



BUTTERFLY PAD PROJECT

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EXPERIENCE WITH WASHABLE SANITARY PADS





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Our attention was drawn to a study by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. It revealed that girls in The Gambia often miss school during menstruation periods.

Washable sanitary pads offer a solution for women worldwide (health benefits, environmental impact, money saving...). But could this be a real and lasting solution for the girls & women in The Gambia? We ventured to find out.

We therefore conducted a user research program comprising of 330 schoolgirls and their teachers. During 2018 they each received a set of Butterfly pads. These high-quality pads last for approximately 2 years. They are hand made in The Gambia and consist of safe technical textiles (certified PUL, absorbing microfiber) and pre-washed cotton.

Feedback was collected from 237 girls and their teachers (90/10%). Of the total respondents, 97% confirmed they would continue to use the Butterfly pads, while for 92% of them, the pads offered a real sense of security.

Prior to receiving the Butterfly pads, 36% of respondents used local cotton wrappers. These were said to cause leakages at times, resulting in shame and lack of self-confidence. For 63% of women & girls who at present use very expensive disposable pads, the Butterfly pads offer a cost saving solution.

Our research hence strongly indicates that our washable Butterfly pads are a real solution for women and girls in The Gambia and beyond. We note moreover that the program was mainly carried out in the developed coastal areas. The situation in other regions of the country may be even more critical, strengthening the need for this cost saving and failsafe alternative.

Thanks to the many people who helped with this research!

For the girls & women in The Gambia,

Hanne Decloedt

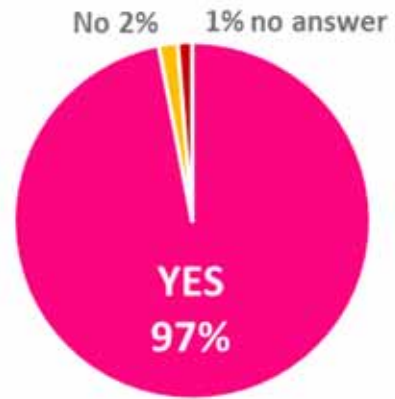
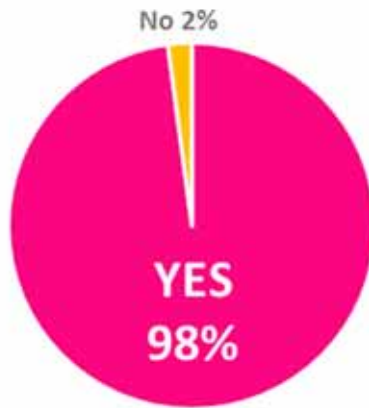
Belgium



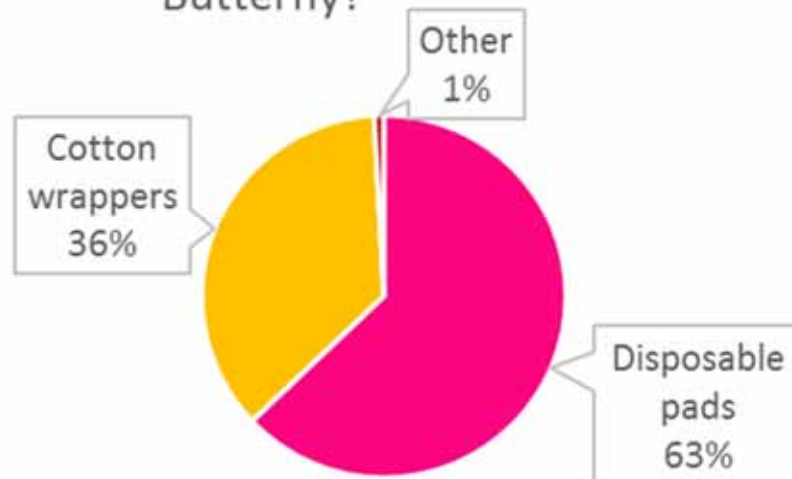
Have you used the pads?

If yes ->

Will you keep using them?



What did you use before Butterfly?

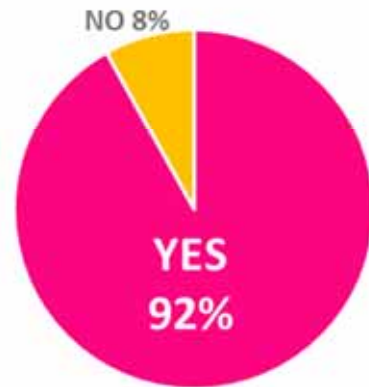




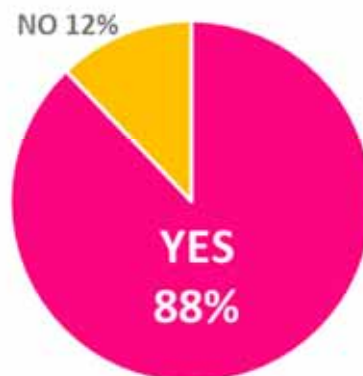
Do you have good fitting underwear to wear the pad?



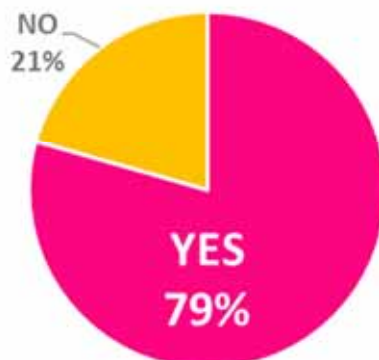
Do you feel safe with the Butterfly pad?



Do these pads keep you going to school during menstruation?



After washing the pads, do you hang them in the sun to dry?



Which fabric do you prefer?



* Drying the pads in the sun is important: UV kills bacteria – sensitization is needed



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