



Developing Washable Sanitary Pads and Raising MHM Awareness

Session I: Approaches to Addressing MHM for girls

UNICEF, ETHIOPIA

WASH section

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Presentation Outline

- Background
- Activities so far
- Key Components of the program
- Lessons learned
- Future Plans

Background

- In Ethiopia, Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is one of the critical challenges adolescent girls face.
- Poor MHM in most of urban and rural primary schools of Ethiopia has been shown to cause adolescent girls:
 - Worry and humiliation, Monthly absenteeism (3-7 days), Poor performance in schools (a study by Tired local NGO).
- Menstruation is seen as taboo by many communities:
- Majority of families in rural Ethiopia are too poor to buy sanitary pads, or underwear.

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- Most girls rinse their rags in water from the well without using soap, and hide them under the bed in the house or on the roof, where they grew mold. (assessment by SNV)
- There is lack of information on the process of menstruation and proper requirements for managing menstruation.
- Poor protection, lack of sanitary pads and inadequate washing facilities may increase susceptibility to infection.
- 34% of primary schools have access to some sort of water supply and 40% have separate toilets. (MOE, 2010/11)

Activities so far (Washable Sanitary Pads)

- SNV Ethiopia had come up with washable sanitary pads.



Activities so far (Awareness Creation)

- *Tiret Community Empowerment For Change Association*, trained 30 HEWs, 30 teachers and 30 girls clubs.
- This local NGO prepare leaflets, posters.



Key Components of the program

- Through stakeholder inquiry SNV tried to understand the depth of the problem.
- With key stakeholders they worked on the possible solution which includes access to affordable reusable sanitary pads, and awareness creation .
- Identifying appropriate material for production of reusable pads.
- Design and production of sample pads.
- Testing sample pads in 4 schools.
- Analysis of student feedback from the 4 schools.

Key Components of the program

Cont`d



Key Components of the program

Cont`d

- Training selected women tailors.
- Linking the tailors with the raw material provider.
- Production and distribution of the pad with reasonable price.
- The production is not equivalent to the demand,
- Currently SNV has done assessment of additional sources in four regions (Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR) and started working with other partners to address the issue at wider scale.

Lessons learned

- The washable sanitary pads are the best options.
- Adolescents are friendly with the washable sanitary pads.
- SNV is doing it, but what SNV was done also not a research based intervention, it was through stakeholders inquiry ,
- Ethiopia doesn`t have any policy ,programme or a research in MHM, the issue is a neglected issue.

Future Plans

- To include MHM in school WASH program (Scaling up).
- UNICEF planned to do a research (evidence based public health intervention).
- To monitor the existing intervention by SNV and then to evaluate the outcome,
- To train HEWs ,

Future Plans

- To make the washable sanitary pads to be accessible in shops with affordable price,
- UNICEF planned to revise the National sanitation and hygiene document in order to include MHM,
- Overall, there needs to be better advocacy, funding and awareness creation in order to use some of the existing opportunities to bring about change in MHM.

THANK YOU!

