Let’s Talk About It!

Mainstreaming MHM in the Ministry of Education System in Zambia

MHM 3rd Annual Virtual Conference

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- 4 year (2011-2015) School WASH program
- Funded by USAID, managed by FHI 360 and CARE
- 600+ schools in Eastern Province, 250,000 pupils reached
- Water and sanitation facilities construction
- Hygiene education in and out of classroom
- School to community actions, O&M
- Partnerships with private and NGO sectors

*Splash: Schools Promoting Learning Achievement through Sanitation and Hygiene
616 schools supported by SPLASH
MHM in SPLASH

From washrooms to a comprehensive integrated program
Focus Areas for Mainstreaming MHM into the Zambia MoE System

1. Awareness raising and advocacy
2. Improved access to facilities and products
3. In and out of classroom activities
4. Institutional integration
5. Useful documents and teaching aids on MHM
Awareness raising and advocacy

- Visual brand and slogan for MHM – Let’s Talk About It!
- MHM Mini Exhibitions at central schools
- Formative research on MHM (underway)
- First National MH Day with high ranking GRZ and USAID officials
- Inclusion of community and traditional leaders in MHM programs
Improved access to facilities and products

- Washrooms in girls’ toilets
- Pad provision via PTAs
- Local reusable pad production in schools
- PPP for reusable pad production and distribution to schools
In and out of classroom activities

• MHM included in national curriculum
• MHM modules as part of teacher in-service training
• Both male and female Guidance and counseling teachers trained in MHM
• WASH clubs have MHM activities for boys and girls
Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools

Training Session

For School Officials and Teachers

Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education

USAID | ZAMBIA

SPLASH
Schools Promoting Learning Achievement through Sanitation and Hygiene
Integration in Ministry of Education Systems

- MHM in provincial and district strategic plans
- MHM indicators in school monitoring tool
- MHM module introduced in provincial teacher training college
3. Menstrual Hygiene Management
   a. Does the school have washrooms for girls? □ Yes □ No

   b. Do washrooms have water? □ Yes □ No. Soap? □ Yes □ No

   a. Do girls’ toilets have facilities for disposal of menstrual soiled sanitary towels?
      (check one) □ Yes □ No

   a. What method of disposal of soiled sanitary towels exist in the school? (check one)
      □ Burying □ Burning (incinerator) □ Other
      (Specify) ......................................

   a. Does the school provide sanitary towels for the girls? (check one) □ Yes □ No

   a. Does the school offer Menstrual Hygiene Management education to the girls?
      (check records) □ Yes □ No

   a. If yes above, how often is this done?
      □ Beginning of each term
      □ Once in a term
      □ Twice in a term
      □ Three times in a term
Useful documents and teaching aids on MHM

- Mini Toolkit for Teachers
- Pad pattern booklet
- In-service teacher training module
- Games and other classroom and WASH club resources
- The ABCs of MHM
Adolescence is the time between childhood and adulthood. During this time, menstruation begins and girls get their periods.

Body changes in girls occur during puberty and menstruation. These changes are normal and girls should not be scared.

Cultural factors and economic constraints can lead to poor menstrual hygiene management among girls.

Doable activities, like pad making parties, can strengthen Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) programs in schools.

Exercising and maintaining a healthy diet can reduce the effects of pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS).

Flannel material is recommended for making local re-usable pads because it has maximum absorbency.

Girls can remain in school if MHM activities are effectively, methodically and practically handled and executed.

Hygiene is important when you are menstruating. You should practice good personal hygiene by washing your body at least once a day.

It’s important to use the correct disposal facilities for used menstrual materials, such as sanitary bins, pit latrines or incinerators.

Join WASH clubs in school and see how you can contribute to the development and sustainability of the club in promoting MHM activities.

Keep track of when you get your period so that you can predict when your next one will be.

Locally produced re-usable pads can be made from a variety of materials and can enable girls to keep attending classes during their menses.

Management in schools should support and promote health, hygiene and menstrual discussions.
Mini-Toolbox for all MHM trainees

• 2 pager overview of MHM
• Visual aids on menstruation physiology
• Session plan for training teachers or others on MHM
• MHM checklist for schools
• Puberty booklet for girls and others (planned)
• Guidelines and patterns for making pads at school or in the community
• Actual pad as example and basic sewing kit to get started
How to Make a Reusable Pad!
Successes and Lessons so far

- Silence and taboos can break down very fast if there is something positive offered.
- MHM can and should be integrated into the existing school system through advocacy, training, materials, activities and events.
- MHM can and should be included in school performance indicators and assessment tools.
- Boys are very interested in MHM and love to make pads!
Challenges

• Pockets of resistance remain due to strong taboo and ignorance
• Materials for making reusable pads are not always available
• Lack of availability of pads in general
**Early (anecdotal) evidence of impact**

- increased enrollment and reduced absenteeism
- strengthened school-community linkages
- improved the psychosocial environment through open discussions and innovative activities

**SPLASH Longitudinal Outcome Survey** ongoing now is assessing the impact of WASH and MHM on girls’ attendance
Recommendations for school MHM programs starting up

• Use an existing institutional framework
• Identify ways of operating at scale and not just in individual schools
• Support production of learner centered education and support materials with teachers, parents and pupils
Thank you!