



PRESS RELEASE

(28TH MAY, 2022)

PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (PPAG) CELEBRATES MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY WITH A CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO DECLASSIFY SANITARY PADS AS LUXURY PRODUCTS

Menstrual health and hygiene have significant impacts on several aspects of the lives of adolescent girls and women, including their health, well-being and education. As the world marks Menstrual Hygiene Day, it is important to remind ourselves that, many girls and women lack access to sanitary pads, water, knowledge on menstruation and disposal mechanisms to manage their menstruation at school, at home and at work. In the case of adolescent girls, this has been a barrier to school attendance and academic performance due to menstruation.

To make matters worse, Ghana classifies sanitary pads as “luxury products”, thus attracting a 20% import tax levy (GRA Harmonized System Code 9619002900). This situation contributes to the high prices of sanitary pads, not affordable to many girls and women in low-income households.

As the leading Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) organization in the country, PPAG has seen at first hand that access to safe and dignified menstruation is a fundamental need of women and girls. Meeting the hygiene needs of all adolescent girls and women in all settings enables human rights, dignity, and public health. It is therefore important to ensure that even the least fortunate girl can learn, play, and safeguard her own health without experiencing stress, shame, or unnecessary barriers to information or supplies during menstruation.

PPAG therefore calls on the government to heed to calls to declassify menstrual products as luxury products, to improve menstrual health conditions, particularly for adolescent girls. We call on all stakeholders to intensify actions to help empower adolescent girls and secure their health and well-being by contributing to breaking the taboos and end the stigma surrounding menstruation; raising awareness about the challenges regarding access to menstrual products and education on menstruation and period-friendly sanitation facilities. We entreat parents to pay more attention to the menstrual health needs of their adolescent girls.

PPAG reaffirms its commitment to work tirelessly to build a world where no one is held back because they menstruate, by 2030.

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Signed

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT