

# Govt commended for budget allocation for free sanitary pads

By Augustina Tawiah

PLAN International Ghana has commended the government for the historic allocation of GH¢3 292.4 million in the 2025 Financial Budget to distribute free sanitary pads to female students in primary and senior high schools.

It said the initiative would significantly reduce school absenteeism, improve menstrual hygiene management and contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty that disproportionately affects girls, adding that it also marked a significant milestone in the fight against menstrual poverty and the promotion of gender equality in Ghana.

A statement issued in Accra said it recognised the profound impact the initiative would have on the lives of girls, especially those in underserved rural communities.

“By ensuring access to free sanitary pads, the government is addressing a key driver of inequality and creating an enabling environment for girls to stay in school, focus on their education and achieve their full

potential,” it said.

## Menstrual poverty

Menstrual poverty remains a critical barrier to the well-being, education and development of women and girls, particularly in rural areas.

Limited access to affordable menstrual hygiene products, according to Plan International Ghana, forced many girls to resort to unsafe and unhygienic alternatives such as rags or leaves, which posed serious health risks and contributed to school absenteeism.

It said in some cases, some of the girls ended up in compromising situations leading to abuse by some adults, pointing out that the government’s commitment to

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• Some of the girls provided with sanitary pads by Plan International Ghana

providing free sanitary pads would not only alleviate these challenges but also empower girls to manage their menstrual health with dignity and confidence.

It urged the government to ensure the effective implementation of the initiative, particularly in hard-to-reach rural areas where the need was

greatest and also called for sustained investment in menstrual health education and the provision of adequate sanitation facilities in schools to complement this initiative.

“Plan International Ghana remains steadfast in its commitment to working with the government, communities and other stakeholders to advance menstrual health and gender equality. Together, we can create a future where every girl in

Ghana can thrive, free from the barriers of menstrual poverty,” it said.

The statement said Plan International Ghana had long been at the forefront of efforts to address menstrual poverty and promote gender equality through its interventions, projects and initiatives such as the SHE Leads, the Lead Fund, “Be Smart Learn and Stay Protected” and Integrated Package for Sustainable Community Development (IPADEV).