



## Project Template

### European Rotaract Information Center

Name of the project: PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence

Organizing club: Rotaract Club of Guzelyali

Contact person: Işinsu Özgüney - President [isinsuozguney@gmail.com](mailto:isinsuozguney@gmail.com), Eda Toksöz -  
ISD/Treasurer [guledatoksoz@hotmail.com](mailto:guledatoksoz@hotmail.com)

Email address: [isinsuozguney@gmail.com](mailto:isinsuozguney@gmail.com)

## **I. ANALYSIS, OPPORTUNITIES AND MAIN IDEA FOR THE PROJECT.**

### **1. ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM WE WANT TO SOLVE**

The problem that "PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" seeks to address is the societal challenge of menstrual stigma and poverty. This refers to the prevalent social prohibitions and misunderstandings surrounding menstruation, resulting in feelings of embarrassment, concealment, and bias against individuals who menstruate. Furthermore, the project aims to tackle menstrual poverty, a substantial obstacle that hinders individuals from obtaining essential menstrual products due to financial limitations. These challenges exacerbate wider gender disparities, affecting the education, health, and overall welfare of individuals who menstruate. The project aims to address these concerns in order to establish a society that is more inclusive, knowledgeable, and supportive, where menstruation is considered normal, and everyone has equal access to the necessary resources for menstrual health.

### **2. OPPORTUNITIES**

"PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" provides crucial avenues for educating and promoting awareness about menstruation, while also confronting societal stigmas and dispelling misconceptions. It tackles the issue of menstrual poverty by guaranteeing access to essential menstrual products for individuals who require them, and actively supports policy reforms to enhance menstrual health and equality. Through community engagement and support, the project aims to foster a cultural shift towards normalizing menstruation and promoting inclusivity and support for menstruators everywhere.

## **II. HOW TO EXECUTE THE PROJECT**

### **1. ACTION GROUP**

Rtr. Işın Özgüney and Rtr. Esin Buse Okay, project coordinators, organized a preparatory meeting with club presidents to assemble hygiene kits, highlighting the value of teamwork. Rtr. Ceyda Bektaş and Rtr. Işın Özgüney ensured support from relevant associations for the project's aims.

Psychologist members Rtr. Sedef Yıldırım and Rtr. Ceren Gündüz, as project managers, developed and delivered educational content, significantly impacting educational outreach. Rtr. Nehir Şimşir and Rtr. Öykü Tuğrul, marketing coordinators, crafted public service announcements and managed social media effectively.

Rtr. Doruk Topuzoğlu and Rtr. Yasin Semerci, organization coordinators, hosted happy hours where entry fees were sanitary pads, creatively supporting menstrual health

awareness. Additionally, many members and guests contributed as speakers and participants in these events.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

"PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" is an initiative launched in 2020 by the Güzelyalı Rotaract Club. Its main objectives are to address the issues of menstrual stigma and poverty, promote awareness about menstrual health, and contribute to the promotion of gender equality. Originally backed exclusively by the Güzelyalı Rotaract Club, the project gathered momentum and broadened its scope by integrating seven more Rotaract clubs within the following two years, thereby amplifying its influence through educational initiatives, the provision of free menstrual products, and advocacy for policy changes. This three-year-long collaborative endeavor strongly adheres to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the policies of the World Health Organization. It showcases the significant impact of community involvement in advancing global health and equality.

## **3. GOALS OF THE PROJECT**

"PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" focuses on overcoming societal and cultural challenges associated with menstruation in countries such as Turkey, Egypt and Iran. The project aims to promote open dialogue on menstrual health and hygiene by removing stigmas, improving education, and combating menstrual poverty. The goal of "PeriodTalk" is to normalize menstruation, improve access to sanitary products, and address gender inequality through collaborative, culturally sensitive efforts and policy advocacy.

Short Term Goals:

1. Launch Awareness Campaigns: Use social media and community outreach to educate and reduce menstrual stigma.
2. Educational Program Development: Create menstrual health-related educational content for institutions such as colleges and workplaces.
3. Distributing Free Menstrual Products: Set up distribution points for free menstrual products to help those in immediate need.

Long Term Goals:

1. Cultural and Social Change: Eliminate cultural stigmas associated with menstruation by changing societal perceptions.
2. Providing Sustainable Menstrual Products: Ensure that everyone has access to affordable, environmentally friendly menstrual products.

3. Advocating for Policy and Legislative Changes: Work to improve access to menstrual products and reduce menstrual poverty.

#### **4. TARGET AUDIENCE**

The target audience of the project consists primarily of elementary and middle school students living in rural and disadvantaged areas. The target group is not limited to female students only; education has also been provided to male students. In the transmitted photos, the faces of the children have been blurred to protect their personal data.

#### **5. ACTION PLAN & TIME FRAME**

The project, now in its third year, includes the following key activities for this year:

1. Project Reevaluation: Discuss the project's future and create a roadmap for continuation (September-October).
2. Role Distribution: Assign roles to club members to ensure effective project execution (October).
3. Promotion to Other Clubs: Share project details with other Rotaract clubs and plan a collaborative meeting for November.
4. Happy Hour Organization: Determine the date and location of the Happy Hour event (November).
5. NGO and Professional Engagement: Begin discussions with relevant organizations about potential partnerships (October).
6. Sponsorship Efforts: Create sponsorship documents and seek financial support (December).
7. Trainer Education: Provide adolescent and menstrual health training to mental health professionals in preparation for educational roles (January).
8. Field Work: Trained professionals will educate students and distribute hygiene kits from February to April.
9. Awareness Campaigns: Throughout the project, promote menstrual health awareness through social media.

#### **Brief description of each step**

The project includes several strategic activities planned for this year:

1. Happy Hour Events: Hold events with an entrance fee paid in sanitary pads to raise funds and encourage men to engage with menstrual health, thereby normalizing the subject and combating period poverty.
2. Collaborative Awareness Panels: Collaborate with organizations like Tabu Kamu and Konuşmamız Gerek to hold awareness panels, promoting synergy among NGOs and raising menstrual health awareness among Rotaract members.
3. Educational Training: Use presentation materials created by Güzelyalı Rotaract Club's expert psychologists to educate club members and guests on menstruation-related topics.
4. Field Work in Education: Promote a supportive environment for candid discussions about bodily changes under the direction of mental health specialists from the club by teaching both genders about the menstrual cycle in public schools.
5. Sponsorship and Kit Distribution: Participate in sponsorship discussions, assemble hygiene kits, and distribute them following training to promote menstrual health education.
6. Social Media Campaigns: Run continuous awareness campaigns on social media platforms to increase the reach and impact of menstrual health education.

Challenges: Securing cooperative educational institutions and coordinating kit preparations with limited personnel are significant logistical challenges.

## **6. RESOURCES**

Fundamentally, having a few club members who are mental health professionals or doctors is sufficient. However, if the goal is to draw attention to this issue and create widespread social and cultural change, it is recommended to collaborate with NGOs in this field. Additionally, seeking support from professional chambers or associations is also advised. The provision of hygiene kits is optional. In the 23/24 period, the prepared kits included chocolate, herbal tea, pads, and informational booklets. Some of the pads used in these kits were provided by the Beige brand, while others came from what was collected during the happy hours. The chocolates and teas were covered by the funds of the seven clubs involved. Depending on the situation and conditions, sponsorships can be found for all of these components. The project has its own unique sponsorship dossier.

### Hygienic Pads

1-5 Euros - By per package (brought by happy hour attendees)

Hygiene kits

Hygienic Pads (partial funded by sponsors molped & beige) (S)

Tea

Chocolate

Brochure

## **7. BUDGET**

- Hygienic pads. 1-5 Euros (depending on it's type)
- Tea, 1-3 Euros for one package (14-20 tea-bag in every package)
- Chocolate: For 1000 kits, the average cost is 30 euros.
- Brochure: The brochures are 25 pages long and were created in collaboration with the Turkish Psychological Association. QR codes for accessing the brochure have been affixed to the kits. The approximate cost is 10 euros.
- Kit equipment
- Logistics: Since this phase of the project has been carried out in different provinces, transportation from west to east averages 40 euros.
- Video studio (20/21): The rental cost for the public service announcement shooting studio is approximately 10.00 Euro.
- Sponsored advertisement fee (20/21): The sponsored Instagram advertisement cost is approximately 12.10 Euro.

## **8. ORGANIZERS OF THE PROJECT**

Provide contact info of your club/s and responsible rotaractors.

Rotaract Club of Guzelyali - Rtr. Işinsu ÖZGÜNEY (President)

Rotaract Club of Guzelyali – Rtr. Sedef Yıldırım (20/21 President)

Rotaract Club of Guzelyali – Rtr. Ceren Gündüz (21/22 President)

Rotaract Club of Guzelyali – Rtr. Eda Toksöz (ISD / Treasurer)

Rotaract Club of Guzelyali – Rtr. Ceyda Bektaş (Community Services Director)

## **9. PARTICIPANTS**

The project was initially carried out solely by the Güzelyalı Rotaract Club in its first year, and by the end of the term, it was awarded the best awareness project by the district and gained attention in the local press, which led to different Rotaract Clubs and associations joining in the second and third years.

For the 20/21 period: Güzelyalı RAC, Turkish Endometriosis Association;

For the 21/22 period: Çekirge, Çiğli, Ege, Güzelbahçe, İzmir, İzmir Economy, Konak, Nilüfer Rotaract Clubs;

For the 22/23 period: The project was not realized due to the Turkey-Syria earthquake.

For the 23/24 period: Bornova, Çiğli, Economy, Güzelbahçe, İzmir, Magnesia, the Association of Turkish Psychologists, and Beige.

## **10. SPONSORSHIP**

In 2020, the "PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" initiative was launched with support from the Güzelyalı Rotaract Club. Molped, a well-known sanitary pad brand, sponsored 800 pads in the project's first year. As the initiative grew in its second and third years, it received additional sponsorship from Beige, another sanitary pad brand, thereby increasing its reach and impact. Transnak Logistics, which played a critical role in distributing sponsored products, provided significant logistical support for the project.

The project's focus shifted dramatically between 2022 and 2023, when a devastating earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale struck seven provinces. In response, "PeriodTalk" shifted its focus to meeting the urgent needs of the earthquake-affected regions. Transnak Logistics responded to the crisis by transporting 500 pads from İzmir to Adıyaman, a severely affected area. This strategic redirection demonstrated the project's adaptability and commitment to meeting immediate community needs in the aftermath of natural disasters, reinforcing its role in providing critical assistance to those in desperate situations.

## **11. MEDIA COVERAGE**

Social media has been actively utilized. The project has been featured on the Rotaract TV channel on YouTube, in Rotavision (the promotional magazine for District 2440), and has also been covered in the local press.

In the first year of the "PeriodTalk: Breaking the Silence" project, informative posts about menstruation and menstrual poverty were shared on social media. To raise awareness and encourage dialogue, a video featuring male and female members and guests answering questions about menstruation was published on YouTube, reaching a large audience. In a second video, Prof. Dr. Ümit İnceboz discussed menstruation from a medical and biological perspective, while Psychologist Sedef Yıldırım (20/21 President) addressed its social and psychological aspects. This public service announcement was promoted on social media as a sponsored post, resulting in 42,493 views. Both videos aired on Rotaract TV, with the goal of sparking societal dialogue and breaking down taboos surrounding menstruation. This year, seven clubs contributed to the project's

reach, with two reels shared on their social media accounts. One reel, titled "If It's Normal, Then Why Are We Ashamed?", sought to challenge societal perceptions of menstruation, while the other focused on debunking menstrual myths and correcting misconceptions, as part of ongoing efforts to normalize conversations about menstrual health and dispel myths that contribute to menstrual stigma.

- YouTube videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0odi2na85AI>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpQbOPJhTY&t=2s&pp=ygUQcmVnbCBrb251xZ9hbMSxbQ%3D%3D>
- Instagram Reels: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/C0w4Ftjr-iD/>,  
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C0w5zgLLmK0/>
- Local press news:  
[https://www.izmirsicakhaber.com/guzelyali-rotaract-kulubu-nun-regl-konusalim-projesi-ses-getirdi/3255/#google\\_vignette](https://www.izmirsicakhaber.com/guzelyali-rotaract-kulubu-nun-regl-konusalim-projesi-ses-getirdi/3255/#google_vignette),  
[https://www.arztakvimi.com.tr/rotaract-kulubunun-regl-konusalim-projesi-ses-getirdi/#google\\_vignette](https://www.arztakvimi.com.tr/rotaract-kulubunun-regl-konusalim-projesi-ses-getirdi/#google_vignette)
- Official website of District: <https://rotaract2440.org/kuluplerden-haberler/643>

### **III. RESULTS**

#### **1. RESULTS AND OVERVIEW**

The project resulted in significant advancements, such as increased societal awareness of menstrual health, which was fueled by increased celebrity dialogue and strategic social media use, as well as tangible support through the distribution of hygiene kits that directly addressed period poverty. Educational efforts increased understanding and normalized discussions about menstruation, while policy changes, such as those implemented by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, demonstrated the potential for systemic impact. In its first year, the project provided education to one primary school in Van and a special education center in Izmir, followed by seven schools in Konak, Çiğli, Menemen, Hatay, and Kemalpaşa in the second year, with an average class size of 15 students. This year, discussions are ongoing with five different locations, and currently, three schools are receiving training, with plans to extend training and distribute sanitary pads to two more schools by the end of the year. Challenges such as engaging institutions wary of societal taboos, the labor-intensive nature of assembling hygiene kits, and maintaining the initiative in the face of changing needs and limited resources highlighted the complexities of comprehensively addressing menstrual health. Despite these challenges, the project's contributions to awareness and direct support demonstrate a significant positive impact.



## **2. ADVICES**

The project's success depends on several critical aspects: First and foremost, awareness and education initiatives are critical for increasing societal understanding of menstruation and eliminating period poverty stigma, necessitating effective educational programs and social media campaigns. Second, the long-term impact of hygiene kit assembly and distribution is dependent on the sustainability of resources, which necessitates continuous material procurement and financial support. Third, developing and maintaining partnerships with schools, local governments, and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is critical for implementing educational programs and reaching a larger audience. Fourth, effective volunteer management, including task distribution and motivation, is critical for the project's successful execution. Finally, regular evaluation and feedback collection are required to make improvements and increase the project's effectiveness. Paying special attention to these critical components is critical to meeting the project's objectives and promoting long-term change in menstrual health and hygiene.

## **3. SUSTAINABILITY**

This project has the potential for long-term success due to its multifaceted approach, which includes education, collaboration with NGOs and professional organizations, community engagement through events such as Happy Hour, and practical assistance with hygiene kits. Its success is dependent on ongoing engagement with the community, obtaining ongoing sponsorships, and maintaining a dynamic presence on social media to raise awareness. Finding willing educational institutions and assembling hygiene kits are both difficult challenges that necessitate innovative solutions and a dedicated team. However, with a strong collaborative framework and a focus on education and awareness, the project can gradually adapt and evolve to meet the needs of the community, laying the groundwork for long-term impact.

Over the years, significant changes have occurred in this field. For instance, the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality decided to cover one month's cost of sanitary pads for women. Additionally, celebrities began to speak more openly about the topic, and an association conducted research on period poverty, indicating increased visibility and awareness of the issue.