



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT DAY**

**LET US SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL HOUSE MOTHERS IN SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF TO PROMOTE  
MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT OF ADOLESCENT DEAF GIRLS**

May 28th each year marks Menstrual Hygiene Day. The day is observed across the world as part of global advocacy activities aimed at promoting good menstrual hygiene management practices and raising awareness of the challenges all women and girls faced. One of the main goals of Menstrual Hygiene Day is to highlight global awareness of the importance of proper Menstrual Hygiene Management among women and girls.

The importance of proper Menstrual Hygiene Management cannot be overemphasized. Good Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) for example is an important determinant of the overall well-being of women and girls. For adolescent girls, proper MHM not only contributes to the overall well-being of women but contributes to improving school attendance and thus improves learning outcomes. It is for this reason that World Menstrual Hygiene Day is celebrated every year on the 28th of May.

While the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that adolescents (between the ages of 10 and 19) constitute 20 percent of the global population and 85 percent of this population live in developing countries, evidence has shown that a significant number of adolescent girls do not have access to resources that would enable them to engage in good MHM practices.

The government of Ghana, Civil Society Organizations, and other groups have placed greater emphasis on good MHM practices, especially among adolescent girls in schools. The understanding is that access to proper MHM practices encourages school attendance, transition, and completion rate for adolescent girls. These are achieved through an annual celebration of MHM days as well as lasting sensitizations and advocacy. Very few of these interventions however target Deaf girls in schools for the Deaf.

Deaf girls have different educational and life experiences. The majority of them grow from young girls to adults in residential schools for the Deaf. For example, unlike hearing girls who spend their pre-secondary education as day students, Deaf girls spent almost all their time in residential schools for the Deaf with very minimal time at home with their families and friends during vacations. They, therefore, lack the needed support from their peers in terms of obtaining the needed support to manage their periods.

A 2019 study conducted by the GNAD on menstrual hygiene management among in-school adolescent deaf girls in Ghana for example indicated that the majority of deaf girls had their first menstrual (menarche) while in school, and many did not know much about menstruation before their first menstruation. In these situations, residential house mothers and peers were the first sources of support for the Deaf girls when they had issues with their menses.

Despite the roles the residential housemothers play in promoting proper MHM for deaf girls, schools for the Deaf remain under-resourced with basic sanitary materials that can help the housemothers support the girls manage their periods properly. For example, needy girls who come to school with no supply of sanitary materials have to look up to their residential house mothers and peers to support them to manage their menses in the absence of their parents. In the absence of such, many adolescent girls would miss classes, a situation that affects their performance academically.

Even though the management of the schools for the Deaf are the key actors with the responsibility to ensure menstrual hygiene among in-school adolescent girls, the role of parents, guardians, and civil society remain equally important in achieving good MHM among deaf girls as well as promoting better educational outcomes.

Thus, as we celebrate this day, GNAD wishes to reiterate that, while schools for the deaf are doing their best to promote proper MHM, they remain under-resourced. We, therefore, call on key stakeholders, cooperative institutions, and donor agencies to support the 13 schools for the Deaf with safe, free sanitary materials so that the residential house mothers can assist the needy deaf girls to practice proper MHM.

We wish to extend heartfelt congratulations to institutions and donors that are supporting the Deaf people around SRH. In particular, the association remains grateful to Amplify Change for its continuous support to promote MHM literacy as provide supplies to Schools for the Deaf

### **ABOUT GHANA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF**

The GNAD is the national organization of Deaf People in Ghana. The GNAD is the mouthpiece of Deaf people working to ensure that every Deaf person in Ghana enjoys the right to a life of dignity. The GNAD seeks to achieve an active and productive Deaf community with access to education and information and secured economic activities that can sustain and maintain the quality and security of life. The GNAD achieves its vision through mobilizing members, removing communication barriers, creating awareness on Deaf issues, and advocating for equal opportunities for the Deaf People.

The GNAD is registered with the Registrar General Department and Social Welfare. The Association is affiliated to the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), the largest International Non-Governmental organization, WFD Regional Secretariat for Western and Central Africa (WCAR), Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations (GFD), and the host organization for **WFDs WCAR** transnational Capacity Building Project.

Further details about GNAD can be obtained from [www.gnadgh.org](http://www.gnadgh.org) or via;

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