



Executive Summary

Throughout East Africa women and girls lack access to sanitary pads and proper menstruation health education. For years women have resorted to using rags and clothes during their menstruation period, which leads to infections and do not provide proper protection. Without proper protection, women struggle to carry out their normal activities such as work and school.

Bana is an Ugandan based social enterprise established 2010, manufactures low-cost sanitary pads from banana pseudo stems and distributes them through female entrepreneurs, called Champions. Bana equips women with the opportunity and skills to advance their entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, Champions help their local communities by providing sanitary pads and menstruation health education.

As Bana continues to grow, our team of Global Social Benefit Fellows team assisted in providing social impact data and test piloted a mobile application for inventory management.

Our research focused on providing detailed accounts of Bana's impact on the livelihood of the Champions. This research consisted of over 45 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Champions and other village members from different regions of Uganda in order gather information on Champions' impact on the community. Our research was also based on field ethnographic observation of Champion's sales and menstruation education workshops. Additionally, we conducted two mobile inventory workshops with Champions, in order to test and introduce a mobile application for sales and inventory tracking.

We concluded that Bana Champions are more than just saleswomen, but rather community educators, role models and rising entrepreneurs. Bana provides Champions with the chance to earn a sustainable income and impact the community while developing skills in business, communication, and menstruation education.

Additionally, we found that Champions were responsive to using SMS to report sales, and therefore a mobile application will benefit Bana's sales tracking and inventory management. In regards to the mobile application, we designed two mobile inventory management manuals. One manual is directed for training of the Champions and the second is for Bana's administration to integrate it the enterprise.

We constructed a social impact assessment report. This report consists of the process of Bana's recruitment and training of women and Champion's impact on the community. We concluded that Bana and Champions are breaking the silence of menstruation and creating widespread change in Uganda. This report demonstrates the larger social implications of Bana beyond creating sanitary pads. They are advancing women as entrepreneurs and breaking the silence about menstruation in rural Uganda.