



RUB̄CUP

Annual Impact Report 2017



We'll remember 2017 as the year we made big changes. Some of them were pretty obvious, such as our redesigned logo and our new brand color, a bold, bright red, because periods are red ;)

Other changes might not have caught everyone's eye at first sight, but nevertheless meant some big changes for our customers and community. We implemented a 100% Money Back Guarantee, we registered with the Vegan Society, and our social media community of period positive advocates hit 17k.

Without a doubt, 2017 was the year with most Ruby Cup donations, a year with new partnerships that have expanded our social impact programmes. All thanks to our customers, advocates, partners and last but not least a wonderful and tireless Ruby Cup team, we are now making an impact together in 11 countries.

People sometimes ask, if we are are mostly a social project or a for-profit business. The answer is; we are a social business with equal weight on both. In our world, profit and impact go hand in hand with our Buy One, Give One model at the core. The more we sell, the more we can give and one doesn't exist without the other. In the following, we present you with both the Give One section, the Buy One Section and beyond - enjoy the read!

Julie Weigaard Kjaer
CEO & Co-founder

RUB̄CUP



Ruby Cup by Ruby Life Ltd. is an award-winning social business and pioneer in bringing the menstrual cup to developing countries. Through a Buy One Give One model and strategic partnerships, we provide Ruby Cups and education on reproductive health and menstrual care to girls and women in 11 countries. We believe that access to information about menstruation and to dignified menstrual care products is a basic human right and we strive to make this a reality for everyone, everywhere.

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2017, a year with so much social impact

Ruby Cup has been available for six years now, always with the Buy One Give One model at the heart. Looking back each year, we are always in awe to see the incredible support we receive from all our stakeholders, how much we have learnt and keep learning, and how far we’ve come and evolved together with our community and strategic social impact partners.

How many girls and women have received a Ruby Cup so far?

Since the launch of our Buy One Give One programme in late 2012, more than 50,000 girls and women have received a Ruby Cup. All programme participants, have taken part in educational workshops on reproductive health, menstrual care and how to use Ruby Cup. They have also received continuous support following the workshops during their learning curve.

In 2017 we had active Social Impact Programmes in 11 Countries:

We care about the adoption rate:

80%

of the Ruby Cup recipients are still using it 6 months to a year after receiving it.

On average, the adoption rate of the participants is 80%. However, we have seen adoption rates as high as 85-90% when a strong continued support system is set up. This can be a network of mentors connected to all the schools and groups of girls receiving Ruby Cup. Mentors from the local community, who are easily accessible and that the girls trust. Or it can be a strong team of trainers, who consistently re-visit the schools and do evaluation and follow up sessions with the girls.

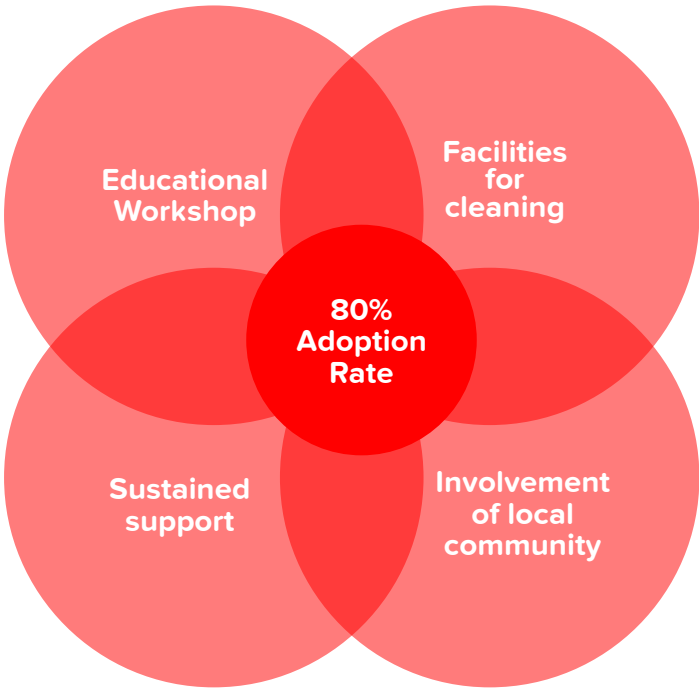
Ensuring a positive long-term impact for all Ruby Cup donations

There are many donation items that can be provided without a lot of explanation needed. But a menstrual cup does not belong in that category. It’s a product with a learning curve; new users need support and help to become confident and comfortable with the product in the first months of using it.

This is what six years of social impact programmes have taught us. It’s why we care so strongly about adoption rate and why we have identified four key elements that have to be in place for any Ruby Cup donations to take place:

- 1. Involvement of local community
- 2. Educational Workshop
- 3. Facilities for cleaning
- 4. Sustained support

These four elements are key to ensuring sustainability of the programmes and that the usage and impact of Ruby Cup is maximized. If the product is simply handed out or introduced in only one training workshop, it doesn’t matter that it’s sustainable and lasts 10 years, the adoption rate will most likely plummet and the product will go to waste.



Based on 10 follow-up reports with Ruby Cup users from our social impact partners in Nepal, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya from 2015 till today.

Ruby Cup and the SAWA programme in Kenya

In countries like Kenya, menstruation is one of many obstacles to a girls’ bright future. Some girls are forced to partake in transactional sex to be able to afford pads or, if getting pads is impossible, the only option seems to be to stay home from school during menstruation to avoid staining their school uniforms.

To achieve a dignified menstruation, having access to information, education, and safe and healthy products that meet girls’ and women’s needs are all essential.

In the social impact programmes, together with our partners, we strive to provide tools and information to the girls, which they can use as helpful stepping stones to an empowered life.

SAWA stands for Savara Women’s Advancement Programme. In 2017, we were so honoured to be included in the **Sawa Initiative**, which is a bootcamp created to support, inspire and empower women to reach their full potential, using their own resources, skills and talents.

The bootcamp equips them with knowledge about their bodies, their health and their rights to help them succeed in life. All Sawa participants received a Ruby Cup and an educational workshop by Ruby Cup Trainer and Brand Ambassador Rachael Mwikali and later in the year, we did a follow up session that yielded positive and valuable feedback, such as:

“For me, the first it was uncomfortable because it was a new thing but the second time was ok. Now I don’t have to buy pads every month. I would recommend it to my friends and I hope they will buy it and use it too”. (SAWA participant)



“I’ve gone the Ruby Cup way and I am not coming back”

Esther, Sawa programme



Ruby Cups at Rhino Uganda Refugee Camp

Our partner, [Womena](#), conducted a pilot project distributing Ruby Cups and the reusable pads AFRIPads to refugees, implementing a Menstrual Health Refugee Camp Pilot Intervention with their partner ZOA across four primary schools in Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement in the West Nile Region.

Womena assessed the acceptability and feasibility as well as potential health and social impacts of introducing menstrual cups and reusable pads. The majority of the beneficiaries of the pilot were South Sudanese refugees, with 30% from the Ugandan host population.

Through Womena's pilot, all women and girls at Rhino camp received training on how to insert and remove the Ruby Cups, wash the AFRIPads and manage menstrual pain. Participants were also given menstrual calendars to track their cycles.

Outcome

Of the women using cups, 11 percent said they had challenges with insertion, removal and, in some cases, cleaning. Others worried that other people would see them emptying the cups. But the vast majority – **81 percent** – said there was nothing they didn't like about them.

Before coming to Rhino camp from South Sudan, Jovia*, 16, would use old clothes or emergency pads from school whenever she got her period. Now in Uganda, she uses menstrual cups.



“The first time I saw the cups I was really afraid. I said, ‘This thing is too big, how can I use it?’”



“I have now used them for almost three months.”



“I have not missed school.”

(*Last names have been withheld to protect their identities. Thank you to [Amy Fallon](#) for shining light on this study).

Growing the social impact in Nepal

Through our partner [Putali Nepal](#), Ruby Cups have been available in the Kathmandu area since 2015. Last year another partner joined to help girls in West Nepal: [Be Artsy](#).

The Be Artsy team hosts three day workshops that consist of menstrual health management classes and participatory photography. Participatory photography serves as a gateway to discuss and break with the Chhaupadi. It's a tradition that bans menstruating girls and women from their homes, because they are deemed impure and this sometimes results in injuries, rape, humiliation, and even death. Last, but not least, all Be Artsy workshops include a Ruby Cup training.

Be Artsy's first follow up sessions in the fall revealed some great results: 96% of the girls that received a Ruby Cup in early March were still using it and they also reported small changes in the way they experience the Chhaupadi tradition. They told Be Artsy that since the menstrual blood is collected inside the body, they are considered clean and the families allow them to sleep inside the house, eat vegetables, and drink milk.





Ruby Cups at the DREAMS Programme

DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe) Initiative is an ambitious partnership to reduce HIV infection among adolescent girls and young women in HIV priority areas within Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

DREAMS is based on the recognition that girls can – and often do – reach their full potential when they have access to multiple interventions, and when they are perceived as capable by themselves and by their relatives, classmates, teachers and other members of their communities.

We could not agree more with the above and we are delighted to have launched a partnership with DREAMS in Nairobi in 2017. The feedback was very positive and we are looking forward to following up with them in 2018!



“Girls reach their full potential when they are perceived as capable by themselves and by their relatives, classmates, teachers and other members of their communities.”

We care about our customers and user-community around the globe and we always strive to listen and learn from them. Without their purchases and advocacy, the Give One section, you just read above, would simply be blank.

Ruby Cup & Ruby Clean registered by the Vegan Society

You might not associate a menstrual cup with veganism but it's important to many of our customers and users that the products they use are cruelty-free. We couldn't agree more and are therefore happy to announce that all Ruby Cup variants and Ruby Clean variants were registered by the Vegan Society in November 2017.

Our 100% Money Back Guarantee

We know that finding the right menstrual cup isn't always easy. So to help those in doubt about taking the cup plunge, we implemented a 100% Money Back Guarantee for our online customers. It goes like this: Within four months of your purchase, you can either switch size or get your money back, if you feel that Ruby Cup is not for you, no questions asked.

Ruby Sterilizer is now Ruby Clean

We're always thankful for the input and ideas our customers give us to help improve our products. 2017 was the year, we made product development customer-driven and improved the design of Ruby Cup's best friend based on customer feedback: It now has handles, which makes handling easier when it contains boiled hot water. It has a new, lighter lid to avoid sealing it and creating too much pressure while boiling, and it has a new, shorter name: Ruby Clean.



“Ruby cup is my “it” cup with two sizes, one for my light days and one for my heaviest. My cups are comfortable and work wonderfully with no leaks. This cup is a great choice for vegans and the cup is certified vegan.”

Ruby Cup user



“After a year of watching countless YouTube videos and reading an absurd amount of reviews, I finally committed to the Ruby Cup. I was so nervous! I boiled it the morning I got my period this month, brought it to the shower, used the punch down fold, and voila! I cannot believe it took me so long to make the switch!”

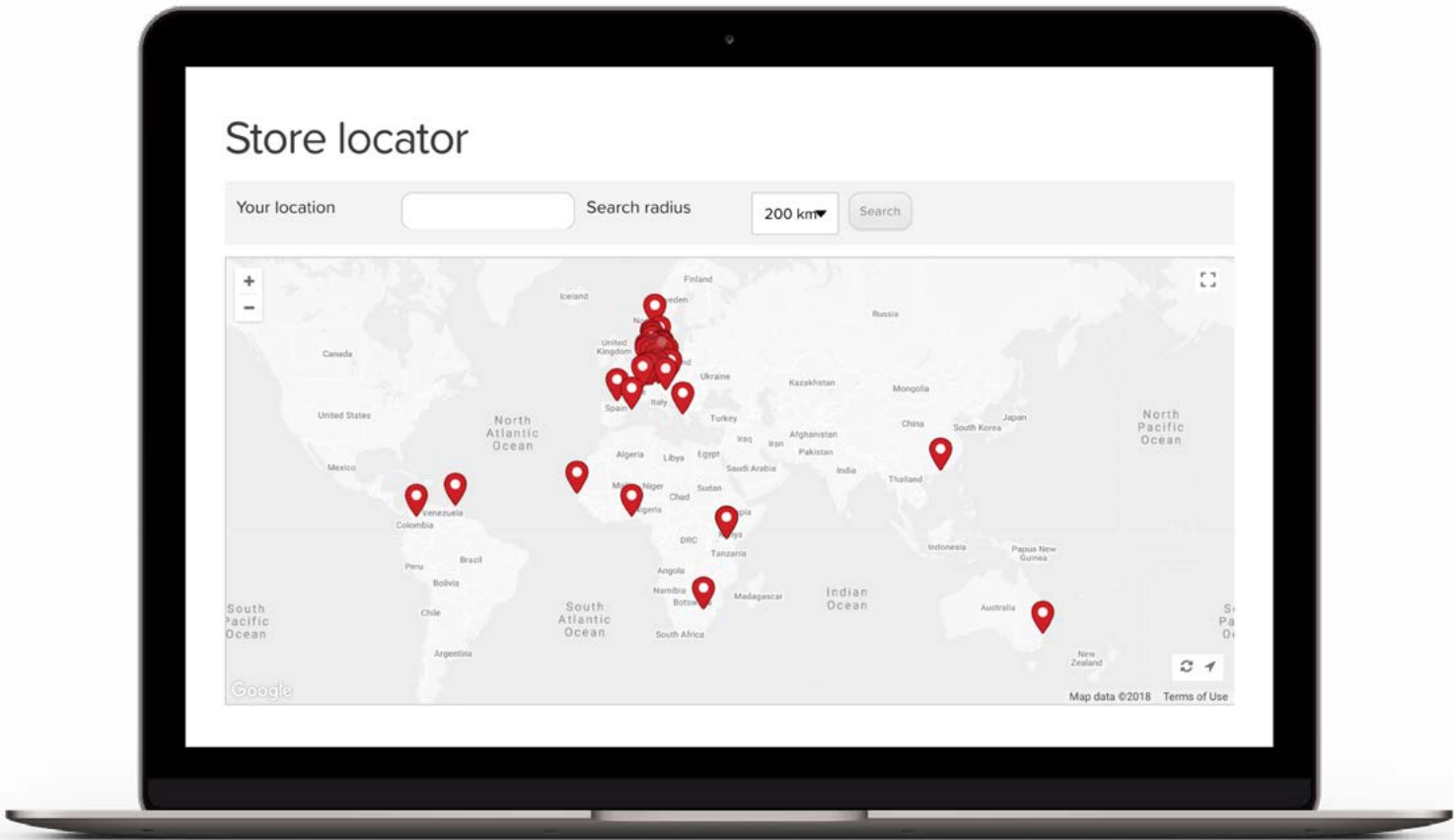
Ruby Cup user

Making Ruby Cup more available and easier to find in stores

In 2017, new resellers joined us, so Ruby Cup is now available in even more locations around the world... and don't forget, no matter where you buy a Ruby Cup, online or in a physical store, the Buy One Give One model always applies.

To help our customers find Ruby Cup easier, we have added a brand new [store locator on our website](#).

In 2017, amongst others, Israel got a pin on the map as well as India via Amazon.in. You can also find us at BIPA in Austria, via resellers in Greece, the Czech Republic, and several new outlets of our valued packaging-free stores in Germany.



We care for the planet

At Ruby Cup making an impact also means caring for our planet, so we're continuously working on making environmental sustainability a key feature in every aspect of the business.

All our paper materials are now cradle-to-cradle certified

In 2017, we switched to a cradle-to-cradle certified print supplier meaning that all Ruby Cup packaging and marketing materials comply with one of the highest standards for eco-friendly printing. The cradle-to-cradle certification has strict demands including a zero tolerance on using materials with any kind of negative environmental impact or associated health risks.

Our recycling trial with TerraCycle

Our customers and community have always valued the eco-friendly side of Ruby Cup and often choose it because it's a more sustainable option than conventional products. The idea for a recycling service for menstrual cups has been on the drawing board for a long time. But it wasn't until we discovered [TerraCycle](#), a company able to receive the disposed cups for recycling, that we were able to launch a trial in August 2017. The trial is ongoing and we hope to bring more news on that in the coming year.

Measuring Ruby Cup's carbon footprint

We also started measuring our environmental footprint and we are happy to announce that we now have reliable data to show you:

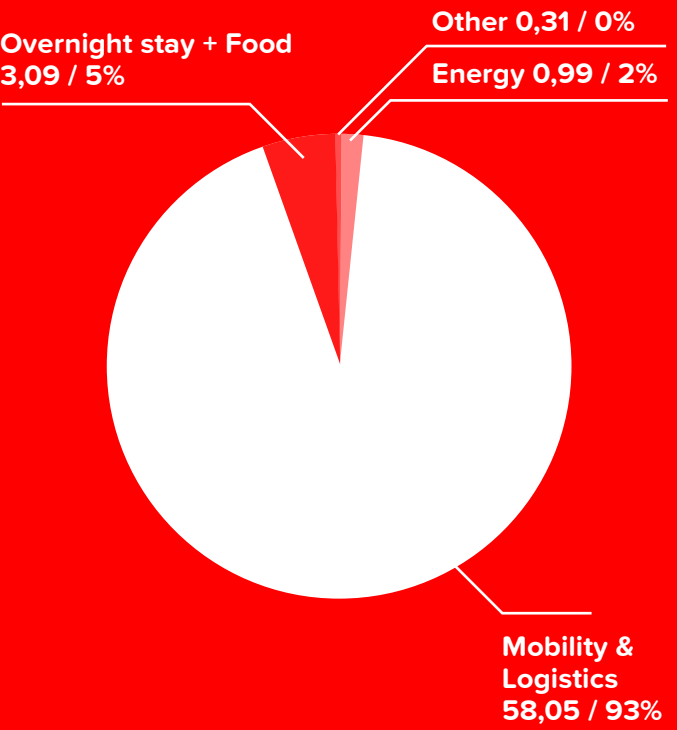
This is our starting point and it will help guide us and track our footprint in the future.

CO₂-quantification for the corporate carbon footprint 2016

CO ₂ Source	Score [t CO ₂ e]
Total	68,69
Safety buffer 10%	6,24
Energy	0,99
Energy demand	0,99
Mobility & Logistics	58,05
Way to work Business trip	0,49
Business flights Product shipments	57,56
Overnight stay + Food	3,09
Overnight stay	0,88
Lunch Catering Beverages	2,21
Other	0,31
Flyer Packaging material	0,23
Waste disposal	0,08

CO₂-balance at a glance

[t CO₂e] / % of total emissions excluding buffer



Tons and tons of waste saved

This calculation is one of our favourites: The tons of tampon waste saved from all our customers and users switching to a Ruby Cup. The result of 2017 amounted to:

1,713.74 tons of tampon waste

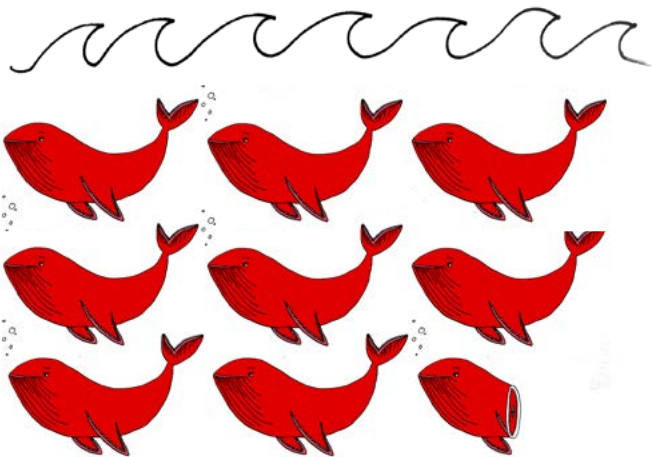
Remember last year we saved an equivalent of 5.5 blue whales of tampon waste? In 2017 we made it to **8.5 blue whales!**

And if you look at the volume of tampon waste saved, we could already fill up approximately 3/5 of the Statue of Liberty with, well, nothing, because that's how much volume of waste we have saved since we started Ruby Cup.

1,713.74
TONS OF TAMPON WASTE



8.5 blue whales



100,000 Champions of Menstruation

We managed to pass the 50k marker on Ruby Cups donated a year earlier than expected. This is amazing and calls for a new goal of course:

We pledge to reach 100k by the end of 2019

However, it's also a growth perspective that keeps us on our toes, since quantity yields no impact without the quality and sustainability of the programmes. Our four key elements will be fundamental to grow with existing and new partners, and most importantly, so we can help more girls have brighter futures:



In Magare Secondary School in Western Kenya, one of the Golden Girls Foundation's programme schools, a teacher had great news for us:

Before the Golden Girls Foundation started their mentorship programme, only 4 of the 20 girls that started school graduated. In 2016, there were 11 girls who proudly graduated.



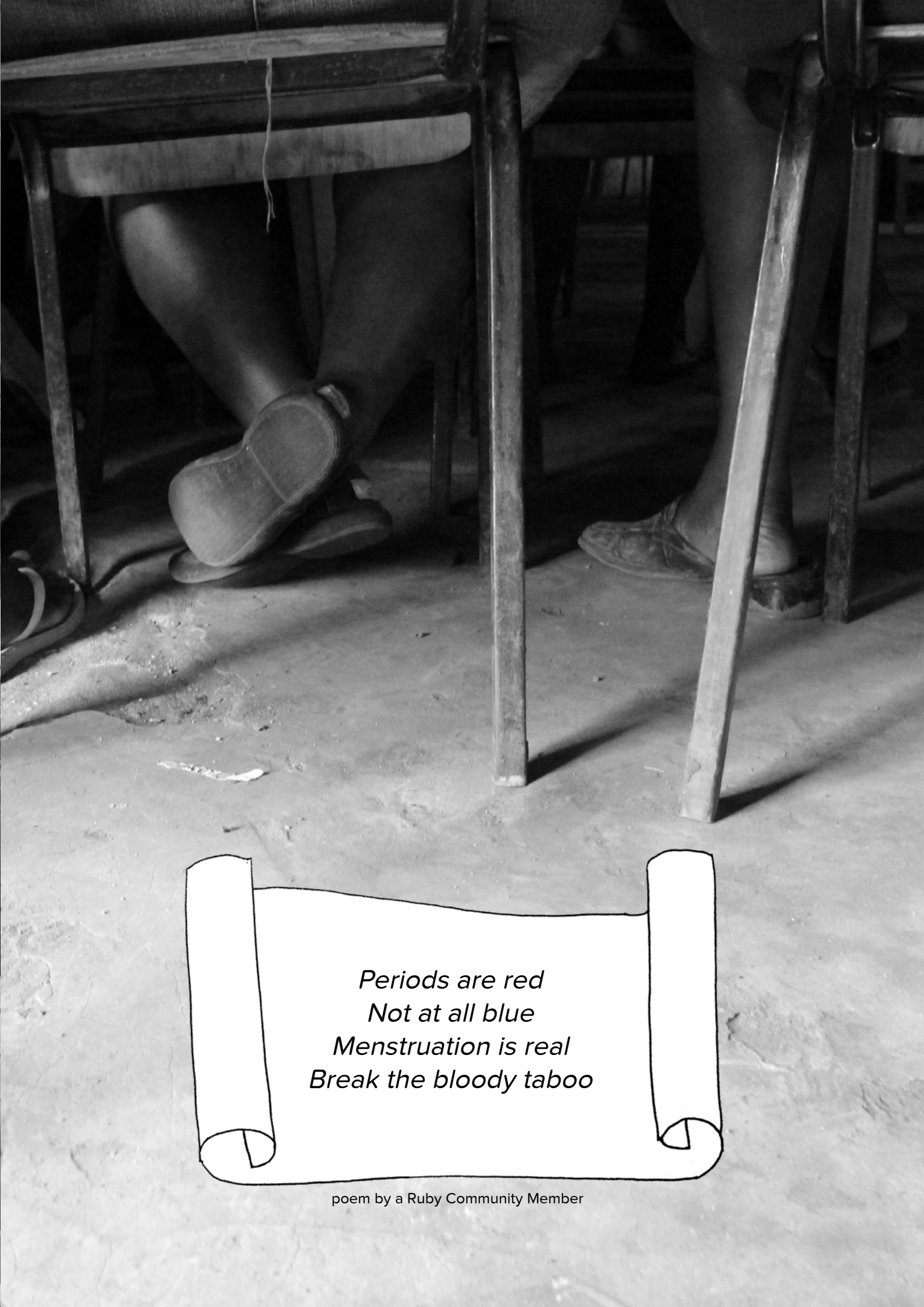
Thank You and Appreciation

We cannot thank all of you enough for your support. Thanks to our amazing Ruby Cup trainers and ambassadors and to our incredible partners for making menstruation a dignified experience for the girls and women in their community. And last but not least, thanks to our amazing Ruby Community for joining the menstrual cup club and for breaking the silence surrounding menstruation.

Our journey would not be the same without you. We are excited and ready to be an active part in creating a better menstrual experience for everybody everywhere.

Stay awesome and empowered,

Your Ruby Cup Team.



*Periods are red
Not at all blue
Menstruation is real
Break the bloody taboo*

poem by a Ruby Community Member

RUBŪCUP

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