's school director, expressed gratitude to the Embassy for the donation, which will encourage girls to attend school without fearing about menstrual stigma. She added that one in five African girls skips or drops out of school due to a lack of access to menstrual supplies. The donation, she remarked, will help address this reality and motivate the girls to become agents of change in their communities.

The kits include two knickers, eight reusable sanitary pads that can last up to three years, absorbent liners, soap bar, washcloth, carry pouch for washing and storing, and care and use information sheet.

After the distribution, Ms. Agnes Achieng of Days for Girls, a nonprofit organization that produces sustainable menstrual health solutions to girls, delivered a short lecture to the students about the female reproductive health.

The UN General Assembly (UNGA), through Resolution 66/170, declared every 11th of October as the International Day of the Girl Child. Now marking its 10th anniversary, the IDG recognizes the unique challenges that girls face around the world, and emphasizes the importance of addressing these difficulties towards girls' empowerment and the realization of their human rights. END

