

# Reflections REJECTIONS? What a Wonder

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Recounted by Alma Thompson, ICCM Global Director to  
Amber Jennings, Exec. Asst. to the Global Director

**A**t the beginning of 2023, I visited our ICCM programs in East Africa. National Coordinators from Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) joined me in Burundi where Neddy Nanjowe Dingili, Regional Coordinator for Africa, instructed the leaders through the educational training for Wunders, an entity equipping girls and women with reusable menstrual supplies and community-informed education.

ICCM partners with Wunders to address period poverty in ICCM-sponsored locations. Period poverty relates to the lack of access girls and women experience in underdeveloped countries regarding menstrual products and sanitation. Unfortunately, it is all too common for girls to miss a week of school every month as a result of their periods.



School girl with Alma photo by Soraya Johnson, ICCM Intern

Our national leaders, including the men, were enthusiastic about the training. They shared passionate hopes for the girls in their countries to have access to Wunders kits. They also began to strategize about how the biological and textile science behind Wunders might be introduced into the curriculum.

In the DRC, 20 of the oldest girls and their female teachers received a Wunders kit and attended the training. This included information about menstrual health, anti-trafficking safety, and how to care for their kit. Each kit is locally sourced. It contains hygiene supplies such as reusable pads, soap, a washcloth, and three new pair of underwear, all packaged in a cinch

backpack. I was delighted to see the girls with their Wunders kits on their backs and bright smiles on their faces as they left the training.



Lemson and Neddy photo by Soraya Johnson, ICCM Intern

In Malawi, 22 girls and three female teachers participated in the training led by Neddy, an engaging speaker and teacher. It was comfortably interpreted into the Chichewa language by Lemson Yohane, ICCM's new Malawi National Coordinator.

At the beginning of the training the girls were not responsive. The shame surrounding the subject

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Sponsoring a child changes a world

was palpable. As Neddy laid the contents of a sample Wunders kit on the table to show what was inside, something beautiful happened.

A girl raised her hand to ask, “Is she saying we each get three pair of new underwear?” When the girls heard Neddy confirm they would be receiving new underwear, the entire room erupted in cheers and celebration. Just recounting the experience brings me chills. From that point on, the girls were highly engaged.



## Beautifully Made in the Image of God

As Neddy demonstrated how the items were used, the girls were laughing, asking questions, making comments, and even volunteering to practice with the items in front of the class. The girls began to recite affirmations of how they are beautiful and made in the image of God. What a transformation!

Wunders provides a holistic response to period poverty. In addition to providing menstrual supplies, Wunders also joins the fight against gender wage inequity by hiring local women to sew the Wunders materials and encourages microenterprise. The design, materials, and education of the Wunders kits are all community informed to be appropriate for each location’s cultural context.



Photos on this page by Soraya Johnson, ICCM Intern

ICCM joins Wunders in their dream of a world where girls, and the women they will become, can thrive. In this last round of education and distribution, Neddy gave out 250 Wunders kits. This fall she hopes to distribute more than 600 kits among ICCM programs in Malawi, Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and the DRC. Please pray with local and regional ICCM leaders for this endeavor. [ICCM supporters help keep girls in school.](#)

Wunders is preparing to launch in a new location in the West African nation of Togo. A kit costs around \$35-40. Contribute to Wunders online at the ICCM website or send a check to ICCM indicating it is for Wunders. Thank you for making a difference.