



SEND
GHANA

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

**CONSULTANCY TO TRACK ADOLESCENT GIRL'S ACCESSIBILITY
OF GOVERNMENT FREE SANITARY PADS DISTRIBUTION
PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GHANA**

1.0: Introduction

Menstruation signals the onset of reproductive age in girls. Worldwide, 1.8 billion women and girls of reproductive age experience menstruation each month (UNICEF, 2019). Maintaining proper menstrual hygiene is essential to prevent infections associated with menstruation. However, approximately 500 million women and girls globally lack access to adequate menstrual hygiene facilities and safe, clean management materials, putting them at significant health risk (UNICEF, 2019; World Bank, 2022).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, one in ten girls cannot attend school during their menstrual cycle. Most are absent for an average of four days each month, resulting in a loss of about 13 learning days per school term. Over a nine-month academic year, an adolescent girl misses 39 days—equivalent to six weeks—of learning due to the lack of sanitary pads (UNESCO, 2014). Evidence from Ghana demonstrates the widespread nature of this issue. Most low-income communities and households cannot afford the menstrual hygiene products needed for girls to manage their periods with dignity (Mucherah and Thomas, 2017). The problem is worsened by the overall rising cost of living and, more specifically, by unfavorable domestic tax policies on sanitary products. The Ghanaian government has imposed a 20% import duty and a 15% Value Added Tax (VAT) on sanitary products, making pads expensive for girls, especially the most vulnerable.

Over the years, Ghanaian civil society has launched various advocacy campaigns urging the government to address period poverty. These efforts have led to several government initiatives aimed at tackling the issue. In November 2023, the Ghanaian government introduced a zero VAT rate on locally manufactured sanitary pads and waived import duties on raw materials to increase accessibility and affordability. The current administration has also begun distributing free sanitary pads to adolescent girls in public basic schools as part of a policy initiative to combat period poverty. This program aims to improve menstrual hygiene management, reduce school absenteeism, and boost educational outcomes for girls, especially those from low-income families.

As a social accountability and gender-responsive public advocacy organization, SEND GHANA, under the CSOs SRH Consortium, plans to track and monitor the rollout of the free sanitary pads program. The assessment will focus on distribution efficiency, equitable access, and the achievement of the initiative's objectives. SEND is thus seeking a qualified consultant to design and lead the tracking exercise

2.0: About the CSO SRH Consortium

The Adolescent Reproductive Health and Rights project is being implemented by a consortium of five organizations: the Alliance for Reproductive Health Rights (ARHR), World Vision International Ghana, Marie Stopes International Ghana, SEND Ghana, and the Africa Health Innovations Centre. This initiative falls under the Government of Ghana/UNFPA 8th Country Programme, which aims to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes and strengthen humanitarian preparedness and response across seven regions in Ghana. The target regions are Ashanti, Eastern, Volta, Greater Accra, Oti, Northeast, and Bono East. For this assignment, however, the consultant will focus on Ashanti, Eastern, Volta, and North East regions.

3.0 Purpose of the assignment

The overall purpose of the consultancy is to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Government of Ghana's free sanitary pad distribution programme, focusing on the distribution processes, transparency, targeting, accountability and equity in access among beneficiaries.

Specifically, the consultant will:

1. Map the distribution channels/mechanisms and documentation of the sanitary pads from the national to the school levels.
2. Assess the coverage and targeting of beneficiaries to determine whether the programme equitably reaches girls in underserved communities.
3. Identify successes, implementation challenges, including coordination and resource allocation both from supply and demand side perspectives.

4.0: Scope of the assignment

- The consultant is expected to review relevant policy documents, guidelines/frameworks related to menstrual health and the sanitary pads distribution programme.
- Develop appropriate tracking and monitoring tools (e.g., interview guides, checklists, questionnaires to be administered with the different target stakeholders). i.e. key informant interviews with policymakers, suppliers, and school heads, FGDs with adolescent girls in beneficiary schools.
- Conduct field data collection in selected regions, districts, and schools (to be agreed upon with SEND GHANA and partners).
- Analyze data and produce a tracking report with findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations for improving equity, transparency, and sustainability of the initiative.

- Present findings at a stakeholder validation meeting to be organized by SEND GHANA.

5.0: Methodology

The methodology would be co-created by the consultant, government ministries departments and agencies (MoE, GES, MoGCSP, Development partners and relevant CSOs. The methodology shall include literature review on existing menstrual hygiene policies and programmes to identify gaps and opportunities. SEND will organize and coordinate a three-day methodology workshop, and the process will be facilitated by the consultant. Participants will include representatives from the MoE, GES, MoGCSP, CSOs, and Development partners.

6.0: Expected Deliverables

The following will be the expected deliverables of the Consultant:

- Inception report detailing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, methodology, tools, and work plan.
- All documents reviewed and consulted during the process, including transcriptions and audio recordings.
- A comprehensive tracking report with actionable recommendations for programme improvement and sustainability.

7.0: Duration

A total of **35** working days would be used for the assignment as follows:

No	Activity	# of Days
1	Inception Report – detailing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, methodology, tools, and work plan	2 days after signing the contract
2	Review relevant policy documents, guidelines, and frameworks related to menstrual health and the sanitary pads distribution programme.	3 days
3	Hold a three-day methodology workshop to develop monitoring and tracking tools	2 days
4	Submit draft monitoring and tracking tools (Questionnaires, Interview guides, checklists, etc. for review by SEND and partners	2 days

6	Conduct field data collection in selected regions, sampled districts, and schools.	15 days
	Analyze data and produce a draft tracking and monitoring report with actionable recommendations for improving equity, transparency, and sustainability of the initiative.	7 days
7	Submit draft report for review by SEND and partners	1 day
8	Validation and final report	3 days
9	Total Number of days	35 days

8.0: Consultant qualification

- Advanced degree in Development Studies, Public Policy, Health Economics, Gender studies, or other social sciences and related fields.
- 5-10 years of continuous professional experience in policy research, expenditure tracking and monitoring, and stakeholder engagement.
- Demonstrated capacity in working with government ministries, departments, and agencies, CSOs, and development partners.
- Good understanding of menstrual health management, Ghana's education policy, social protection systems, and gender equality issues in Ghana.
- Proven experience in facilitating workshops, engaging with participants, and leading idea discussions processed interactively and inclusively.
- Excellent analytical skills and ability to produce high-quality reports.
- Fluency in English
- Ability to **DELIVER** on time

9.0. Reporting and Supervision

The consultant will report directly to the Country Director of SEND GHANA, and work closely with the Programme Officer, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) team. Regular progress updates will be provided throughout the assignment.

10.0 Ethical Considerations

The consultant must adhere to ethical research standards, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and protecting the privacy and dignity of adolescents and all research respondents during data collection. At all times the principles of safeguarding especially **“Do No Harm”** must be upheld.

11.0 Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Interested and qualified applicants should submit a proposal that includes:

1. A technical proposal outlining the consultant /firm's understanding of the assignment, the proposed methodology, and the work plan.
2. A financial proposal detailing the proposed budget with justification
3. Cover letter of no more than one page introducing the consultant /firm and how the skills and competencies described above are met.
4. An updated CV with at least two references.
5. Samples of similar assignments completed
6. A statement of commitment of availability for the entire assignment.

12.0: Selection

Selection will be based on:

1. Technical evaluation of the proposal elaborating approach/methodology, work plan, and budget.
2. Establishing your credibility in undertaking assignments of a similar kind.

Please submit the expression of interest and other documents to career@sendwestafrica.org with “Consultancy – Tracking the Free Sanitary Pads Distribution Programme” in the subject line, by Friday, **October 17** 2025, by 23:59 pm.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted