

# Ashanti file

From Thomas Agbenyegah Adzey, Konongo

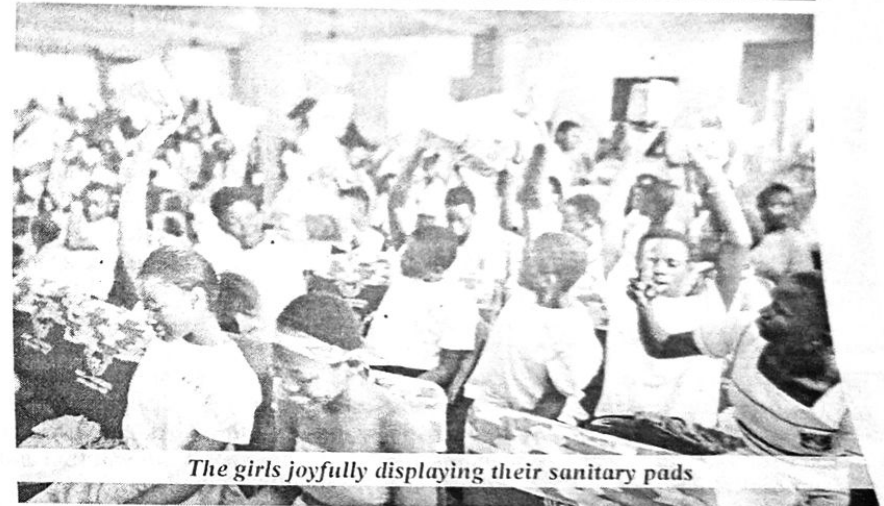
## Erudite Women's Empowerment Foundation, DCI-Ghana mark 2024 World Menstrual Hygiene Day

**E**rudite Women's Empowerment Foundation (EWEF), an NGO with funding support from the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and Defence for Children Ghana (DCI-GHANA) has commemorated the 2024 World Menstrual Hygiene Day with an awareness creation on sexual and reproductive health outreach programme for some 150 young girls.

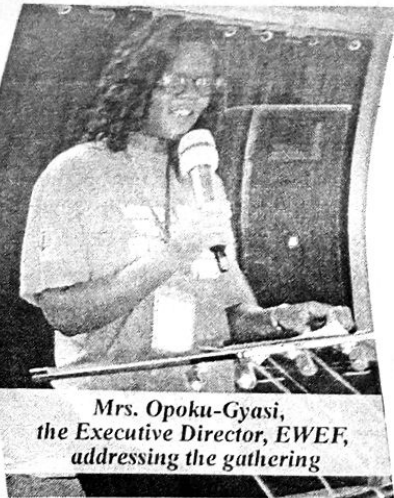
The outreach programme for girls with and without disabilities at the PIWC Auditorium at Konongo Ahyiaem in the Asante Akim Central Municipality of Ashanti region was well attended by stakeholders, including representatives from traditional and religious leaders, male



Stakeholders in a group photograph with some of the young girls



The girls joyfully displaying their sanitary pads



Mrs. Opoku-Gyasi, the Executive Director, EWEF, addressing the gathering

champions, health care providers, Adesua Foundation and the Ghana Education Service, who took their turns to educate the girls on the sexual and reproductive health needs.

Mrs. Ohenewaa Constance Opoku-Gyasi, the Executive Director of EWEF, in an address, observed that Menstrual Hygiene is fundamental to the well-being of women and girls, because it influenced their ability to attend school and work, but often does not receive the much attention it deserves.

She said lack of access to proper menstrual products and inadequate sanitation facilities, as well as the pervasive stigma around menstua-

tion, created barriers that millions of women and girls must overcome every month, emphasising that these challenges "are particularly severe in low-income communities, where access to basic necessities is already limited."

Mrs. Opoku-Gyasi said the mission to commemorate the day is to work together to break down the barriers and advocate for policies that ensure that "every woman and girl has access to affordable and sustainable menstrual products".

The Executive Director stressed that "menstrual hygiene is not a luxury, but a necessity and also not a privilege but a right," and called on

stakeholders to support initiatives that provide education on menstrual health and also to invest in infrastructure that guarantees safe and private sanitation facilities for all,

Nana Frimpong Manso Adakabre, the Adesuaahene of Agogo Traditional area who is also the CEO of Adesua Foundation Ghana, suggested that government should consider free supply of sanitary pads to second cycle schools, because it is too expensive for the girls to afford every month.

Alternatively, government must wave all the taxes on the imports of sanitary pads to make it affordable to girls of menstrual age.

Facilitators from the Ghana Health Service took the girls through a training workshop on menstrual hygiene management and cervical cancer prevention and treatment, general health screening and distributed free sanitary pads.

Dr. Francis Aboagye Kwarteng, a retired social worker and a Consultant who is also the CEO of FRANBENNY Group of companies remarked that it is not proper to organise the menstrual hygiene day only as an annual special event and suggested to the stakeholders to consider distributing sanitary pads to schools frequently, without organising it as a special day.