



MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

**Training Manual
By Mojaz Foundation**

Introduction

Menstruation is a naturally occurring physiological phenomenon in adolescent girls and pre-menopausal women. Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is defined as 'Women and adolescent girls using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect blood that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials'. Menstruation necessitates the availability of material resources to absorb or collect menstrual blood, facilitate personal hygiene and dispose of waste, ideally with adequate privacy. Women and girls in low income settings have low awareness on hygienic practices and lack culturally appropriate materials for menstrual hygiene management (MHM) practices. Menstruation and associated activities are surrounded by silence, shame and social taboos that are further manifested in social practices that restrict mobility, freedom and access to normal activities developing countries like Pakistan. For instance, drinking milk, preparing food, interacting with people or refraining from performing religious rituals are restrictions found in many cultures.

Young adolescent girls tend to be less prepared for MHM and suffer from anxiety, apprehensions, fear and shame during their menses. In addition, pre-existing social taboos and cultural restraints during menstruation mean that managing menstruation is a greater challenge during disasters. Further, there is limited access to reproductive health services and safe menstrual hygiene materials during disasters. Menstrual hygiene needs are not only specific and pressing to women and girls in reproductive age but also require access to same management of the menstrual period, a basic reproductive health right. In emergencies, the usual lifestyles of affected individuals change and they are confronted with additional stress that could worsen their physical and psychological well-being. Provision of fundamental human requirements such as shelter, food, clean water and medicines is prioritized, however other needs such as safe menstrual hygiene management that can have profound psychosocial impact if unmet are often neglected.

Module 1: Training of Focal Teachers

Session Plan

Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A-4 Chart Papers • Markers • MHM Awareness Video 	
Total Duration	60 minutes	
Sr #	Activity	Estimated Time
1	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team • Participants 	5 minutes
2	Detail orientation/ discussion on MHM and practices in vogue before orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management • Explain why MHM is Important • Involvement of teachers in the project • Role of Focal Teachers • Symptoms of MHM • Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene • Healthy diet and its importance • Myths and Taboos • Challenges faced by girls during menstruation 	25 minutes
3	Showing the video on MHM A Themed Dialogue – Group Discussing activity on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the expected outcomes of these sessions and what is the impact of these outcomes? • What are the “Myths and Taboos” associated with MHM and what is the impact of these beliefs in our lives? • Should MHM be discussed in schools or not? What are the challenges and barriers in this process? • What role can teachers play in sparking MHM in schools? 	20 minutes
3	Introduction to hard component <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing on incinerator • Use of mirror • Placing of cupboard • Appropriate time for burning 	10 minutes

Start the session by introducing yourself and also ask the participants to introduce themselves to each other. Explain the following objectives of the session:

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the Teacher Training/ Orientation Session:

- To orient the teachers on the importance of Menstrual Health Management (MHM) and its impact on learning outcomes
- To overcome the barriers that teachers will face teaching MHM
- Defining role of teachers in this mission
- Making teachers as “Change Agents” for the society
- How they will carry out MHM activities and implement it in their schools
- Introduction to GFT (hard component) and its use
- Improved version of Incinerator and how it works
- Focus on each school and each toilet ‘need and document the each school learning

Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management

Explain the concept of menstruation and menstrual hygiene to the participants. Encourage their responses and sum them as following:

Menstruation

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina.

The menstruation cycle starts in every girl between the age of 9 and 17. This process occurs every month and lasts for around 3 to 10 days. Menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age.

Menstrual Hygiene Management

Women and adolescent girls are using clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. They understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear.

Physical Changes in the Body of a Girl

Tell the girls that as they grow up they experience physical changes in their body which need to be properly managed for comfort, dignity and hygiene.

A list of such changes include:

1. Increase in height
2. Increase in weight
3. Chest begins to expand, and it becomes necessary to wear a shameez or a bra.
4. Increase in hip size
5. There is hair growth under the arms and between the legs. Since both areas remain humid and wet, especially in the summer, it is a natural place for the growth of germs and bacteria. It is important to keep this area clean through regularly washing the area, and keeping it dry.

Above listed are just some of the physical changes. However these are not the only changes that a female body experiences. Some internal change are also part of the process and one of the major and important internal change is the start of process of menstruation.

Ask the girls whether they know about what menstruation or menses and at what age do they think the process begins?

Take their responses and conclude it by telling that this can happen anytime between the ages of 9-17.

Explaining the Duration of Menstruation Process

Emphasize that number of days may vary from person to person, ranging from 3-10 days. It would be affected by a number of factors, including physique, activities, life style, food intake or genetics. A rule of thumb is that it should not be less than 3, or more than 10. If menses are for less than 3 days, or more than 10, it may indicate a problem. In both cases, the matter should be discussed

with an elder, preferably the mother. Tell the participants that the normal gap between two menses should not be less than, or more than, 25-30 days.

Explain why MHM is Important

Discuss to explain the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management. For more clarity and extended details of MHM concepts and its importance, refer to **Handout 1** and **Handout 2**.

Involvement of Teachers in the Project

Teachers play a big role in ensuring that this information is accurately communicated to students, but they are not always well equipped to do so, or MHM is not well covered in teacher training curriculums. The government can support teachers through in-service training on MHM, while health professionals can support addressing self-reported health impacts such as menstrual cramps/pain/discomfort experienced by girls during their menses. Parents should then be engaged through awareness creation. Their participation is crucial in ensuring that these practices are transferred to households and communities.

Role of Teachers

- By giving timely and right information on MHM to adolescent girls
- By creating an enabling environment to discuss MHM among stakeholders
- By encouraging girls to confide in and open up to you on MHM related issues
- By providing adolescent girls and boys with information on puberty and MHM.

Symptoms of MHM

It is important to learn about the symptoms of menstruation so as to be prepared for your time of period before they start. Not only for your ownself but also sometimes to guide others while they experience these symptoms unknowingly. This would help them get awareness and prepare themselves in advance.

Refer to **Handout 4** for details on different types of symptoms.

Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene

An important aspect associated to menstruation is the hygiene factor. It is important to maintain hygiene in every aspect during menstruation days to avoid rising of any disease or other health problems.

Refer to **Handout 6** to learn on what personal hygiene measures should be taken and what are the associated health risks factors if these measures are overlooked.

Healthy diet and its importance

Menstruation is a process of blood loss from the body which means that a female body is losing on a lot of nutrients and liquids from her body every month and therefore these nutrients should be replaced with new ones for a healthy body. Thus the need for a healthy and balanced diet is a foremost in the lives of females.

Refer to **Handout 7** for to learn more about a healthy diet.

Myths and Taboos

Myths and taboos are those sayings which are based on stories and other factors having no scientific or logical value. These cultural norms and restrictions effect the life of a menstruating female in adverse ways and it's time to break them and set ourselves free from such baseless sayings.

Handout 8 gives a list of such myths and taboos along with scientific explanation for each of it.

Challenges faced by girls during menstruation

Menstruation is a natural phase in every girl's life and although this process is an identity of being a female yet it brings along a lot of challenges for females which they have to face every month in their life till the process stops at a certain age.

These challenges should however be faced with confidence and dignity by every women. To overcome all such challenges training on "**Menstrual Hygiene Management**" is introduced and it is encouraged that females should talk about this topic and not keep it neglected for the coming generation so that they do not face these challenges, rather manage it independently, confidently and with dignity.

Handout 9 provides information on such challenges.

Showing the MHM video by WaterAid

Tell the teachers that now they will be shown a video on MHM so as to help them understand their role with respect to the required teacher's support for the project.

Ask them to watch the video carefully and note at least three MHM and related messages. You will ask them for these during a later discussion.

Once the video is over ask them their messages and note them down on the board or flipchart, and make sure that the following points have been raised:

1. Menstruation is one of the reasons why girls are sometimes absent from school
2. Menstruation is seen as a disease or illness rather than a natural process
3. As girls grow up, there are physical changes that become obvious
4. Menstruation is a natural biological process and a sign of good health, but many still see it as a problem or issue, mainly due to social and cultural factors.
5. Some girls and women may experience health problems related to menstruation, and must know when they should seek medical advice.
6. Schools should have all the necessary items required to manage menstruation, e.g. pads/cloth, soap, paper and plastic bags, tissue, underwear, and a girl friendly washroom.
7. Pad or cloth that is used as protection should be changed every 4-6 hours (depending on flow).
8. Bathing with warm water and soap is very important during menstruation.
9. WASH Club and its members can play a positive role in sparking MHM in schools, e.g. like Salma Baji.
10. Students who are confident and expressive can play a role in guiding and teaching other girls on menstrual management.
11. Parents or community may still be sensitive to talking about menstruation.

A Themed Dialogue

In this activity a discussion was held with the teachers in form of groups. The teachers were divided in 4 groups and each group will be given a question to provide their insight and feedback. The following topics in the form of questions will be covered:

- 1. What are the expected outcomes of these sessions and what is the impact of these outcomes?**

2. What are the “Myths and Taboos” associated with MHM and what is the impact of these beliefs in our lives?
3. Should MHM be discussed in schools or not? What are the challenges and barriers in this process?
4. What role can teachers play in sparking MHM in schools?

Each group of teachers is given a topic and asked to provide their feedback on the given topic on an A-4 chart paper.

Conclude the activity session by discussing the feedback turn by turn from each group with everyone.

Introducing the Girl Friendly Toilet

Now introduce the concept of “Girl Friendly Toilet” explain the teachers why is it important to have toilet and wash facilities for girls in the school. For discussion on an ideal girl friendly toilet refer to **Handout 3**.

Refer to **Handout 11** – O & M Manual for safety tips on adequate management and usage of washroom.

Conclusion

After this conclude the training session by agreeing on future actions points to be carried out in the school by the focal teachers.

A reference for idea on future action plans is attached in **Handout 14**.

Module 2: Training of Washgroup Members

Session Plan

Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart Papers • Sticky Notes • Markers • MHM Awareness Video • Cotton Roll • Gauze • Cloth • Elastic Band • Badges for Wash Group Members 	
Total Duration	60 minutes	
Sr #	Activity	Estimated Time
1	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team • Participants <p>Sharing the session objectives with the participants</p> <p>Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by menstruation and menstrual hygiene management • Explain why MHM is Important 	15 minutes
2	<p>Overview of Menstrual Hygiene Management-MHM Story-based Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story telling • Showing the MHM Video • Encouraging the girls to talk about MHM and sharing your first experience • Conducting a Group Activity with the Wash Group Members and asking them to present their key messages <p>Detailed Discussion on MHM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms and management during menstruation • Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation • Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene • Healthy diet and its importance 	30 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myths and Taboos • Challenges faced by girls during menstruation • Introduction to Girl Friendly Toilet 	
3	Demonstration on Pad Making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make low cost sanitary material • Introducing MHM Box and its refill mechanism • Introducing a Personal MHM Kit 	5 minutes
4	Overview of Roles and Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form and assign roles and responsibilities of WASH Group Oath Taking	10 minutes

Start the session by introducing yourself and also ask the participants to introduce themselves to each other. Explain the following objectives of the session:

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the WashGroup Training Session:

- To orient the washgroup members on the importance of Menstrual Health Management (MHM) and its impact on learning outcomes
- Defining role of washgroup members in this mission
- Making washgroup members as “Change Leaders” for the school and society
- How they will carry out MHM activities and implement it in their schools
- Introduction to GFT (hard component) and its use
- Improved version of Incinerator and how it works
- Guiding them on how to help and further guide other girls in the school when in need

Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management

Explain the concept of menstruation and menstrual hygiene to the participants. Encourage their responses and sum them as following:

Menstruation

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina.

The menstruation cycle starts in every girl between the age of 9 and 17. This process occurs every month and lasts for around 3 to 10 days. Menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age.

Menstrual Hygiene Management

Women and adolescent girls are using clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. They understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear.

Physical Changes in the Body of a Girl

Tell the girls that as they grow up they experience physical changes in their body which need to be properly managed for comfort, dignity and hygiene.

A list of such changes include:

1. Increase in height
2. Increase in weight
3. Chest begins to expand, and it becomes necessary to wear a shameez or a bra.
4. Increase in hip size
5. There is hair growth under the arms and between the legs. Since both areas remain humid and wet, especially in the summer, it is a natural place for the growth of germs and bacteria. It is important to keep this area clean through regularly washing the area, and keeping it dry.

Above listed are just some of the physical changes. However these are not the only changes that a female body experiences. Some internal change are also

part of the process and one of the major and important internal change is the start of process of menstruation.

Ask the girls whether they know about what menstruation or menses and at what age do they think the process begins?

Take their responses and conclude it by telling that this can happen anytime between the ages of 9-17.

Explaining the Duration of Menstruation Process

Emphasize that number of days may vary from person to person, ranging from 3-10 days. It would be affected by a number of factors, including physique, activities, life style, food intake or genetics. A rule of thumb is that it should not be less than 3, or more than 10. If menses are for less than 3 days, or more than 10, it may indicate a problem. In both cases, the matter should be discussed with an elder, preferably the mother. Tell the participants that the normal gap between two menses should not be less than, or more than, 25-30 days.

Explain why MHM is important

Discuss to explain the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management with the participants.

For more clarity and extended details of MHM concepts and its importance, refer to **Handout 1** and **Handout 2**.

Story telling

The focus of this activity is to highlight the need of awareness on menstruation in schools. This activity will allow the students to talk confidently about menstruation and become familiar with school support related to menstruation.

Story of Salma-Menstruation first experience

1. Facilitator will inform the participants that they are going to hear a chain story, where the facilitator will give the story starter and participants will end it together.

2. Facilitator will then continue the story of Salma, as follow:

Salma's Story

Salma, a 12-year-old girl, was studying in class 7. She was a hardworking girl who enjoys going to school every day and make her parents proud. One day, Salma and her friend, Lubna were having lunch during the break. After finishing their lunch, they both ran towards the playground. Suddenly, Lubna noticed blood stains on Salma's shirt. She got frightened and stopped Salma. Salma couldn't see the stains on her shirt and got worried, as she wore neat and clean uniform in the morning. She rushed to the washroom to see and check her uniform. There, she found herself with blood in her shalwar. Due to the bleeding, she thought that she was suffering from some chronic disease and would die soon. She became restless and started crying.

3. Facilitator will stop narrating the story, and ask the participants to tell what will happen next. MO will ask:
 - What will Salma and Lubna do?
 - What will their teacher do?
 - If the mother is informed what will she do?
 - If Salma will go home early or not?
 - Will she attend the school the next day or not?

Gathering the responses from the participants, the trainer will bring the story to its end and link it to the video explaining how Salma carried this message of awareness to others.

Showing the MHM Video

Tell the Wash Group Members that now they will be shown a video on MHM which will show how Salma used her example to spread awareness among others. Also this will help them understand their role with respect to the required Wash Group Member's support for the project.

Ask them to watch the video carefully and note at least three MHM and related messages. You will ask them for these during a later discussion.

Once the video is over ask them their messages and note them down on the board or flipchart, and make sure that the following points have been raised:

1. Menstruation is one of the reasons why girls are sometimes absent from school
2. Menstruation is seen as a disease or illness rather than a natural process
3. As girls grow up, there are physical changes that become obvious
4. Menstruation is a natural biological process and a sign of good health, but many still see it as a problem or issue, mainly due to social and cultural factors.
5. Some girls and women may experience health problems related to menstruation, and must know when they should seek medical advice.
6. Schools should have all the necessary items required to manage menstruation, e.g. pads/cloth, soap, paper and plastic bags, tissue, underwear, and a girl friendly washroom.
7. Pad or cloth that is used as protection should be changed every 4-6 hours (depending on flow).
8. Bathing with warm water and soap is very important during menstruation.
9. WASH Club and its members can play a positive role in sparking MHM in schools, e.g. like Salma Baji.
10. Students who are confident and expressive can play a role in guiding and teaching other girls on menstrual management.
11. Parents or community may still be sensitive to talking about menstruation.

Encouraging the girls to talk about MHM and sharing your first experience

Ask the girls how many of them discuss menses with their mother or an elder sister? A few students may raise hands while majority may not raise their hands. Ask them why they do not discuss? Most will answer that they feel shy, ashamed or uncomfortable to talk about it with anyone.

Tell them that they must overcome their shyness and discomfort and discuss with someone at home or in the school, particularly if they are facing any issues. Unanswered questions or issues may cause a problem just the way it was a problem for Salma Baji in the above story.

To make them more comfortable to talk and share their experience with you, tell the girls that you would like to share your own story of their first experience of menstruation with them:

“I WAS SITTING ON THE CHAIR IN MY CLASS AND LISTENING TO THE LECTURE WITH FULL CONCENTRATION. SUDDENLY I FELT THAT SOMETHING IS DRIPPING OUT OF ME. I TOOK PERMISSION FROM TEACHER AND RUSHED TO THE WASHROOM. I SAW BLOOD STAINS ON MY TROUSER AND GOT REALLY FRIGHTENED DUE TO THE BLEEDING. I THOUGHT THAT I WAS SUFFERING FROM SOME DISEASE AND WOULD DIE SOON. I BECAME RESTLESS AS I WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO COULD HELP ME. AS I GOT OUT, I FOUND PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTRUCTOR (MALE TEACHER) IN THE GROUND. I WENT UP TO HIM AND TOLD HIM THAT I AM SUFFERING FROM A DISEASE AND I AM DYING SO I NEED HELP PLEASE. HE CONSOLED ME TELLING ME NOT TO WORRY AND CALLED MY TEACHER. MY TEACHER CAME AND GAVE ME A PAD AND UNDERWEAR AND INSTRUCTED ME TO WEAR IT. I DID AS TOLD AND CAME BACK TO THE CLASS. AS IT WAS ALWAYS A PRIDE FOR A STUDENT TO GET SOMETHING FROM A TEACHER AND I HAD JUST RECEIVED TWO THINGS FROM MY TEACHER SO I FELT THAT I SHOULD SHARE IT WITH MY CLASS FELLOW TIPU (BOY) WHO WAS THE SECOND CLASS MONITOR. I TOLD HIM THAT TEACHER GAVE ME ALL THIS STUFF JUST TO MAKE HIM JEALOUS. HE BECAME ANGRY THAT WHY TEACHER DID NOT GIVE HIM ANYTHING. WHEN I REACHED AT HOME MY MOTHER SAW THE BLOOD STAINS ON MY SHIRT. SHE CALLED ME AND ASK WHAT HAPPENED AND I STARTED TO CRY. MY MOM HUGGED ME AND KISSED ON MY FOREHEAD AND TOLD ME IN DETAIL THAT IT IS NOT A DISEASE, IT IS A NATURAL PHENOMENON AND I DON'T NEED TO BE WORRY ABOUT IT. SHE TOLD ME IN DETAIL THAT WHAT IS MENSTRUATION AND HOW I CAN MANAGE IT. SHE ADVISED ME THAT I SHOULD NOT DISCUSS WITH FATHER, BROTHER OR ANY OTHER MALE. I TOLD MY MOTHER THAT I HAVE ALREADY SHARED IT WITH PTI UNCLE AND TIPU. THEN SHE SAID ITS OK FOR NOW BUT TOLD ME TO BE CAREFUL FROM THEN ONWARDS.”

Now just imagine that if I had all the information regarding menstruation beforehand, do you think I would have make all these mistakes? The answer is No.

We will now move on to conduct a group activity with all of you.

Conducting a Group Activity with the Wash Group Members and asking them to present their key messages

Once the video is finished the trainer will conduct a group activity with the Wash Group Members. This activity is called the “**MHM Buzz Group Activity**”

MHM Buzz Group is an activity, where the WASH group members are divided into 4 groups for quickly and efficiently gathering feedback on a topic assigned to them. The topics given to the groups, will be as follow:

- Symptoms of menstruation and its remedies
- Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation
- Challenges faced by girls during menstruation
- Myths and Taboos about menstruation

Each group will be given a flip chart paper, markers and sticky notes to discuss and write down their feedback in bullet form.

After 4-5 minutes intense discussion, each group will present and share their feedback with fellow participants.

Trainer will then sum the participants feedback and continue to elaborate and conduct detailed discussion and information dissemination on each of the above given topics.

Symptoms of MHM

It is important to learn about the symptoms of menstruation so as to be prepared for your time of period before they start. Not only for your ownself but also sometimes to guide others while they experience these symptoms unknowingly. This would help them get awareness and prepare themselves in advance.

Refer to **Handout 4** for details on different types of symptoms.

Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation

Menstruation is a process that should be handled with care and every female should be careful of the necessary precautionary measures which needs to be taken during these days at both home and school.

Handout 5 lists down a few such precautionary measures that should not be avoided.

Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene

An important aspect associated to menstruation is the hygiene factor. It is important to maintain hygiene in every aspect during menstruation days to avoid rising of any disease or other health problems.

Refer to **Handout 6** to learn on what personal hygiene measures should be taken and what are the associated health risks factors if these measures are overlooked.

Healthy diet and its importance

Menstruation is a process of blood loss from the body which means that a female body is losing on a lot of nutrients and liquids from her body every month and therefore these nutrients should be replaced with new ones for a healthy body. Thus the need for a healthy and balanced diet is a foremost in the lives of females.

Refer to **Handout 7** for to learn more about a healthy diet.

Myths and Taboos

Myths and taboos are those sayings which are based on stories and other factors having no scientific or logical value. These cultural norms and restrictions effect the life of a menstruating female in adverse ways and it's time to break them and set ourselves free from such baseless sayings.

Handout 8 gives a list of such myths and taboos along with scientific explanation for each of it.

Challenges faced by girls during menstruation

Menstruation is a natural phase in every girl's life and although this process is an identity of being a female yet it brings along a lot of challenges for females which they have to face every month in their life till the process stops at a certain age.

These challenges should however be faced with confidence and dignity by every women. To overcome all such challenges training on "**Menstrual Hygiene Management**" is introduced and it is encouraged that females should talk about this topic and not keep it neglected for the coming generation so that they do not face these challenges, rather manage it independently, confidently and with dignity.

Handout 9 provides information on such challenges.

Introducing the Girl Friendly Toilet

Now introduce the concept of "Girl Friendly Toilet" explain the teachers why is it important to have toilet and wash facilities for girls in the school. For discussion on an ideal girl friendly toilet refer to **Handout 3**.

Refer to **Handout 11** – O & M Manual for safety tips on adequate management and usage of washroom.

Learning How to Make a Pad

We can even learn to make low cost sanitary pads and holders in case of an emergency where we do not have our own material and also if pads are not available at some place.

Handout 10 explains and demonstrates in detail on how to make a pad and a pad holder in case you do not have an underwear. Although it is advised and encouraged to wear an underwear at all times during the day.

MHM Box and its Refill Mechanism

MHM box is a class resource for all the classmates of a particular class in case of an emergency. It is a mutual responsibility of the entire group to develop a system in your class, to avoid any embarrassing situation for sure.

1. A few easy steps to make an MHM Box are:
2. You may make a box or a carton.
3. Wrap it up with a colorful paper.
4. Take the initial step of filling it with collecting the amount to buy the things/ items or by bringing the things/ items voluntarily. These may include:
 - Sanitary Napkin or pad
 - Cloth
 - Tissue papers
 - Soap
 - Panty
 - Shopper

Once the box is ready with the items, the next step is its maintenance and refill. The MHM Box refill mechanism is like give and take. If one girl takes or uses the things from the box then it is her moral responsibility to replace it the used item with a new item to make it available for her other classmates when in need.

MHM Personal Kit

It is best to keep yourself prepared at all times for effective management in case of any need. A “Personal MHM Kit” is therefore a fine solution to cater for every female's need in case of an emergency.

Your Personal MHM Kit should consist of the following items:

1. A sanitary Material – e.g. a sanitary pad or a cloth (depending on the comfort and personal choice of the user)
2. An extra underwear
3. A soap
4. A hand sanitizer
5. A tissue
6. A brown bag or a shopping bag for disposal of used pad

This kit should be carried by every girl and women at all times in their school bags and handbag with them.

Roles and Responsibilities of Wash Group Members

Wash Group Members play an important role in spreading the message of awareness among students to bring the necessary change in knowledge, attitude and practices of the girls and guide them on hygienic management of menstruation.

For this purpose Wash Group Members are entrusted with some important roles and responsibilities which they should carry out effectively and responsibly for an efficient and smooth intervention.

Following are roles and responsibilities of Wash Group Members:

1. To deliver sessions on MHM in their respective classes and assembly
2. To ensure MHM personal kits
3. To display MHM related messages in classrooms
4. To recruit more volunteers in WASH Groups
5. To ensure dustbins in classrooms and washrooms
6. To celebrate International days including the component of MHM
7. To have quarterly meetings with focal person
8. To document meeting minutes

Furthermore relate these roles to the character of Salma Baji in the video and her story and role as wash group member to serve the school and community.

Conclusion

After this conclude the training session by conducting an oath taking ceremony of the Wash Group Members and agreeing on future actions points to be carried out in the school by the focal teachers.

A reference for idea on future action plans is attached in **Handout 15**.

Furthermore tell the girls that a "Suggestion Box" has been placed outside the toilet. If they have a question, a suggestion or a complaint about WASH and MHM related matters, they should write it on a piece of paper and put it in that box. Once a month, the Wash Group will collect these comments, cluster them, and first share the same with the MHM Focal Teachers to seek the right solutions to queries and then discuss it in the hall with the students.

Module 3: Training of Students

The training of students is divided in 3 phases known as the “3 – Connects.” This manual provides detailed session plans with the agenda for all the 3-Connects. From here on the manual is divided in 3 portions as following:

1. 1st Connect
2. 2nd Connect
3. 3rd Connect

Highlighting the Purpose

The purpose is to learn about menstrual hygiene management so as to help ensure cleanliness – know what product or material to use, how often to change it, and have access to WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) facilities to help girls and women maintain good hygiene while menstruating. Furthermore it is also to learn and understand what menstrual hygiene options exist, giving girls the opportunity to choose what solution is best for them.

1st Connect

The 1st Connect marks a detailed class wise session with all the students from Grade 6 to Grade 10.

2nd Connect

The 2nd Connect marked a follow up session with the girls to access their retention of knowledge taken from the 1st Connect.

3rd Connect

The 3rd Connect is all activity based which will be implemented in the schools throughout the year. The idea and purpose behind conducting these activities is to bring about behavior change among the girls and encourage them to stay active during their menstruation days and participate in sports and other activities.

Training Module 3-a: 1st Connect

Session Plan

Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticky Notes or Pieces of Paper • Markers • MHM Awareness Video • Cotton Roll • Gauze • Cloth • Elastic Band 	
Total Duration	60 Minutes	
Sr #	Activity	Estimated Time
1	Assembling	5 minutes
2	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the trainer and the participants Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by menstruation and menstrual hygiene management • Explain why MHM is Important 	15 minutes
3	Story Telling and Video (Ao Baat Karein) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling the story and showing the video 	5 minutes
4	Sharing of First Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging the girls to talk about MHM and sharing your first experience Detailed overview and discussion on MHM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms and management during menstruation • Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation • Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene • Healthy diet and its importance • Myths and Taboos • Challenges faced by girls during menstruation 	15 minutes
5	Introduction of the Girls Friendly Toilet-GFT Demonstration on Pad Making	15 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make low cost sanitary material • Introducing MHM Box and its refill mechanism • Introducing a Personal MHM Kit 	
6	Use of Suggestion to collect Feedback	5 minutes

Start the session by introducing yourself and also ask the participants to introduce themselves to each other. Explain the following objectives of the session:

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the 1st Connect Session:

- To orient the adolescent girls on the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) and its impact on learning outcomes
- To overcome the confusions and misconceptions of adolescent girls about MHM and provide them with the right guidance
- Defining role of students in this mission for spreading the message and information learned to others
- Orientation on how to make your toilets a “Girls Friendly Toilet” and its use with respect to WASH facilities
- To inform the symptoms of MHM and its management

Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management

Explain the concept of menstruation and menstrual hygiene to the participants. Encourage their responses and sum them as following:

Menstruation

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina.

The menstruation cycle starts in every girl between the age of 9 and 17. This process occurs every month and lasts for around 3 to 10 days. Menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age.

Menstrual Hygiene Management

Women and adolescent girls are using clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. They understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear.

Physical Changes in the Body of a Girl

Tell the girls that as they grow up they experience physical changes in their body which need to be properly managed for comfort, dignity and hygiene.

A list of such changes include:

1. Increase in height
2. Increase in weight
3. Chest begins to expand, and it becomes necessary to wear a shameez or a bra.
4. Increase in hip size
5. There is hair growth under the arms and between the legs. Since both areas remain humid and wet, especially in the summer, it is a natural place for the growth of germs and bacteria. It is important to keep this area clean through regularly washing the area, and keeping it dry.

Above listed are just some of the physical changes. However these are not the only changes that a female body experiences. Some internal change are also part of the process and one of the major and important internal change is the start of process of menstruation.

Ask the girls whether they know about what menstruation or menses and at what age do they think the process begins?

Take their responses and conclude it by telling that this can happen anytime between the ages of 9-17.

Explaining the Duration of Menstruation Process

Emphasize that number of days may vary from person to person, ranging from 3-10 days. It would be affected by a number of factors, including physique,

activities, life style, food intake or genetics. A rule of thumb is that it should not be less than 3, or more than 10. If menses are for less than 3 days, or more than 10, it may indicate a problem. In both cases, the matter should be discussed with an elder, preferably the mother. Tell the participants that the normal gap between two menses should not be less than, or more than, 25-30 days.

Explain why MHM is important

Discuss to explain the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management with the participants.

For more clarity and extended details of MHM concepts and its importance, refer to **Handout 1** and **Handout 2**.

Story telling

The focus of this activity is to highlight the need of awareness on menstruation in schools. This activity will allow the students to talk confidently about menstruation and become familiar with school support related to menstruation.

Story of Salma-Menstruation first experience

1. Facilitator will inform the participants that they are going to hear a chain story, where the facilitator will give the story starter and participants will end it together.
2. Facilitator will then continue the story of Salma, as follow:

Salma's Story

Salma, a 12-year-old girl, was studying in class 7. She was a hardworking girl who enjoys going to school every day and make her parents proud. One day, Salma and her friend, Lubna were having lunch during the break. After finishing their lunch, they both ran towards the playground. Suddenly, Lubna noticed blood stains on Salma's shirt. She got frightened and stopped Salma. Salma couldn't see the stains on her shirt and got worried, as she wore neat and clean uniform in the morning. She rushed to the washroom to see and check her uniform. There, she found herself with blood in her shalwar. Due to the bleeding, she thought that she was suffering from some chronic disease and would die soon. She became restless and started crying.

3. Facilitator will stop narrating the story, and ask the participants to tell what will happen next. MO will ask:
 - What will Salma and Lubna do?
 - What will their teacher do?

- If the mother is informed what will she do?
- If Salma will go home early or not?
- Will she attend the school the next day or not?

Gathering the responses from the participants, the trainer will bring the story to its end and link it to the video explaining how Salma carried this message of awareness to others.

Showing the MHM Video

Tell the Wash Group Members that now they will be shown a video on MHM which will show how Salma used her example to spread awareness among others. Also this will help them understand their role with respect to the required Wash Group Member's support for the project.

Ask them to watch the video carefully and note at least three MHM and related messages. You will ask them for these during a later discussion.

Once the video is over ask them their messages and note them down on the board or flipchart, and make sure that the following points have been raised:

1. Menstruation is one of the reasons why girls are sometimes absent from school
2. Menstruation is seen as a disease or illness rather than a natural process
3. As girls grow up, there are physical changes that become obvious
4. Menstruation is a natural biological process and a sign of good health, but many still see it as a problem or issue, mainly due to social and cultural factors.
5. Some girls and women may experience health problems related to menstruation, and must know when they should seek medical advice.
6. Schools should have all the necessary items required to manage menstruation, e.g. pads/cloth, soap, paper and plastic bags, tissue, underwear, and a girl friendly washroom.
7. Pad or cloth that is used as protection should be changed every 4-6 hours (depending on flow).
8. Bathing with warm water and soap is very important during menstruation.
9. WASH Club and its members can play a positive role in sparking MHM in schools, e.g. like Salma Baji.
10. Students who are confident and expressive can play a role in guiding and teaching other girls on menstrual management.
11. Parents or community may still be sensitive to talking about menstruation.

Encouraging the girls to talk about MHM and sharing your first experience

Ask the girls how many of them discuss menses with their mother or an elder sister? A few students may raise hands while majority may not raise their hands. Ask them why they do not discuss? Most will answer that they feel shy, ashamed or uncomfortable to talk about it with anyone.

Tell them that they must overcome their shyness and discomfort and discuss with someone at home or in the school, particularly if they are facing any issues.

Unanswered questions or issues may cause a problem just the way it was a problem for Salma Baji in the above story.

To make them more comfortable to talk and share their experience with you, tell the girls that you would like to share your own story of their first experience of menstruation with them:

“I WAS SITTING ON THE CHAIR IN MY CLASS AND LISTENING TO THE LECTURE WITH FULL CONCENTRATION. SUDDENLY I FELT THAT SOMETHING IS DRIPPING OUT OF ME. I TOOK PERMISSION FROM TEACHER AND RUSHED TO THE WASHROOM. I SAW BLOOD STAINS ON MY TROUSER AND GOT REALLY FRIGHTENED DUE TO THE BLEEDING. I THOUGHT THAT I WAS SUFFERING FROM SOME DISEASE AND WOULD DIE SOON. I BECAME RESTLESS AS I WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO COULD HELP ME. AS I GOT OUT, I FOUND PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTRUCTOR (MALE TEACHER) IN THE GROUND. I WENT UP TO HIM AND TOLD HIM THAT I AM SUFFERING FROM A DISEASE AND I AM DYING SO I NEED HELP PLEASE. HE CONSOLED ME TELLING ME NOT TO WORRY AND CALLED MY TEACHER. MY TEACHER CAME AND GAVE ME A PAD AND UNDERWEAR AND INSTRUCTED ME TO WEAR IT. I DID AS TOLD AND CAME BACK TO THE CLASS. AS IT WAS ALWAYS A PRIDE FOR A STUDENT TO GET SOMETHING FROM A TEACHER AND I HAD JUST RECEIVED TWO THINGS FROM MY TEACHER SO I FELT THAT I SHOULD SHARE IT WITH MY CLASS FELLOW TIPU (BOY) WHO WAS THE SECOND CLASS MONITOR. I TOLD HIM THAT TEACHER GAVE ME ALL THIS STUFF JUST TO MAKE HIM JEALOUS. HE BECAME ANGRY THAT WHY TEACHER DID NOT GIVE HIM ANYTHING. WHEN I REACHED AT HOME MY MOTHER SAW THE BLOOD STAINS ON MY SHIRT. SHE CALLED ME AND ASK WHAT HAPPENED AND I STARTED TO CRY. MY MOM HUGGED ME AND KISSED ON MY FOREHEAD AND TOLD ME IN DETAIL THAT IT IS NOT A DISEASE, IT IS A NATURAL PHENOMENON AND I DON'T NEED TO BE WORRY ABOUT IT. SHE TOLD ME IN DETAIL THAT WHAT IS MENSTRUATION AND HOW I CAN MANAGE IT. SHE ADVISED ME THAT I SHOULD NOT DISCUSS WITH FATHER, BROTHER OR ANY OTHER MALE. I TOLD MY MOTHER THAT I HAVE ALREADY SHARED IT WITH PTI UNCLE AND TIPU. THEN SHE SAID ITS OK FOR NOW BUT TOLD ME TO BE CAREFUL FROM THEN ONWARDS.”

Now just imagine that if I had all the information regarding menstruation beforehand, do you think I would have made all these mistakes? The answer is No.

Conclude the session by taking their questions and answering to these questions.

Now continue with a detailed overview and discussion on Menstrual Hygiene Management

Symptoms of MHM

It is important to learn about the symptoms of menstruation so as to be prepared for your time of period before they start. Not only for your ownself but also sometimes to guide others while they experience these symptoms unknowingly. This would help them get awareness and prepare themselves in advance.

Refer to **Handout 4** for details on different types of symptoms.

Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation

Menstruation is a process that should be handled with care and every female should be careful of the necessary precautionary measures which need to be taken during these days at both home and school.

Handout 5 lists down a few such precautionary measures that should not be avoided.

Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene

An important aspect associated to menstruation is the hygiene factor. It is important to maintain hygiene in every aspect during menstruation days to avoid rising of any disease or other health problems.

Refer to **Handout 6** to learn on what personal hygiene measures should be taken and what are the associated health risks factors if these measures are overlooked.

Healthy diet and its importance

Menstruation is a process of blood loss from the body which means that a female body is losing on a lot of nutrients and liquids from her body every month and therefore these nutrients should be replaced with new ones for a healthy body. Thus the need for a healthy and balanced diet is a foremost in the lives of females.

Refer to **Handout 7** for to learn more about a healthy diet.

Myths and Taboos

Myths and taboos and are those saying which are based on stories and other factors having no scientific or logical value. These cultural norms and restrictions effect the life of a menstruating female in adverse ways and it's time to break them and set ourselves free from such baseless sayings.

Handout 8 gives a list of such myths and taboos along with scientific explanation for each of it.

Challenges faced by girls during menstruation

Menstruation is a natural phase in every girl's life and although this process is an identity of being a female yet it brings along a lot of challenges for females which they have to face every month in their life till the process stops at a certain age.

These challenges should however be faced with confidence and dignity by every women. To overcome all such challenges training on "**Menstrual Hygiene Management**" is introduced and it is encouraged that females should talk about this topic and not keep it neglected for the coming generation so that they do not face these challenges, rather manage it independently, confidently and with dignity.

Handout 9 provides information on such challenges.

Introducing the Girl Friendly Toilet

Now introduce the concept of "Girl Friendly Toilet" explain the teachers why is it important to have toilet and wash facilities for girls in the school. For discussion on an ideal girl friendly toilet refer to **Handout 3**.

Learning How to Make a Pad

We can even learn to make low cost sanitary pads and holders in case of an emergency where we do not have our own material and also if pads are not available at some place.

Handout 10 explains and demonstrates in detail on how to make a pad and a pad holder in case you do not have an underwear. Although it is advised and encouraged to wear an underwear at all times during the day.

MHM Box and its Refill Mechanism

MHM box is a class resource for all the classmates of a particular class in case of an emergency. It is a mutual responsibility of the entire group to develop a system in your class, to avoid any embarrassing situation for sure.

1. A few easy steps to make an MHM Box are:
2. You may make a box or a carton.
3. Wrap it up with a colorful paper.
4. Take the initial step of filling it with collecting the amount to buy the things/ items or by bringing the things/ items voluntarily. These may include:
 - Sanitary Napkin or pad
 - Cloth
 - Tissue papers
 - Soap
 - Panty
 - Shopper

Once the box is ready with the items, the next step is its maintenance and refill. The MHM Box refill mechanism is like give and take. If one girl takes or uses the things from the box then it is her moral responsibility to replace it the used item with a new item to make it available for her other classmates when in need

MHM Personal Kit

It is best to keep yourself prepared at all times for effective management in case of any need. A "Personal MHM Kit" is therefore a fine solution to cater for every female's need in case of an emergency.

Your Personal MHM Kit should consist of the following items:

1. A sanitary Material – e.g. a sanitary pad or a cloth (depending on the comfort and personal choice of the user)
2. An extra underwear
3. A soap
4. A hand sanitizer
5. A tissue
6. A brown bag or a shopping bag for disposal of used pad



This kit should be carried by every girl and women at all times in their school bags and handbag with them.

Conclusion

Conclude the training session by telling the girls that a “Suggestion Box” has been placed outside the toilet. If they have a question, a suggestion or a complaint about WASH and MHM related matters, they should write it on a piece of paper and put it in that box. Once a month, the Wash Group will collect these comments, cluster them, and first share the same with the MHM Focal Teachers to seek the right solutions to queries and then discuss it in the hall with the students.

Training Module 3-b: 2nd Connect

Session Plan

Material Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Different Colour Markers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pink b. Blue c. Purple d. Yellow e. Orange f. Green • MHM Bingo Chart • A bowl carrying question paper 	
Total Duration	45 minutes	
Sr #	Activity	Estimated Time
1	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the trainer and the participants 	5 minutes
2	Highlighting the objectives of the session MHM Bingo Game <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dividing the students in 6 groups • Explaining the rules of the game • Playing the game 	25 minutes
3	Checking the MHM Box and MHM Personal Kit	5 minutes
4	Q& A Session (Questions asked by students)	10 minutes

Start the session by introducing yourself and also ask the participants to introduce themselves to each other. Explain the following objectives of the session:

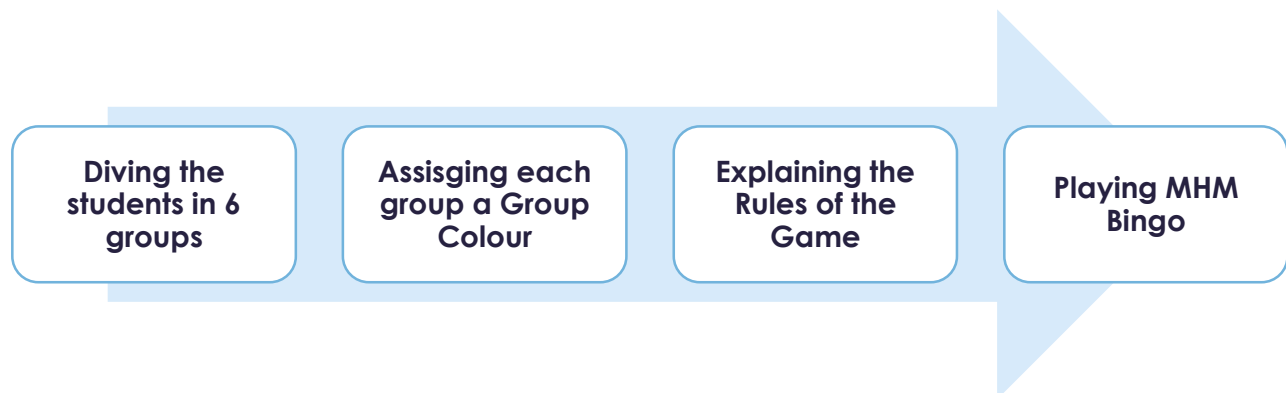
Objectives

Following are the objectives of the 2nd Connect Session:

- The overall objective of 2nd Connect was to review the students retention on the teachings of the 1st Connect Sessions
- The idea was to test their knowledge and probe more to know the change in their attitude and practices.
- The purpose of testing the knowledge through a game was to attract students and ensure their attention and participation in 2nd Connect Awareness Sessions.

MHM Bingo Game

After the introduction of trainer and participants and explanation of the 2nd Connect objectives, the trainer will now start with the MHM Bingo Game.



1. Display the MHM Bingo Chart in front of the students
2. The trainer divides the class in to 6 equal groups and assigns a colour to each group
 - Group 1: Purple
 - Group 2: Orange

- Group 3: Green
- Group 4: Yellow
- Group 5: Blue
- Group 6: Pink

Rules of the Game:

- WASH group members facilitate the trainer for marking and scoring
- Every group will choose a leader, who is only allowed to say BINGO and get a chance for the group to answer the question
- If all the students in a group call Bingo then that group will not be given a chance
- If the members of all the groups call Bingo then that question will be cancelled (this is to avoid any confusion and be fair to all the groups and provide an equal opportunity to everyone to participate and answer the questions)

Playing the Game:

1. Begin the game by allowing one student to draw a question out of the bowl
2. Explain to students that every question has a number. When the number is called they should find the number on the Bingo chart
3. Trainer reads the question that corresponds to the number called. Whichever group calls out Bingo first, gets a chance to answer to that question.
4. Members of the group can discuss and have to answer within 10 seconds.
5. Trainer then checks the answer given by students
6. If the answer is correct that group's colour is marked on the Bingo chart and Bingo sheet (maintained for school record)
7. If the answer is wrong other groups get a chance to answer.
8. If none of the groups are able to answer then the trainer tells the correct answer and mark that question as "Not Answered" on the Bingo Chart
9. Once all the questions are answered and discussed, the trainer and Wash group members finalize the result by counting the number of correct responses of every group and declare a winner of the game.

Printable design of MHM Bingo Chart is given in **Handout 12**.

List of questions asked in this game are attached in **Handout 13**.

Checking the MHM Box and MHM Personal Kit

The students were told during the 1st Connect Awareness Session to make a MHM Box for their class in case of need in an emergency by any classmate and also keep a MHM Kit in their bags for their personal use.

For MHM Box the entire class was asked to pool in money to buy the needed stuff and refill accordingly. The refill mechanism defined that the user of the material will be refilling the items used by new ones in the box so as to make it available for other classmates in case of emergency or need – as defined in Module 3-a.

MHM Personal Kit was to be kept with the students themselves for their personal use.

To ensure that the students made compliance to the teachings and instructions from the 1st Connect, the trainer checks to ensure whether students had made an MHM Box for the class and also if they were carrying MHM Personal Kits with them.

Question and Answer Session

Conclude the session by asking the student if they have any questions or queries which the trainer can answer and provide guidance to students. This is helpful as many students may have a lot of questions since the last awareness session (1st Connect) conducted with the students.

Training Module 3-b: 2nd Connect

Session Plan

Material Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil Paints • Turpentine oil • Paint rushes • Scissors • Markers • Pencils • Erasers • Sharpeners • Lacquer spray • A thick and long rope • Necessary props if required for role play 	
Total Duration	45 minutes	
Sr #	Activity	Estimated Time
1	<p>Debate Students to do a 3-5 minutes debate on the following topic: “Awareness of MHM in Schools”</p> <p>(Both English and Urdu language allowed)</p>	30 minutes
2	<p>MHM Wall Students with good painting skills will be selected to make painting on MHM wall to demonstrate messages related to MHM</p>	45 minutes
3	<p>Role Play Students to enact on two situations: “Before” and “After” trainings conducted on MHM</p>	45 minutes
4	<p>Tug of War Two teams to play the game – each team has 8-10 members; objective of the game is to depict breaking of myths and taboos</p>	60 minutes

Objective of 3rd Connect

The objective to conduct 3rd Connect Activities is to bring about behavior change among the girls and encourage them to stay active during their menstruation days and participate in sports and other activities.

MHM Wall

Objective:

To show creative and aesthetic skills of girls and a way of advocacy; ensuring sustainability; and is a best form of expression used to inculcate in their routine and habits.

Requirements:

1. Oil paints
2. Poster paints
3. Eraser
4. Spray paints
5. Lacquer spray
6. Pencils
7. Ruler
8. Paint brushes
9. Scissors
10. Turpentine oil

Instructions:

1. Art or home economics teacher will facilitate the focal teachers in making the activity a success
2. Participants will bring ideas and make their paintings according to the given theme and show it to focal teachers

Participants: As many students upon their choice and will.

Theme: WASH and MHM

Time duration: 45 minutes

Tug of War

Objectives:

1. To defeat and break the illogical myths and taboos of the society.
2. Encourage girls not to avoid sports due to menstruation and have proper material for effective management.

Instruction and Rules of the Game:

1. Two groups of 10 girls.
2. 10 girls on each side of the rope
3. The centerline will have balloons attached with a myth written on each balloon
4. On the blow of the whistle both team will start to pull the rope on their side to win
5. The winning group will come and burst a balloon to break a myth
6. The group which bursts the maximum balloons will win the game

Requirements:

1. Soft dyed pink rope 1.5 inch diameter polyester fiber (extra soft) 25feet.
2. Balloons with different myths written on them
3. White chalk powder
4. Whistle

Playing the Game:

The Tug-of-War activity will be set up, where each team will pull the other team across the centre marker.

When a team wins, one member of the team will go and burst one of the myth balloons. The Wash Group member will note the number of myths burst by each team. The team that bursts the maximum myths is the winner. The game will continue till all the balloons are burst.

Conclusion:

Conclude the activity by asking the students whether they liked the activity or not, and what did they learn from this activity. Emphasize that myths are developed over time with reasons limited to the resources available in that time period, and that it needs someone to take assertive action to burst those myths.

Debate

Objectives:

To check the confidence level developed in the school girls related to MHM.

Required Material:

1. Buzzer
2. Papers for Jury (for scoring)
3. Pens for Jury

Topic: "Is MHM awareness in schools necessary or not?"

Instruction/ Rules of the game:

1. The students can debate either in favour or against the topic
2. The students should be careful about the timings of the debate
3. First buzzer will be rung after 3 minutes to inform the students and make them alert of the time
4. Final buzzer will be rung exactly after 5 minutes and then the student has to end the debate

Time: 3 to 5 minutes

Participants: As many students from grade 6-10

Conducting the activity:

The students will be given an equal opportunity to either talk in favour or against the topic of the debate. The jury will listen to each debate and mark the scoring for each student. The students will be asked to come up with structured arguments on the topic. The student with the best debate will be announced as the winner.

Conclusion:

Jury decision to announce the winner and second positions. The focal teacher can conclude the session by giving relevant arguments on the topic and emphasizing as to why it is important to talk on MHM. She can further refer to **Handout 2** for importance of MHM.

Role Play

Objectives:

The objectives are:

1. To make the message vocal in the society;
2. Ensure acceptance level in the schools and society as a whole
3. Advocating at government level for providing MHM facilities in schools

Required Material: Any general material or prop needed to help for role play

Instruction/Rules of the game:

1. Each situation should not be more than 15 minutes
2. Students should be confident in their acting

Scenario Example 1:

“A girl has experienced periods for the 1st time. She has no idea and is very scared. Her reaction and roles of Washgroup member and Focal teachers are highlighted in this situation”

Scenario Example 2:

“A girl has just received training on ‘Awareness of MHM’ a few days back and now experiencing her menses for the first time. She is not scared or confused. However she is confident and well equipped. Yet she seeks advice from wash group member for guidance on first time management of menses”

Methodology:

1. Identify the situation and discuss how to act it out
2. To make the scenario appear more real, add dialogues from routine conversation
3. Assign roles to each girl as fictional characters of the scenario
4. Act out the scenario with confidence
5. Discuss the learnings from each scenario

Conclusion:

Conclude the session by discussing the learnings from each scenario and encouraging the girls to overcome their shyness so as to manage their menses with independently with confidence and hygienic practices.

Handout 1

Understanding the concept of Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene Management

Menstruation by definition is:

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina.

The menstruation cycle starts in every girl between the age of 9 and 17. This process occurs every month and lasts for around 3 to 10 days. Menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age.

MENSTRUATION IS

- **A natural biological function of all females worldwide**
- **A natural process where the female body sheds the lining of the uterus every month if a fertilized egg does not plant itself there and grow into a baby**
- **When the lining of the uterus, rich in blood and other matter ready to nourish a baby, flows out through the vagina every 28 days if conception has not occurred**
- **Sometimes painful because the uterus cramps up to shed the lining**

MENSTRUATION IS NOT

- **An illness or a curse**
- **Shameful**
- **A reason to keep girls and women from school, household activities, or work**

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is defined as:

Women and adolescent girls are using clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. They understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear.

Physical Changes in the Body of a Girl

Tell the girls that as they grow up they experience physical changes in their body which need to be properly managed for comfort, dignity and hygiene.

A list of such changes include:

1. Increase in height
2. Increase in weight
3. Chest begins to expand, and it becomes necessary to wear a shameez or a bra.
4. Increase in hip size
5. There is hair growth under the arms and between the legs. Since both areas remain humid and wet, especially in the summer, it is a natural place for the growth of germs and bacteria. It is important to keep this area clean through regularly washing the area, and keeping it dry.

Explaining the Duration of Menstruation Process

The number of days may vary from person to person, ranging from 3-10 days. It would be affected by a number of factors, including physique, activities, life style, food intake or genetics. A rule of thumb is that it should not be less than 3, or more than 10. If menses are for less than 3 days, or more than 10, it may indicate a problem. In both cases, the matter should be discussed with an elder, preferably the mother. Tell the participants that the normal gap between two menses should not be less than, or more than, 25-30 days.

MHM in school is a program that provides:

- Proper girl-friendly facilities: separate toilets for boys and girls
- Washrooms for girls with water and soap available
- Access to sanitary pads or towels, or other products for discretely absorbing the menstrual flow
- Means for disposal of used menstrual absorption products
- Training in MHM for teachers
- Education about menstruation for girls and mothers
- Booklets and other support materials for pupils and teachers

- WASH Clubs with MHM activities
- Teachers are knowledgeable about menstrual hygiene in school and the needs of girls and female staff.
- Menstrual hygiene is included in the curriculum.
- Appropriate sanitary materials are available for girls who need them.
- Where possible, girls can purchase appropriate, low cost sanitary products through the school.
- The school governing bodies are aware of the menstrual hygiene needs of girls and staff, and work to ensure the school is menstrual hygiene-friendly.
- Menstrual hygiene is incorporated into the school's standard monitoring systems.

However, menstrual hygiene management is a social issue that cannot be addressed by working in schools alone. In order to ensure that adolescent girls and women have the necessary support and facilities, it is important that the wider society, communities and families must challenge the status quo and break the silence around menstruation. There is a need to change family and community norms and beliefs in this regard. Not being able to talk about their experience and having limited information means that menstruation becomes something to be ashamed of and to hide, and is consequently ignored in families, schools and communities. In many families, the mother has limited experience in explaining the management of menstruation with regard to schooling, mobility or outdoor activities. Communities should be aware of the barriers to menstrual hygiene management that girls face in school, as well as their role in enabling girls to successfully manage menses in school and at home.

It is therefore the responsibility of those with influence – including government officials and teachers, to find appropriate ways to talk about the issue and take necessary actions.

Handout 2

Reasons as to why MHM is Important

1. Menstrual hygiene is fundamental to the dignity and well-being of women and girls and an important part of the basic hygiene, sanitation and reproductive health services to which every woman and girl has a right.
2. We make efforts towards embedding measures within the system to promote menstrual hygiene, and give women and girls the confidence and space to voice their need for improved menstrual hygiene. Our work focusses on integrating menstrual hygiene management into programmes and policies across key sectors including WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), health, women and girls development, education and rights, from community to the national levels.
3. Educating girls and women about feminine hygiene and biology helps to bust myths and cultural superstitions. Access to correct information about hygiene and adequate sanitary materials enables women to feel more confident and comfortable with their bodies.
4. Access to menstrual hygiene products keeps girls on the same track as their male peers.
5. Lack of modern sanitary products often leads to lower school attendance rates, failure and/or dropping out. When girls miss school they lose educational pace with boys, making them more vulnerable inside and outside of the classroom.
6. Girls staying in school longer contributes to the economic empowerment of not only the woman, but also to the family, community and nation.
7. Proper menstrual hygiene keeps girls in school.
8. It allows girls to be prepared for their first period. Talking about menstrual hygiene before menarche (the first period) is very important for ensuring that girls know how to handle the often scary first period.
9. It gives girls and women confidence to live their lives normally.
10. When they know that they have reliable and hygienic solutions to absorb or collect their menstrual flow, women and girls can do anything they normally would when they are not menstruating.
11. Learning about menstruation empowers girls to take care of themselves in brand new ways.
12. Knowing that their period is coming about every month gives girls a newfound and empowering sense of responsibility for their taking care of their bodies.
13. It gives them the freedom to make their own decisions.
14. Learning and understanding what menstrual hygiene options exist for them gives girls the opportunity to choose what solution is best for them.

15. It helps women realize that they are not impure – According to many traditions and cultures, menstruating women can't perform religious rituals, touch idols, pray, visit temples, cook, serve food or touch drinking water because they are considered impure.
16. Understanding menstruation helps women realize that they are not unclean – Many traditional religions consider menstruation ritually unclean, however, when one has access to sanitation facilities and menstrual hygiene products, good hygiene is easy to maintain.
17. Learning about menstrual hygiene management helps ensure cleanliness – Knowing what product or material to use, how often to change it, and having access to WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) facilities helps girls and women maintain good hygiene while menstruating.
18. It helps prevent skin irritations – Wet pads that are not changed frequently can cause skin irritation which can then get infected if the skin becomes broken.

Handout 3

Sanitary Infrastructure – Girl Friendly Toilet

Importance and Need for a Girl Friendly Toilet

Access to and availability of a proper sanitary infrastructure – most commonly called washrooms or latrines is a major component without which the entire process of menstrual hygiene management is incomplete.

From a very practical perspective, girls who lack adequate sanitary materials may miss school each month during their period. If girls attend schools which lack adequate latrines and water supplies to comfortably change sanitary materials and wash themselves in privacy, they may remain uncomfortable in class during their menstrual cycle. The absence of clean and private sanitation facilities that allow for menstrual hygiene may discourage girls from attending school when they menstruate.

Where girls are able or determined to attend school throughout menstruation, insufficient facilities and sanitary protection may nevertheless create discomfort in the classroom and an inability to participate. For example, menstruating girls may hesitate to go up to the front of the class to write on the board, or to stand up as is often required for answering teachers' questions, due to fear of having an 'accident' and staining their uniforms.

To manage menstruation hygienically, it is essential that women and girls have access to water and sanitation. They need a safe, private space to change sanitary materials; clean water for washing their hands and used cloths; and facilities for safely disposing used materials or a place to dry them if reusable.

An Ideal Girl Friendly Toilet

Girl's Friendly Toilet (GFT), is a facility which should be constructed in the school. This GFT is designed to facilitate women and girls during menstruation. An ideal GFT is designed to have the following:

1. Safe and Private
2. Ensure accessibility for girls and/ or women
3. English and Indian commode seats
4. Access to water and soap
5. Access to menstrual products – Usage of Resource Cupboard
6. A disposal mechanism of menstrual products by the help of an "Incinerator"
7. A full size mirror
8. Hooks and Ledges
9. Washing or bathing units
10. Cleanliness
11. Well maintained
12. Faecal and liquid waste management

Safe and Private

- Easy and safe to access in an unhidden location, avoiding rundown, dark or remote areas, ideally identified through consultations with women and girls.
- Be in a safe location.
- Have a clearly marked female toilet section with a separate entrance.
- Robust doors and structure that users can lock from the inside.

Ensure Accessibility for Girls and/ or Women

- Close to classrooms and easily accessible
- Have good lighting.
- Have trained male and female attendants.
- Path is flat where possible, even, unobstructed and non-slip.
- Have ramps alongside stairs for handicapped females
- Handrails to support use of ramp.

English and Indian commode seats

- An ideal GFT should have, both an English and Indian commode seats installed to facilitate the girls/ women comfort level of using the washroom.

Access to water and soap

- Handwashing facilities in each toilet block – a basin, water and soap. These enable handwashing and cleaning of reusable menstrual products.
- Water access (either through a tap or bucket storage) inside the cubicle, both for increased privacy for managing menstruation and for those experiencing incontinence or other illnesses such as diarrhoea or sickness.
- A tap or bucket with a jug inside all cubicles is essential where the cultural practice is to use water for anal cleansing.
- Other can be installation of a hand shower (Muslim shower) for easy usage of water for anal cleansing

Access to menstrual products – Usage of Resource Cupboard

- Access to products for menstruation, e.g. pads are kept in a visible place (the resource cupboard installed in the washroom) that users can take from the caretaker (preferably female).
- If women and girls in the context might feel uncomfortable or embarrassed to ask for products from a caretaker, then they should use the material in the resource cupboard and replace it with new ones to make it available for others as well.

A disposal mechanism of menstrual products by the help of an “Incinerator”

- Safe and culturally appropriate disposal options for menstrual materials inside the cubicle (for privacy) if possible, otherwise inside the female toilet block.
- Construction of an incinerator is a good option for easy disposal of sanitary material. It allows the user to throw the sanitary material through the lid inside the pit and that material can be burned to ashes and the pit can be easily cleaned.
- An incinerator is a unit or facility used to burn soiled pads or cloth until it is reduced to ash. Through a small opening in the wall of GFT, girls will throw the soiled material in that unit. The sweeper or caretaker of the GFT will burn the material on weekends or after school hours.
- Options for washing reusable products.

Mirror

- A full size mirror enables the girls to adjust their clothing or uniform and caters for self-care requirements, and increases handwashing by providing a nudge or pull factor.
- It will help them keep up their confidence during the menstruation days and help them use the washroom independently.
- Ensure the mirror's position does not enable people outside to see into the toilet section.

Hooks and Ledges

- Hooks and ledges for hanging clothes, keeping belongings off the floor or keeping menstrual products on a clean surface.
- Defecation, urination and menstrual hygiene management require removing clothes and using hands – hooks provide solution for keeping the clothes clean by hanging them.

Washing or bathing units

- Access to water and soap for washing, ideally within the toilet cubicle or at least inside the toilet block as needed for washing menstrual materials or the body.
- An extra space for washing and drying menstrual cloths, or washing the body, within the female toilet block might be appropriate.
- Facilities for ritual cleansing (e.g. foot washing for wudu) might be essential in particular contexts.

Cleanliness

- A clean toilet is especially important for women and girls, who have to touch more parts of a toilet than men do. A frequent and reliable cleaning schedule should be in place, with means and resources allocated to ensure it is adhered to.
- A frequent and reliable cleaning schedule is in place. This is often the responsibility of the toilet caretaker/attendant hired by the school, but they should be given the means and resources – including salary and working conditions – to perform this task.

Well maintained

- Clear management arrangements are in place to ensure the above features. This is important for maintaining functionality of the washroom. Guaranteed and consistent water service.
- It is desirable to have a constant electricity supply.
- Refer to **Handout 11** – O & M Manual for safety tips on adequate management and usage of washroom

Faecal and liquid waste management

- Toilets are close to water supply networks, drainage, and, if present, sewer systems.
- In locations without sewers, septic tanks or seepage tanks are easy to access for sludge-emptying trucks.

Handout 4

Symptoms of Menstruation

Most women experience mild symptoms in the few days leading up to menstruation and in the first day or two of menstruating when the flow of blood is heavier.

There are over a hundred symptoms that have been attributed to menstruation, and these may change over time and from cycle to cycle.

Here are some of the normal physical symptoms of menstruation:

1. Abdominal or pelvic cramping
2. Lower back pain
3. Bloating and sore breasts
4. Food cravings
5. Mood swings and irritability
6. Headache
7. Fatigue
8. Tender breasts
9. Bloating, fluid retention
10. Muscle aches
11. Joint pain
12. Acne
13. Diarrhea or constipation
14. Trouble sleeping
15. Low energy

The symptoms of menstruation can affect your quality of life. It's important to take note of whether your period is impacting any aspects of your life.

Consult a Doctor

Talk to your doctor if

- You haven't had a period for 90 days.
- Your period suddenly becomes irregular.
- You have a period more often than every 21 days.
- If your monthly cycle is either less than 3 days or more than 10 days

Talk to your doctor if your period is causing you to:

- Miss work or school
- Not be able to participate in activities that you usually enjoy
- Struggle to carry out your usual daily activities
- Accomplish less than you would like to
- Have difficulty in your relationships with your family or friends
- Have severe pain
- Feel very blue
- Lack energy or feel very fatigued
- Not exercise when you normally do
- Choose not to go out when you normally would

Handout 5

Hygiene and Precautionary measures taken at home and school during Menstruation

Learning the basics of menstrual hygiene and necessary precautionary measures helps to ensure that you are fully informed about the right way to stay healthy and avoid infection during menstruation.

Menstruation is a time of heightened risk of infection for women. This increased risk of infection occurs because the mucus that usually blocks your cervix opens during menstruation to allow blood to pass out of the body. This makes it possible for bacteria to travel up into your uterus and pelvic cavity. Changes in vaginal pH also make yeast infections more likely.

It is essential that each woman understand the best practices for period hygiene along with the precautionary measures, actions and situations that put them at risk in order to maintain a healthy menstrual routine.

Wash the Right Way

Because your vagina is more sensitive than other parts of your body, it requires a different kind of wash. Always wash your vagina externally and never use normal soap, douches or shampoo on your intimate area, which can upset your natural flora and acidity. Opt for a wash specially formulated for intimate use or just use your hand and warm water.

Don't use soaps or vaginal hygiene products

The vagina has its own cleaning mechanism that works in a very fine balance of good and bad bacteria. Washing it with soap can kill the good bacteria making way for infections. So, while it is important to wash yourself regularly during this time, all you need to use is some warm water. You can use soap on the external parts but do not use it inside your vagina or vulva.

Consider Your Wardrobe

Avoid tight clothing or fabrics that don't breathe. Wearing clothing close to your vagina can cause increased moisture and heat and also irritate your skin. Wear cotton underwear and loose fitting clothing to stay fresh and dry.

Change your sanitary pads frequently

During your period, please make sure you change your sanitary pads frequently, even on a day when you have little menstrual flow. If you do not bother to

change it for a long time, the dampness there could, for example, lead to getting a yeast infection. Try and change pads at least once every 3 or 4 hours, even on a day when your menstrual flow is light.

Discard your used sanitary product properly

It is essential to discard your used napkins or tampons properly because they are capable of spreading infections, will smell very foul. Wrapping it well before discarding it ensures that the smell and infection is contained. It is advised not to flush the pad or tampon down the toilet since they are capable of forming a block and can cause the toilet to back up. More importantly it is imperative that you wash your hands well after you discard your used napkin since you are likely to touch the used portion of the pad or tampon while discarding it.

Beware of a pad rash

A pad rash is something that you might experience during a period of heavy flow. It usually occurs when the pad has been wet for a long time and rubs along the thighs causing it to chafe. To prevent this from occurring, try to stay dry during your periods. If you do have a rash, change your pads regularly and stay dry. Apply an antiseptic ointment, after a bath and before bed – this will heal the rash and prevent further chaffing. If it gets worse do visit your doctor who will be able to prescribe you a medicated powder that can keep the area dry.

Have a bath regularly

To some it may seem like the most inane advice, but in some cultures it is believed that a woman should not bathe during her periods. This myth was based on the fact that in the olden days women had to bathe in the open or in common water bodies like a river or lake. But with indoor plumbing having a bath is the best thing you can do for your body during your periods. Bathing not only cleanses your body but also gives you a chance to clean your private parts well. It also helps relieve menstrual cramps, backaches, helps improve your mood and makes you feel less bloated. To get some relief from backaches and menstrual cramps, just stand under a shower of warm water that is targeted towards your back or abdomen. You will feel much better at the end of it.



Keep an iron and protein rich diet

Since you are losing blood, you are susceptible to anemia during menstruation. Don't push yourself too hard, and try to keep a diet which includes iron and protein rich foods. There are some old wives' tales that you will menstruate more heavily after eating chocolate, but none of them have been medically proven.



Refrain from indulging in cold drinks, alcohol, or smoking

It is better to avoid cold drinks or spicy foods during your period, as they are likely to upset your stomach.

Alcohol increases bleeding. So please refrain from drinking too much. Smoking, on the other hand, contracts your blood vessels, which results in intensifying your menstrual symptoms. We recommend that you refrain from both drinking and smoking.

Drink Water and Stay Hydrated

It might seem odd that you need to drink more water when you're feeling the most bloated, puffy and full, but the more water you drink, the more easily you will eliminate the water building up in your body. Drink eight to 10 8-ounce glasses of fluid like water, juice or milk throughout the day (not all at once). If you're on-the-go, be sure to carry a water bottle with you. This will help you stay hydrated throughout your busy day.

Keep warm to alleviate menstrual pains

Poor blood circulation causes pelvic congestion during menstruation. Take precautions against poor circulation and keep your body warm. Keeping warm helps improve blood circulation, thus alleviating menstrual pains. Try and find ways to keep your stomach and lower back areas warm. Take your time enjoying your bath with aromatherapy products, or use warm pack pocket warmers, for example. Far infrared mats are also quite effective in keeping you warm.

Rest yourself well

Low levels of female hormones during menstruation might not only affect the uterus but also various other parts of your body in various ways. They may cause nosebleeds or diarrhea in some women. Although it varies for each person, symptoms tend to appear where the individual is most vulnerable. Your entire body's defenses are down during menstruation, so make sure you rest well.

Exercise within limits

Light exercise and massage help relax your body and improve circulation. As we mentioned before (in the sections for menstrual pain and PMS), light exercise and yoga are likely to alleviate menstrual symptoms.

If you exercise regularly, you can work out as usual when you are feeling fine during your period. However, don't push yourself and do take a break if you are not feeling too well and are suffering from a stomach ache or anemia.

It is important that you listen to what your body is trying to tell you, and pace yourself accordingly.

Take Notes

Being prepared is your best defense when it comes to your period. Record your period each month on a tracker to chart when it starts, how long it lasts, how heavy it is on each day, and what side effects you have before, during, and after. After a few months you're likely to see a pattern and you'll be prepared.

Carrying your Personal MHM Kit

It is best to keep yourself prepared at all times for effective management in case of any need. A "Personal MHM Kit" is therefore a fine solution to cater for every female's need in case of an emergency.

Your Personal MHM Kit should consist of the following items:

1. A sanitary Material – e.g. a sanitary pad or a cloth (depending on the comfort and personal choice of the user)
2. An extra underwear
3. A soap
4. A hand sanitizer
5. A brown bag or a shopping bag for disposal of used pad

This kit should be carried by every girl and women at all times in their school bags and handbag with them.

Handout 6

Importance of personal hygiene and associated risks with poor menstrual hygiene

Inadequate or lack of personal hygiene practices during menstruation gives birth to various infections and diseases among girls and women. It is therefore pertinent to manage menstrual hygiene and personal hygiene in its best practices. Some most common practices that are ignored on hygiene are summarized in the table below.

Practice	Health Risk
Unclean sanitary pads/materials	Bacteria may cause local infections or travel up the vagina and enter the uterine cavity.
Changing pads infrequently	Wet pads can cause skin irritation which can then become infected if the skin becomes broken.
Wiping or washing from back to front following urination or defecation	Makes the introduction of bacteria from the bowel into the vagina (or urethra) more likely.
Unsafe disposal of used sanitary materials or blood	Risk of infecting others, especially with Hepatitis B (HIV and other Hepatitis viruses do not survive for long outside the body and pose a minimal risk except where there is direct contact with blood just leaving the body).
Frequent douching (forcing liquid into the vagina)	Can facilitate the introduction of bacteria into the uterine cavity.
Lack of hand-washing after changing a sanitary towel	Can facilitate the spread of infections such as Hepatitis B or Thrush. Thrush is an infection of the mouth caused by the Candida fungus, also known as yeast. Candida infection can occur in other parts of the body as well, causing diaper rash in infants or vaginal yeast infections in women.

Handout 7

Healthy Diet and its Importance

We are convinced that educated, healthy and skilled adolescent girls will help build a better future, advance social justice, support economic development, and combat poverty. They will stay in school, make a healthier society, and earn better incomes that will benefit themselves, their families, communities and nations. Investing in their rights and empowering them will help accelerate the achievement of a developed and healthy nation.



The Government supports the provision of clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools and colleges. However, there is poor operations and maintenance (O&M) and limited knowledge about menstruation among girls. Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) guidance for students has been developed and training for teachers is underway to improve their understanding of menstruation.

Efforts to improve the supply and disposal of MHM materials include government and NGO's to make safe and low-cost sanitary pads available to every schoolgirl. Research on girls' needs, priorities and proposed solutions is guiding advocacy and awareness programs. An inter-sectoral approach is being promoted through Menstrual Hygiene Day celebrations

Most women in China believe that it is imperative that they take certain precautions to manage their menstrual cycles. Many, perhaps most, women in the U.S. treat their menstrual cycles as biologically pre-determined. Good or bad, painful or not, short or long, the nature of a woman's cycle seems to be an act of fate.

Having your period isn't fun. Not only can it be uncomfortable and painful, it can also make you irritable and depressive. Thankfully, there are some period food you can eat to make your time of the month a little more bearable.

Eat lean protein and fiber

Do you get a lot of cravings during your period? By eating lean protein and fiber, you can help your blood sugar stabilize, curbing your cravings. Snack on cheese, yogurt (unrefrigerated), butter, and so forth in the afternoon, which is when your cravings hit their peak.

Fiber helps you feel full, and also helps with constipation and diarrhea, which many women have during menstruation.

Mood-boosting foods

Omega-3 foods are great for your mood, so eat plenty of salmon, soybeans, spinach, and so on. Dark chocolate (the less sugar, the better) is also great because it has antioxidants and magnesium, which helps regulate serotonin—the happy hormone.

Vitamins A and B-12

Do you tend to break out during your period? Vitamin A helps with your skin's health, so if you suffer from skin problems during menstruation, add foods like carrots, spinach into your diet.

Your blood cells and nervous system need Vitamin B-12 to keep healthy. Not enough of this vitamin can lead to depression and fatigue during your period. Natural sources of Vitamin B-12 are lean meats like chicken, turkey, and fish; dairy; and milk.

Iron

Most women lose quite some blood every month through menstruation, and many menstruating women lack iron. Iron helps with menstrual cramps and PMS, so stock up on iron-rich foods like liver, sunflower seeds, beef, nuts, beans, and dark leafy green.

Days 1-5

- Once menstruation starts, most women feel a sense of relief.
- In the days before, it is common to feel tense, irritable, and bloated, with pelvic pain, bad skin and sore breasts.
- This hormonal shift typically makes women feel tired.

Food

- At this stage, your appetite is normally smaller than usual. Listen to your body: smaller portion sizes and lighter snacks should suffice.
- What you do eat should contain the nutrients you need to replenish your body as you are losing blood.
- Crucially, you need plenty of iron, Baum explains.
- This can come from red meat, shellfish, beans, pulses, dark greens, and sesame.
- You also need balance that out with vitamin C from orange and red pepper, and vitamin B from eggs or whole grains.
- From calcium try yogurt and sesame.

Days 5-13

- This is the stage when women tend to feel fantastic.
- For about 10 days (time length varies from person to person), women tend to feel particularly attractive and strong.
- It is called the 'follicular phase'.

Food

- With increased energy, you will feel a greater drive to work out more and fuel up.
- You're naturally going to crave stronger portion sizes than when you were menstruating.
- Vitamin B12 - found in red meat - is key for nourishing cells and preparing your body for exercise.
- You also want to eat more capsaicin (the active stimulant in chilies) to open up the arteries.
- Essentially you want to eat more of what you had during phase one, while adding more energy sources.

Day 14

- Women are at their most active in this stage.

Food

- Your energy levels are even stronger so eating well is crucial.
- Zinc is also key to aid cell division - whether you're trying to conceive or not.
- Fish, figs, and whole grains are a good source of zinc.

Days 15-28

- This phase is long. The first two days will feel good. The rest is the hardest bit of the entire cycle.
- Then comes the tough stage.
- Pre-menstrual stress (PMS), cramps, headaches, break-outs, pain, lethargy, anger, tender breasts, weak legs, intense hunger - it all happens at this point.
- Magnesium, omega 3, and dairy are recommended to help with PMS. Magnesium supplements, often used to treat migraines, can help in this stage.

Handout 8

Myths and Taboos

Menstruation was a mystery before science could explain it. So, a lot of different ideas and beliefs were created to explain periods in ancient societies and cultures. Many such ideas and beliefs have been proven wrong by science, but they are still followed in current societies and may at times even be justified on religious grounds. We call these ideas “**Menstrual Myths or Taboos.**”

Many myths tends to suggest that menstruation is a disease or a curse and it leads up to beliefs like a woman's body is polluted when she is experiencing periods. Such beliefs cause discrimination against women and at times, can lower their self-esteem and opportunities for growth.

Talk to your teacher and your friends to plan how you can help to dispel these myths!

Some common Myths or Taboos include:

- **The Menstrual blood is impure**

Considering Menstrual blood as impure and a menstruating women impure has been a result of a lot of misconceptions, taboos and practices which has been followed by people in our society without being aware of the actual cause.

While a woman is menstruating, to make sure that the girl/women gets proper rest, she was not allowed to work in kitchen or do any house hold work, sometime a girl/women would also be sent to separate huts to spend their time in privacy and peacefully. All these precautions got exaggeration and one started assuming that since a girl is impure during her periods so she should be secluded.

Menstrual discharge is accompanied by abdominal pain in some women. All of this too makes the menstrual fluid appear as dirt, something that the body rejects and thus a menstruating woman is impure and anything she touches becomes impure.

- **Menstruating girls should not take baths. Bathing or washing your hair during a period will increase your flow**

Bathing is very important during menstruation to maintain hygiene. In some of the culture, women



should bath every day. While having your periods maintaining hygiene is the most important thing.

- **Prohibition of eating particular foods during menstruation**

During menstruation, it is more important to maintain healthy diet and one should eat more nutritious food however eating sour and spicy foods can rise or worsen menstrual cramps (abdominal pain).



- **It is a taboo that in our culture menstruating girls should not touch flowering plants**

There is a famous myth that if a menstruating women will touch a flowering plant then as a result the flowers of that plant will die or wither away. However scientifically there is no valid reason behind it.

- **Exercise is also prohibited during menstruation**

Physical fitness and staying active is encouraged during these days. Therefore there is no scientific basis for this belief on prohibition of exercise during menstruation. However it is encouraged to maintain an active lifestyle.



- **Disposal of used sanitary materials by burning or burying leads to infertility**

Infertility has nothing to do with burning because menstruation itself is a sign and surety of fertility process to be normal in a woman. Burning used sanitary materials is the safest way to dispose them and is followed in many countries around the world. An ideal Girl Friendly Toilet has a feature of an incinerator used for burning the disposed sanitary material.

- **Menstruating girls smell**

Menstruating girl do not smell. The smell will only occur if a girl does not take a bath during menstruation or when the sanitary napkin has been worn for a long time without changing. This can be avoided if schools are able to support the girls in practicing safe menstrual hygiene management.

Handout 9

Challenges faced by girls during Menstruation

Some common challenges that menstruating girls frequently experience while managing menstruation at school are:

- Less concentration and participation, including fear of standing up to answer questions in the classroom, in case they have stained their clothes or due to embarrassment, stress, concern over leakage or smell and discomfort
- Bullying and teasing from fellow classmates
- Shame and fear of people finding out that they are “on their menses”
- Lack of accurate information and fear about what is happening to them
- Health problems related to inability to change their pads regularly i.e. urinary tract infection, vaginal candida, etc.
- Taboos on what they can and cannot do, where they can and cannot be, during their menses
- Lack of support and understanding from the adults in their lives: families, and teachers
- Inadequate knowledge on use of the right absorbent materials
- Unavailability of options and resources for sanitary napkins or other absorbent materials
- Lack of proper sanitation facilities to change absorbent material from time to time
- Lack of sanitation facilities in schools for girls
- Unavailability of water at certain places to wash menstruation material
- No facility of soap for hand-washing or washing of menstruation material
- Lack of safe and private washroom for females to change their menstruation material
- Nutrition and health is neglected during menstruation days
- No guidance on health risk management during menstruation days
- Lack of knowledge on how to deal with taboos associated with menstrual hygiene
- No awareness is given to girls on changes during puberty and how to manage and handle these changes independently
- Exclusion from sports – due to discomfort, concern over leakage or because of cultural restrictions
- Lack or right guidance and support from the teachers

Handout 10

Do it yourself (DIY): How to make a pad

To begin the demonstration on the pad making process, refer to the instructions below in accordance with its diagram. Once concluded, remind students they will have to 'show and sell' something that they have created the next time the WASH Club/Group has an activity with them.

Step 1: Take a two-fold/double layered piece of cloth of 10"X6" dimension.



Step 2: Fold the cloth in to half to make it double layered.



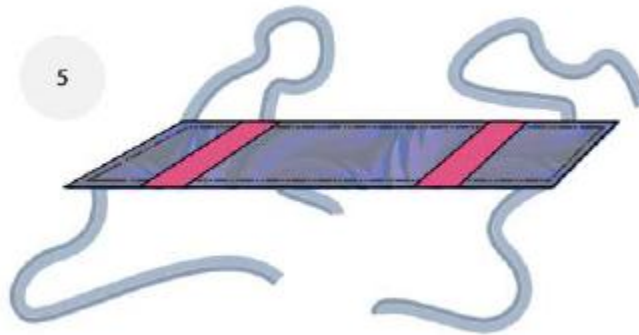
Step 3: Hem or sew the folded ends to secure it. This would be used as the main body of underwear.



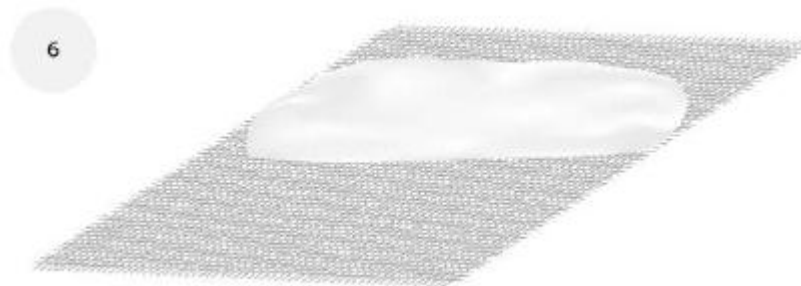
Step 4: Take two narrow strips of cloth and stitch the ends of both strips to edge of the long piece of cloth, so that the napkin placed on the underwear would not slide down or move, ensuring a tight fit.



Step 5: Take four narrow elastic strings of cloth and stitch to four edges of the double layered cloth. The length of the elastic string should be appropriate to the body size. Place in the main body of the underwear i.e. the double layered cloth between legs, the two narrow strings of cloth will be tied at the lateral sides of waist.

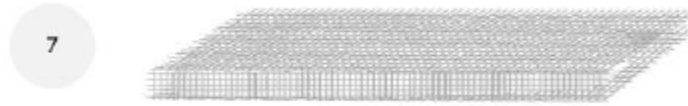


Step 6: Take a cotton roll and cut a thick rectangular piece. Open the gauze roll and place the cotton piece on it as shown in the picture below.

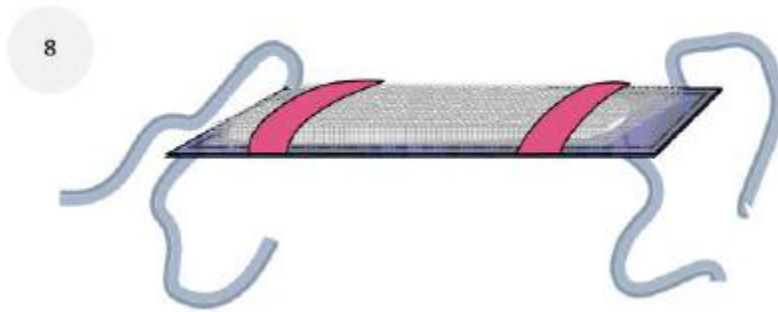


Step 7: Fold one piece on the other as shown in the picture and fold all the four sides to secure them from opening as shown in the picture below. Layers of

equally cut cloth can also be used in place of cotton. This is the most basic type which is recommended for younger and newly adult girls.



Step 8: Add the re-usable napkin/ sanitary pad to the double layered piece of cloth by firmly inserting edges under the two narrow strips so that it does not slip and slide, ensuring a tight fit.



Step 9: Tie the elastic strings around your waist to use.



Handout 11

Operation and Maintenance (O & M) Manual

WaterAid



MOJAZ
Foundation
Lets Bring Change

ہدایات برائے واش روم استعمال



استعمال کے بعد فلیش ضرور کریں۔



کوڑھیں اٹھو یا پیڑ ہرگز نہ چھینکیں۔



استعمال کے بعد مسنن شاہ کو واپس اپنی جگہ پر لگا دیں۔



کوڑھ کو تصویر میں دی گئی ہدایت کے مطابق استعمال کریں۔



دروازے کو کھڑی رکھیں۔



واش روم کے فرش پر پانی کھڑا نہ ہونے دیں۔



استعمال کے بعد نکلے کو مکمل بند کریں۔



ہاتھوں کو اچھی طرح پانی سے دھوئیں۔



پیڑ ڈالنے کے بعد INCINERATOR LID کو مکمل بند کریں۔



پیڑ کو دبے گے طریقے کے مطابق INCINERATOR میں ڈال دیں۔



بعد میں آنے والوں کیلئے واش روم کو صاف چھوڑ کر جائیں۔



EXHAUST FAN کو ضرورت کے وقت ON کریں۔



واش روم کے استعمال کے بعد لائٹ بند کریں۔

Handout 12

MHM Bingo

1	6	13	9	18
14	2	8	15	20
7	11	17	3	16
10	4	19	12	5

School Name: _____ Date: _____

Details of Sections merged: _____

Number of Students: _____

Number of Groups: _____

Details of questions answered: _____

Handout 13

Questions for Bingo Game

Handout 14

Action Plans for Teachers

Serial Number	Activity	Responsible Teachers	1 Academic Year
1	Facilitating Wash Group for conducting class wise session on MHM (Purpose is to refresh the teachings of MHM with students)	Focal Teachers + Class Teachers	April to March
2	Celebration of International Days <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World Health Day – 7th April• Mother Earth Day – 22nd April• World Hygiene Day – 5th May• World Environment Day – 5th June	Focal Teachers	April to March
3	Facilitating the Wash Group on Fund Raising and Maintenance of MHM Tool Kit and Dustbins in classrooms and washrooms	Focal Teachers + Class Teachers	April to March
4	Monitoring of Girl's Friendly Toilet for proper and hygienic usage by students	Focal Teachers	April to March
5	Quarterly Meeting of Focal Teachers with principal and teachers to promote MHM activities	Focal Teachers	April to March

Handout 15

Actions Plans for Wash Group Members

Serial Number	Activity	Responsible Class	1 Academic Year
1	Class wise session on MHM (Purpose is to refresh the teachings of MHM within students)	Grade 9 th and 10 th	April to Mach
2	Celebration of International Days <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World Health Day – 7th April• Mother Earth Day – 22nd April• World Hygiene Day – 5th May• World Environment Day – 5th June	Grade 6 th to 10 th	April to March
3	Fund Raising and Maintenance of MHM Tool Kit and Dust Bins in classrooms and washrooms	Grade 6 th to 10 th	April to March
4	Monitoring of Girl's Friendly Toilet for proper and hygienic usage by students	Grade 6 th to 10 th	April to March
5	Quarterly Meeting of Wash Group Members and Focal Teachers	Grade 6 th to 10 th	April to March