

## **AHOY Africa and The Orange Girl Foundation donate sanitary materials to girls in Jukwa-Bremang.**

Advancing and Harnessing Opportunities for Youth (AHOY) Africa and The Orange Girl Foundation have donated sanitary materials to students at the Bremang-Jukwa Catholic School in the Central Region of Ghana as part of their effort to end period poverty and promote good menstrual hygiene among girls.

The project took place on May 26, 2023, at the community center and saw the presence of some parents, the chief of the community, the PTA chairman, teachers, and the Ghana Education Service girl's coordinator. The team donated menstrual cups and cloth pads to the girls in the community who are missing school due to period poverty. According to the group, access to menstrual hygiene products has become a big challenge in the community, affecting girls' education; therefore, there is a need to tackle the issue amicably.

Speaking with Nanayaa Amoako Baffoe, the team leader, she said that "girls in the community resort to various means, including sleeping with visitors who come into the communities for funerals and other purposes for as little as 20 cedis to enable them to afford basic things such as sanitary pads. Some of the parents take the girls to nearby hospitals for family planning methods to protect them from their mini-hookup services. This is disheartening and quite disturbing because their education and health are at risk".

In furtherance, she stated that their intervention has produced great results because, when they last visited the community in 2021, the school had recorded five teenage pregnancy cases, but after their intervention, there has not been any record of teenage pregnancy from 2022 to 2023.

"We decided to go back to the community to measure our progress, and it has been refreshing. I am excited about the new development, and I am hopeful it will remain the same till the next time we return", she pointed out.

She added that there's a need to respond to menstrual health issues, particularly the sex of pad canker, which has become a hindrance to girls' education.

Menstrual challenges are a common issue in Ghana, particularly. The lack of menstrual products, menstrual change rooms, and proper disposable systems are major challenges many girls in Ghana face in their quest to manage their period. According to a report by UNICEF, only 36.7% of girls and women in Ghana have access to clean menstrual hygiene products, 19.4% use unhygienic materials such as rags, leaves, or old cloths, and 44.8% of schools in Ghana have separate toilets for girls and boys, which makes it very difficult for them to manage their period while in school. 70% of girls in Ghana miss five days of school every month, according to a report by WaterAid.