



## **TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF MENSTRUAL MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS/ Reusable Pads**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1. Country Context**

São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), located in the Gulf of Guinea, is a small, lower-middle income country consisting of two main islands. It has a total population of approximately 200000 people. In 2017, its gross domestic product per capita was 1921 US\$. In addition to having a small population and a remote location, there is a high fixed cost of public goods due to all the factors that affect the country's trade, fiscal accounts, and human development outcomes.

The structure of the country's tertiary education sector was changed by the 2018 National Education System Act, which imposes 11 years of compulsory education (two years of pre-school and nine years of primary education) divided into three cycles.

In STP school-age children face three main issues: (a) girls' school results are constrained by high rates of early pregnancy, among other factors; (b) learning levels in STP are low for both boys and girls, due to system-wide weaknesses; and (c) vulnerable children in and out of the school system are not supported in their efforts to reach their full human potential.

Other barriers girls face to enrolling and staying in school are long distances to school, safety concerns, poor conditions/lack of sanitation facilities, and the limited value placed on girls' education. Girls are at increased risk of gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual exploitation and abuse and Sexual Harassment (SA). Most schools have poor sanitation/toilets and provide little or no support for menstrual hygiene management (MHM), preventing consistent school attendance.

#### **1.2. The Project**

The Projeto Empoderamento de Raparigas e Educação de Qualidade para Todos–GIRLS EMPOWERMENT AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL PROJECT (PEREQT) project is aligned with the priorities and strategies of the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe. The project will support the implementation of the Government's Education Policy Charter by focusing on critical and specific issues in Basic Education. To achieve this goal, the project consists of five components, which together aim to empower girls and tackle learning poverty by supporting the acquisition of life skills for girls through system-wide activities to tackle poor learning outcomes, as well as to support a more inclusive and supportive learning



environment for girls and the most vulnerable. The scope of the project is general education (covering pre-primary to secondary education).

### 1.3. Justification of the Activity

Given the various systemic factors that contribute to the low learning outcomes presented above, the country, and more specifically the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (MECC) with the support of partners, has been investing in a policy to promote a safer and more pleasant school environment for students, to promote the well-being of boys and girls and the desire to attend school.

One of the activities that will be supported is the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program, in three distinct dimensions. One of these dimensions is the restocking of school toilets in an efficient way (e.g. toilet paper, soap, menstrual hygiene products, etc.) because MECC envisions students using clean menstrual material that can absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed privately as needed during the menstrual period, using soap and water to wash their bodies as needed, and having access to safe and convenient facilities to dispose of this menstrual material.

## 2. General Objective

MECC of São Tomé and Príncipe, as part of PEREQT, intends to **contract a Supplier/NGO to supply menstrual management products for distribution in schools.**

The products requested are **Reusable Pads** (Regular, Maxi, Super maxi sizes).

## 3. Technical Specifications

The product, reusable pads with wings for use during the menstrual period should be of high quality to maintain menstrual health and must meet the technical specifications mentioned below.

### a. Product Description

The product shall:

- The product shall consist of 3 layers: a top layer, an absorbent core consisting of cotton towel, cotton fleece, or other absorbent fabrics and a leak-proof bottom layer that typically consists of polyurethane laminate (PUL). The top layer will be the high absorbency layer that will transport fluids to the absorbent core. The top layer is made of materials such as cotton, cotton flannel.



- The product should have securement mechanisms such as plastic buttons, Velcro, etc., or similar so that the wings firmly attach the product to the underwear to prevent shifting during use.
- The product should not be perfumed.
- The layers should be free of acids and alkalis, free of dust and particles, free of foul odors, and free of flaking fibers. It must be free of chemical residues such as chlorine, herbicides, pesticides, heavy metals, azo dyes, etc. The total viable bacterial count, when determined in accordance with EN ISO 6887-1 or equivalent, shall not exceed 1000 CFU per gram of sanitary pad/towel and shall be free of Enterobacteriaceae and, Staphylococcus aureus, and Pseudomonas aeruginosa, etc.... The pH of the extract should be 6-8.5 when tested according to EN ISO 3071, Method B.
- Products should be able to be soaked and washed thoroughly in water up to 60 degrees C, using soap/liquid detergent. After washing with soap, they must be able to be dried thoroughly for reuse. The product must be able to withstand a minimum of 60 washes whether hand or machine washed.
- Time of use should be calculated to wear from 4 to 6 hours.
- The sewing thread should be free of loose threads and clean. It should have dimensional stability with good tensile strength and seam strength.
- The product must come with a declaration of biodegradability and compostability
- accompanied by a certification according to the applicable ISO/EN standards.

#### b. Sizes and Absorbency

The following sizes and absorbencies should be considered:

Type	Size	
Regular	Regular with length 180mm to 220mm and width 60mm-100mm excluding wings	Must be able to handle a normal flow. The absorption must be at least 15 ml (Supplier must share results from an ISO 17025 approved laboratory during technical document submissions)
Maxi (large)	Maxi with length 220mm to 260mm and width 60mm-100mm excluding wings	It must be able to handle moderate to heavy flow. The absorption should be at least 20 ml
SuperMaxi (extra-large)	SuperMaxi with length 260mm to 300mm and width 60mm-100mm excluding wings	It must be able to handle moderate to heavy flow. The absorption must be at least 30 ml

#### c. Instructions

The instructions should be in Portuguese and should include instructions for use, washing and care, preferably by pictograms. They should also make indication of which side is



absorbent; safety warnings, if any; recommendation on the time of use during menstruation; and recommendation and indications on when to dispose of the product and method of disposal.

#### **d. List of Products to be Produced and Packed**

The Supplier shall supply the products in packages which shall contain:

- 1 leak-proof travel pouch to store a minimum of two used pads and must be reusable.
- 3 units of reusable Regular size pads.
- 3 units of reusable Maxi size pads.
- 3 units of reusable Super Maxi size pads.
- Instructions for use.

All of the above should be delivered in a sealed package to protect the products from moisture, dirt, and contamination during storage and transportation.

#### **4. Specific Services**

The specific services are as follows:

- Final product.
- Packaging (primary and secondary).
- Purchase of packaging and labels.
- Palletizing.

The packages defined above must be packaged. On the primary packaging must be identified the name of the product, product size, manufacturer, address, dimensions, lot number, date, month and year of manufacture, expiration date, number of packages and other relevant information.

Products must be newly manufactured and have at least 75% of their shelf life remaining at the time of delivery.

#### **5. Delivery**

The selected company will be directly responsible for all the tasks mentioned above and will be responsible for their delivery/completion and respective invoicing to MECC.

Deliveries will be made according to MECC's instructions at a place and date to be determined in the City of Sao Tome in Sao Tome and Principe.



Upon receipt, MECC will have a period of not less than 45 days to inspect the goods after delivery. The goods must be delivered in compliance with all the technical specifications mentioned above.

Once contracted, if any product fails inspection before or after shipment, the Supplier will be responsible for the disposal and or return of the rejected goods. The Supplier will bear the cost of all related activities, including product replacement, freight, and re-inspection costs.

If the delivered product does not satisfy MECC in terms of the requirements of the technical specifications and in terms of quality in relation to the samples submitted (provided for see details in point 7), the Supplier shall replace the articles within the time specified for delivery, or extension granted.

Inspection does not release the Supplier from its contractual obligations and the products are subject to final acceptance upon delivery.

## **6. Quantities**

The Supplier must submit different financial bids in order to be able to supply the following quantities:

- Financial proposal for the supply of 1,000 packages as defined above.
- Financial proposal for the supply of 5,000 packages as defined above.
- Financial proposal for the supply of 10,000 packages as defined above.
- Financial proposals for the supply of more than 10,000 packages as defined above.

## **7. Samples**

The Supplier must provide in its technical proposal 3 samples of each of the products. These samples are free of charge and non-returnable. They will be evaluated and tested by the MECC team.



## 8. Minimum Requirements/Supplier Capacity

The following attributes will be considered for the evaluation of the bids:

- Over 3 years of specific export/distribution experience in hygiene and health.
- Minimum 3 years of relevant experience.
- Demonstrated ability in large scale production and distribution of sanitary pads.
- Evidence of work already done in this field (at least 3)
  
- The specifications of the products to be supplied conform and do not contain any deviation(s) from the minimum required in the Technical Specifications.
- **If not possible to comply the Supplier shall provide a detailed explanation and an alternative proposal.**
- The samples received are in conformity and contain no deviation(s) from the minimum required in the Technical Specifications.
- The price comparison should be based on the Unit Price of the packages for delivery.
- The supplier, upon signing the contract, must ensure that all employees involved in all the tasks sign the Code of Conduct (CoC) which will include aspects related to unacceptable behavior and sanctions in cases of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, including the prohibition of any relationship with a minor.
- In the course of the work, the vendor must be careful and respectful of the issues of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), including Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SAE/AS), Special Education.

## 9. Deadlines

- Deadline for supplying the product: 90 days from the date of signing the contract.
- Place of delivery: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences of STP.

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