

# ***Girl Empowerment Pad Program Update***

TNC's Girl Empowerment Pad (GEP) Program has some **exciting news to share**, including two new initiatives designed to bring the program into its next, more self-sufficient chapter. "We're grateful to all who have supported this program, and **invite everyone to help with the new initiatives** as the holiday season approaches," said **Bonnie Lawson**, TNC's GEP Program Leader.

## **Program Update:**

- GEP **goals** have been to keep girls in school during their menstrual cycle to avoid learning loss; to give them tools to make their own sanitary supplies; and to provide culturally- and age-appropriate health education.
- In 10 years the **program has evolved** from providing complete pads to furnishing materials for pad-making kits to purchasing kit materials in Zimbabwe. In addition, TNC volunteers have trained teachers and have paired health literature and education with sewing activities. And they have sent refurbished manual and electric sewing machines to seven primary schools.

## **Two New Initiatives:**

- To keep the program sustainable, we cannot have our partners dependent on U.S. supplies, and we must cultivate new leadership as teachers move on. For these reasons, we're launching a **Giving Tree** and a **Sewing Scholarship**. Proceeds from donation cards returned via the **Giving Tree** initiative will allow partners to buy supplies in Zimbabwe, thereby avoiding shipping container delays and storage fees. The **Sewing Scholarship** will fund tuition at the Tabudirira Vocational School, enabling recipients to earn income by sewing and to train other students to sew.

## **What You Can Do:**

- Contact Bonnie for **Giving Tree Cards** and a handout on the Giving Tree and **Sewing Scholarship** sponsorship levels. Churches could consider setting up a tree in a specific location and/or for special events such as craft fairs and Christmas bazaars. The scholarship could be supported by a variety of initiatives, such as: Covenant or prayer groups could agree to pool donations; or fundraisers held by sewing circles or other church groups could donate a portion of their proceeds.

## **For More Information:**

- Please contact Bonnie Lawson at [www.bonnielawson58@comcast.net](mailto:www.bonnielawson58@comcast.net)