Menstrual Hygiene Management among Girls in School: Getting to a Model of an Enabling School Environment

A joint Collaboration between UNICEF and Emory University

MHM Virtual Conference
UNICEF & Columbia University
September 27, 2012
MHM in Schools
Getting to a Model of an Enabling School Environment

Presentation Outline

1. Partnership Background

2. Expected Collaboration Results

1. Research Activities

2. Involved Country Offices
MHM in Schools
Partnership Background: Emory-UNICEF

**2010**
- **Collaborative learning agenda formed:** WASH in schools (WinS)
- **WinS “Call to Action”** campaign and network collaborator
- **WinS 101,** a web-based course, developed and launched

**2011**
- **Research Fellows Program developed and launched**
  - Focus: Equity of access to WinS
  - 3 Research Fellows in 6 countries

**2012**
- **Research Fellows Program continued**
  - Focus: Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in Schools
  - 4 fellows placed in 4 countries
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Expected Collaboration Results

The collaboration has three expected results:

1. Country Specific Research on MHM Challenges
2. Development of ‘basic package’ of school-based interventions
3. Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools report

Photo: Matthew Freeman
## MHM in Schools

### Research Activities

**Research Activities align with expected results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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| 1. *Country Specific Research on MHM Challenges* | • Document Review  
• School Facility Observations  
• In-Depth Interviews with Girls  
• Focus Group Discussions with girls, boys, and mothers  
• Key informant interviews with teachers / school administrators |
### MHM in Schools

#### Research Activities

Research Activities align with expected results:

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| 2. Development of ‘basic package’ of school-based interventions | • Recommendations compiled and discussed with stakeholders  
• Country-specific recommendations finalized  
• All data and recommendations from study sites used to develop a ‘basic package’ that can inform other settings |
# Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools

## Research Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools report</td>
<td>The report will synthesize results #1 &amp; #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Introduction, background, methods</td>
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<td>• Synthesis of key findings from study sites</td>
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<td>• Proposal of a ‘Basic package’ of school-based interventions &amp; monitoring system</td>
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<td>• Country-specific Case Studies</td>
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<td>• Appendix with tools used for MHM learning and instructions for adaptation</td>
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</table>
Multiple levels of influence investigated in order to understand the most appropriate, and potentially impactful, space to intervene or provide support.
Societal Factors $\rightarrow$ Policy, Tradition, Cultural Beliefs, Social Norms

$\rightarrow$ Desk review:
- School, Gender, WASH Policies
- Curriculum, Teacher training standards
- Country-Specific reports

$\rightarrow$ Key Informant Interviews
- National and community level government officials, UNICEF/NGO staff

$\rightarrow$ Discussions / Interviews with Girls, Teachers, Moms, Boys:
- Perceptions, myths, norms, beliefs
MHM in Schools
Research Activities

**Multiple levels of influence.**

**Societal Factors ➔** Policy, Tradition, Cultural Beliefs, Social Norms

**Environmental Factors ➔**
*School Water, Sanitation, & Resource Availability*

➔ **Observations in Schools/ Communities Selected:**
  - WASH conditions
  - Availability of sanitary napkins & costs

➔ **Interviews with Teachers:**
  - School conditions & availability of resources
  - Government assistance
  - Role of teachers related to MHM, puberty, WASH Issues

➔ **Discussions with Girls:**
  - Perceptions about their school environment
MHM in Schools
Research Activities

Multiple levels of influence.

Societal Factors ➔ Policy, Tradition, Cultural Beliefs, Social Norms

Environmental Factors ➔
School Water, Sanitation, & Resource Availability

Interpersonal Factors ➔
Influence of Family, Teachers, Peers

Discussions with Girls, Teachers, Moms, Boys:
Roles post-menarche
Relationships with family, peers, teachers
Support
MHM in Schools
Research Activities

Multiple levels of influence.

Societal Factors ➔ Policy, Tradition, Cultural Beliefs, Social Norms

Environmental Factors ➔ School Water, Sanitation, & Resource Availability

Interpersonal Factors ➔ Influence of Family, Teachers, Peers

Personal Factors ➔ Girl’s Knowledge, Skills, Beliefs

Discussions with Girls:
Current knowledge about menstruation
Coping mechanisms, Needs
Attitudes and beliefs about menstruation
Self-Efficacy
MHM in Schools
Research Activities

Multiple levels of influence.

Societal Factors ➔ Policy, Tradition, Cultural Beliefs, Social Norms

Environmental Factors ➔
School Water, Sanitation, & Resource Availability

Interpersonal Factors ➔
Influence of Family, Teachers, Peers

Personal Factors ➔ Girl’s Knowledge, Skills, Beliefs

Biological Factors ➔ Pain, Intensity

→ Individual interviews with Girls:
Biological experience (pain, flow, fatigue)
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Involved Country Offices

- Bolivia
- Sierra Leone
- Rwanda
- Philippines
Questions?

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