

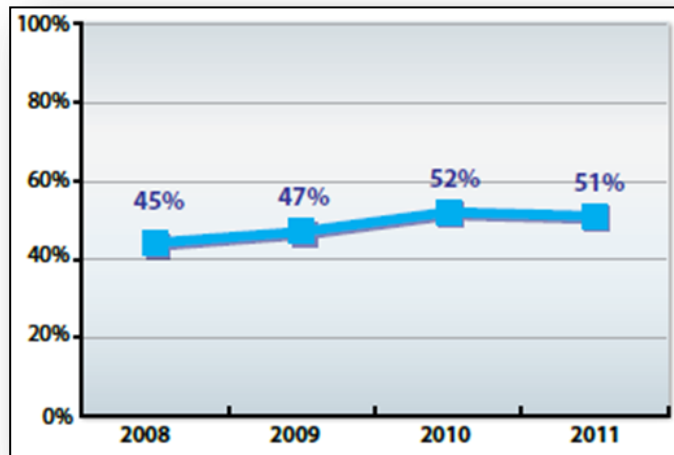
**Overcoming the Taboo:  
Addressing the  
Menstrual Hygiene Management Needs  
of School Girls**

**Research and Monitoring Tools & Instruments  
for MHM in WASH in Schools (WinS)**

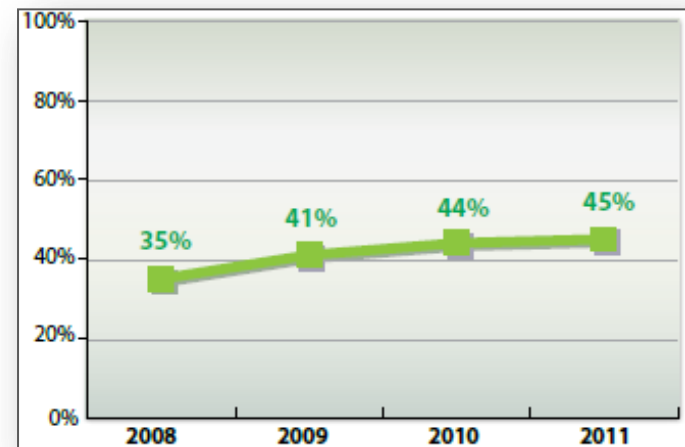
2<sup>nd</sup> Virtual MHM in WinS Conference  
Columbia University & UNICEF  
November 21, 2013

# Inadequate water & sanitation facilities pose major impediments for school girls

## Water Coverage



## Sanitation Coverage



- *Proportions from surveyed low-income countries:*
  - *49 % of schools lack adequate water*
  - *55 % of schools lack adequate sanitation*

## Definition of MHM

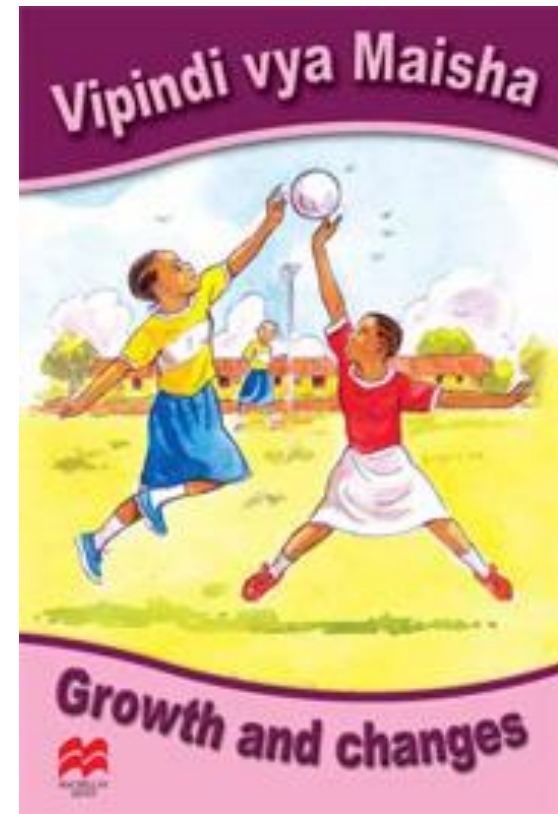
*Women and adolescent girls are using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of a menstrual period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials.*

# What is necessary for menstrual hygiene management (MHM) with safety and dignity?

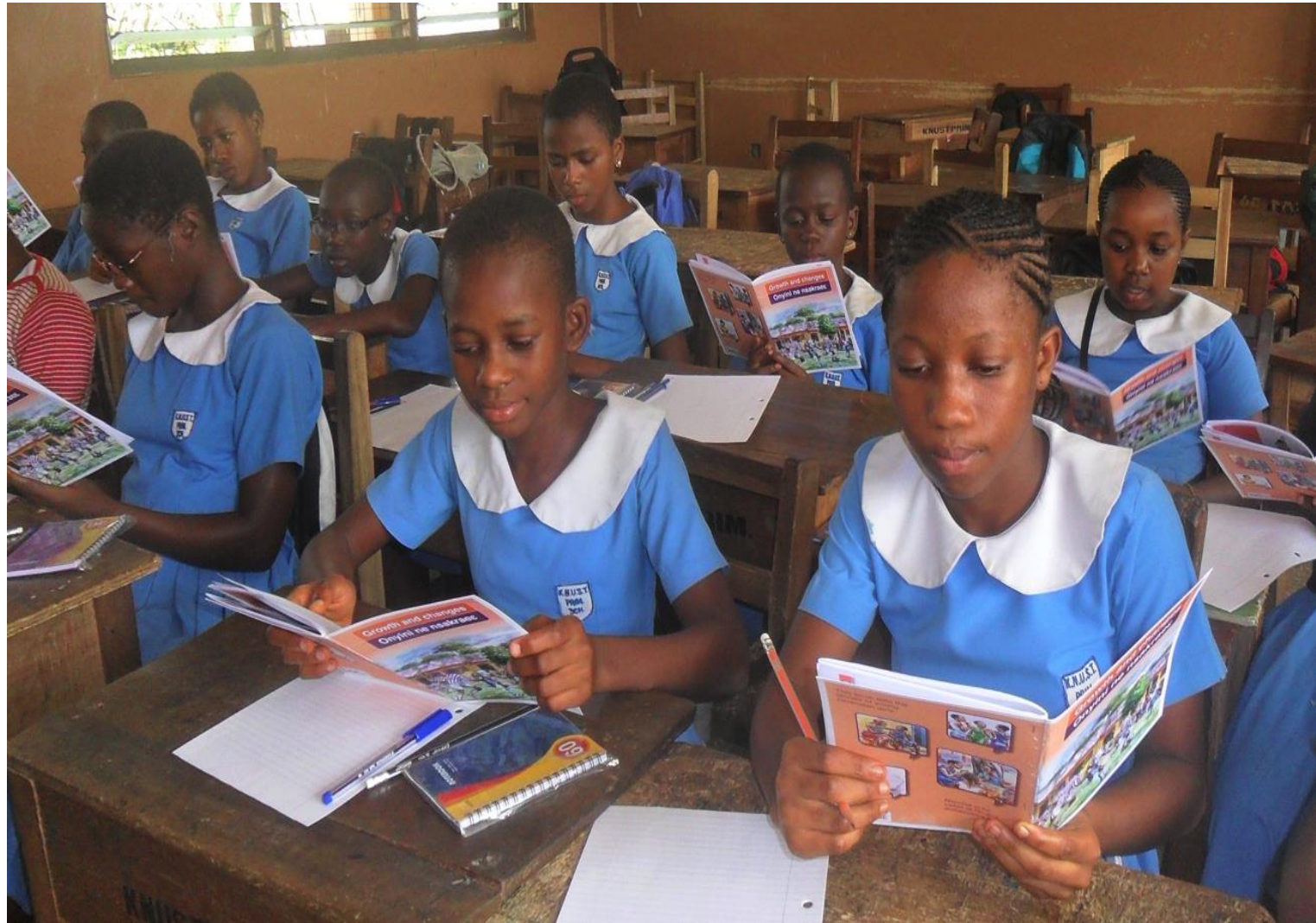
- *access to accurate and pragmatic information*
- *access to menstrual hygiene materials* (appropriate, affordable, hygienic)
- *access to facilities that provide privacy for changing materials and washing and drying menstrual cloths*
- *access to water and soap within a place that provides an adequate level of privacy for washing body, cloths and clothes*
- *access to disposal facilities for used menstrual materials* (disposal as a complete service)

## *Access to accurate and pragmatic information*

- Evidence suggests girls have inadequate guidance and support on menstruation and MHM in many middle and low-income countries
- One solution ~ the provision of menstrual education through girl's puberty books







## *Access to menstrual hygiene materials*

- Affordable, culturally appropriate, hygienic sanitary materials
- Provision of underwear for some girls
- Disposable or reusable solutions



## *Access to facilities that provide privacy*

- Adequate numbers of safe, private, clean latrines/toilets with doors and locks
- Water available inside latrines/toilets
- Sufficient space for washing of menstrual stains on uniforms and/or washing out used menstrual cloths





## *Access to water and soap*

- Provision of water and soap inside latrines/toilets
- Incorporation of need for water and soap (and other interventions) into WASH in Schools (WinS) national strategies



## *Access to disposal facilities*

- Adequate disposal facilities in latrine/toilet stalls (e.g. dustbin with lid) and disposal system within school grounds (e.g. incinerator or pit for burning or burying)
- Disposal must be culturally appropriate



## Recommendations from the 1<sup>st</sup> virtual MHM conference for WinS

- Document various MHM practices and the barriers girls face in various contexts
- Develop guidelines for integration of a minimum package for MHM into existing WinS programs
- Engaged with national governments from the very beginning when initiating MHM activities to ensure buy-in and additional support for multi-sectoral involvement

## Rationale for the 2<sup>nd</sup> virtual MHM in WinS Conference

Recommendation #1: Document various MHM practices and the barriers girls face in various contexts

~ need for adequate research tools and instruments for exploring MHM barriers facing school girls and female teachers (and tools for monitoring MHM interventions)

# Agenda for Today

- Opening remarks - Columbia University & UNICEF
- 16 presentations from around the world
- Presentations from academics, NGOs, private sector, social entrepreneurial groups, UNICEF offices
- Group breakout to discuss MHM toolkit & the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual virtual MHM in WinS conference



## Expected Outcomes from 2<sup>nd</sup> virtual MHM in WinS Conference

- Sharing of lessons learned/research approaches
- UNICEF & Columbia University publication ~ templates on research/monitoring activities
- MHM Research instruments/tools for UNICEF toolkit publication
- Ideas for theme of 3<sup>rd</sup> virtual MHM in WinS Conference in 2014