Menstrual Hygiene Week 2021

We need to step up action and investment in menstrual health and hygiene now!

Join us on 21, 24 and 27 May 2021 for a series of engaging webinars and discussions on the future of menstrual hygiene in the East Asia and Pacific Region

Welcome!

As people are joining this webinar, please get started with the items below:

Set your name in Zoom, so people can identify you.

Please mute your microphone.

Please turn off your video if you are not a speaker.

Please use the chat function to interact with presenters.

Having technical issues? Please ask for TechSupport in the chat.

This meeting is being recorded.

WaterAid

#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

unicef
for every child

Agenda

- **Opening** (Chelsea Huggett, WaterAid)

- **The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality** (Maria Holtsberg, UN Women Asia Pacific Regional Office)

- **Menstrual health and hygiene and COVID-19** (Brooke Yamakoshi, UNICEF EAPRO)

- **Philippines: #MeronAko campaign** (Marysol Balane, UNICEF Philippines)

- **Oky period tracker app: localisations and deployments around the world** (Gerda Binder, UNICEF EAPRO)

- **Building digital solutions for and with girls: UNICEF GenderTech toolkits** (Alexandra Tyers-Chowdhury, UNICEF)

- **Closing** (Ina Jurga, International MH Day Coordinator, WASH United)

WaterAid

#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

unicef
for every child

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality

Maria Holtsberg
Humanitarian and DRR Advisor
UN Women Asia-Pacific Regional Office

WaterAid

#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

unicef
for every child
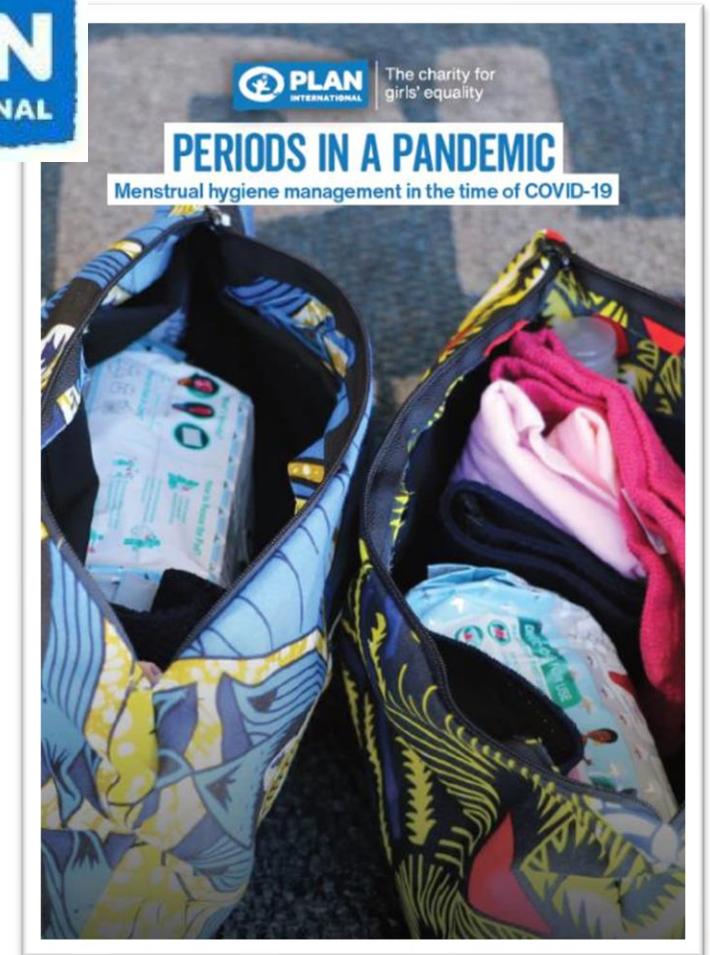
MHM and COVID-19

KEY FINDINGS: PERIODS IN A PANDEMIC REPORT

In relation to MHM, WASH professionals in 24 countries have reported that COVID-19 has worsened key challenges for people who bleed by:

1. Restricting access to products, through either shortages or disrupted supply chains: 73% agreed*
2. Restricting access to WASH facilities to help change, clean and dispose of sanitary products: 68% agreed
3. Increased and prohibitive prices of products: 58% agreed
4. Lack of access to information about menstrual hygiene management: 54% agreed
5. Reduced access and availability of clean water to help manage periods: 51% agreed
6. A less hygienic environment for sanitary hygiene product disposal: 47% agreed
7. Increased stigma, shaming or harmful cultural practices associated with menstruation: 24% agreed

*N=45 (16 survey takers skipped the multiple choice questions)

PLAN INTERNATIONAL

PLAN | The charity for girls' equality

PERIODS IN A PANDEMIC
Menstrual hygiene management in the time of COVID-19

Source: Plan International (2020) Periods in a Pandemic
https://plan-international.org/publications/periods-in-a-pandemic

#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

WaterAid

Indonesia U-Report survey on menstruation during the pandemic (2020)

Source: Reza Hendrawan, UNICEF Indonesia

Findings

- 5,843 U-Reporters contributed to the survey (throughout Indonesia)
- 26% U-Reporters **experience challenges when getting disposable pads** during the pandemic. This is due to movement restriction, shops were closed, and the price of disposable pads become unaffordable
- 17% experience problems managing menstruation in general during a pandemic, 55% of them **experience irregular menstruation cycles** due to various things, one of them is stress.
- Even only 1.5% of U-Reporters, **access to single-sex toilet and privacy** could become problem for girls at home
- 50% of u-reporters are **looking on the internet** for information around MHM during pandemic
- Of all respondents, only 78% claimed to wash their hands before and after changing pads, meaning that 22% still did not know when to wash their hands during menstruation even during the pandemic
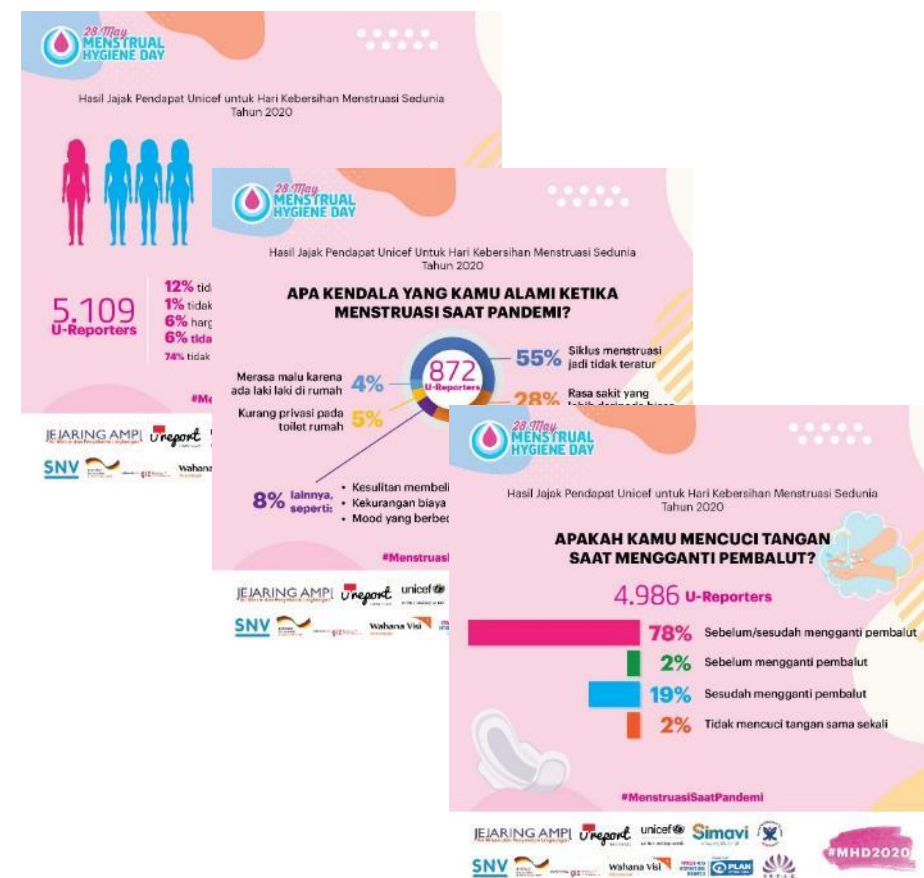
COVID-19: Impacts on the menstrual cycle?

- Stress and irregular menstruation?

- Coronavirus disease and painful periods?

- Impacts of the COVID-19 vaccines?

WaterAid

#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

unicef
for every child

Mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 on MHH

1. MHH and the provision of essential social services:

- Ensure MHH supplies and WASH facilities as well as a supportive environment are in place for health care workers and patients;

- Ensure the continuity of essential health and other social services, especially for adolescents;

2. MHH and the availability and accessibility of supplies and services

- Mitigate the impact of lack of access to menstrual materials and WASH facilities by providing materials with NFI and food assistance for people with limited movement, the poor or live-in camps or institutions;

- Provide basic WASH facilities and services in communities, camps, and institutional settings

3. MHH and menstrual irregularities: Ensure timely and adequate information is available about the potential impact of the COVID -19 pandemic on menstruation, as well as social support and supplies when and where needed for adapting to irregular cycles
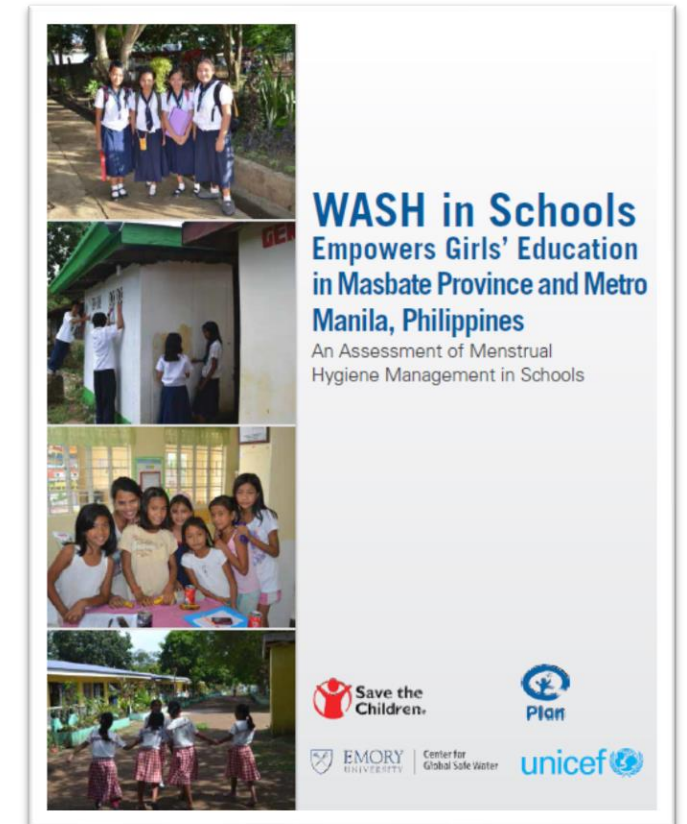

#MI
#Its

Mainstreaming Menstrual Hygiene Management in Public Basic Education in the Philippines

The *#MeronAko* MHM Campaign in Focus

unicef

- Girls hear & learn about menstruation from female relatives & friends.

- Most of what girls know about managing menstruation is inaccurate.

- Most teachers feel ill-equipped to teach or talk about menstrual hygiene.

- Most girls feel ashamed about having their menstrual period.

- Poor WASH conditions in schools pose significant challenges to effective MHM among school girls.

WASH in Schools
Empowers Girls' Education
in Masbate Province and Metro
Manila, Philippines
An Assessment of Menstrual
Hygiene Management in Schools

Save the Children   Plan

EMORY UNIVERSITY | Center for Global Safe Water   unicef

INVISIBLE PROBLEM

- *No ritual barriers*
- *Veneer of industry and media projection – MHM as urban, middle to upper class, personality-development issue*
- *Sporadic efforts of the education sector*
- *Need for enabling environment*
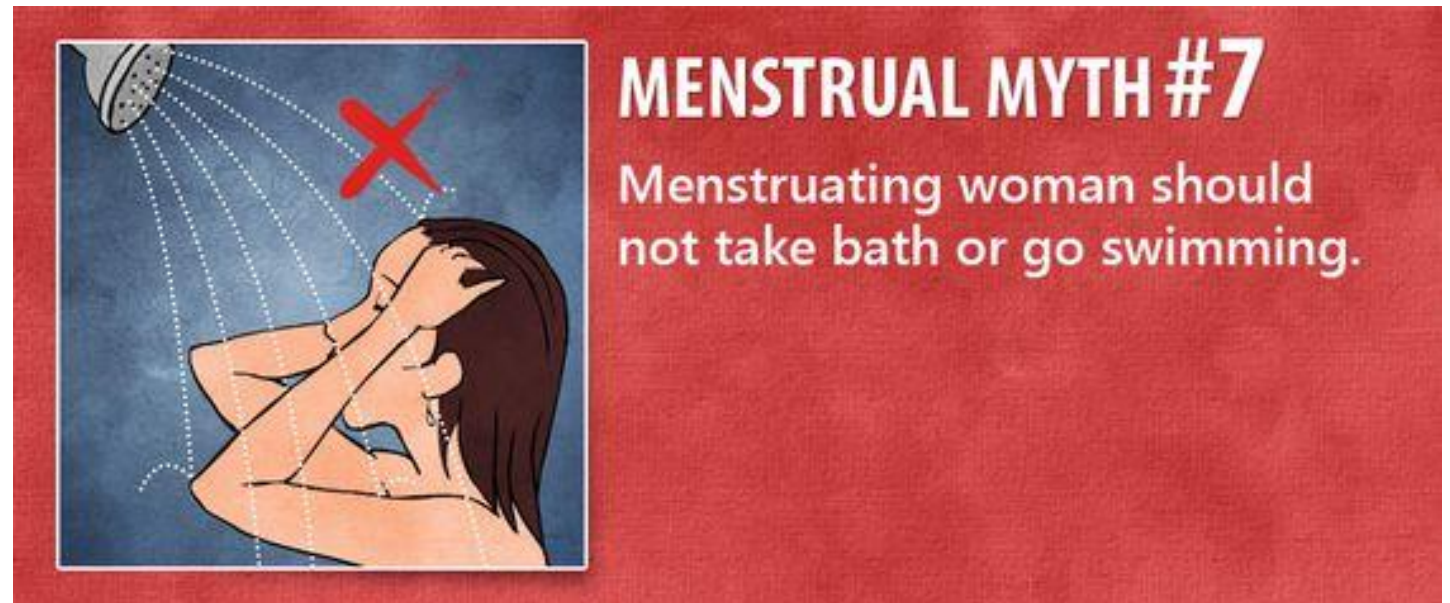
Challenges to MHM Learning Delivery

- Malice and shame about sex, sexuality and reproductive issues
- Lack of enabling mechanisms for teaching MHM
  - Limited learning management skills of teachers
  - Lack of teaching materials
  - Slow roll-out of sexuality education curriculum
- Limitation of MHM-related lessons to anatomy, physiology and health issues
- Curriculum design misses out on pre-menarche age

The #MeronAko Campaign

#MeronAKO

I have period...I cannot.

→
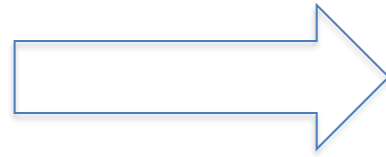
I have period. I have...

    Dreams

    Abilities

    Parents, teachers and friends who support me

...I can do, I can be!

- Gender inclusive and interactive approach to learning delivery
- Tools to enable teacher facilitation and pupil participation.
- Initial pilot in 4 schools in 2018, currently expanding to 350 schools in Northern Samar, Philippines

The #MeronAko Campaign

What has the campaign enabled?

– Open and healthy discussion in classroom.

– Expanded areas and topics for integration
  - Gender identity and relations
  - Child protection
  - WASH practices and provisions

– Teaching and classroom management made easy and teachers confident.

– Outreach to younger pre-menarche (grade 4) girls through peer education

– School governance responsive to MHM needs

Teaching MHM

Peer Learning

VON GABRIEL
Grade 7 student - Present
Grade 4 Peer Educator

We not only had a lot of fun, we also learned a lot about menstruation.
There were games and there were lessons in the games too!

MHM Learning Delivery amid COVID

Challenges amid COVID

- Closure of schools meant no use for school-based MHM tools/activities
- Learning loss on MHM/ASRH - contracted curriculum has de-prioritized MHM/ASRH lessons
- Lack of distance-learning tools to reach pupils at home

#MeronAko distance learning package

- Online write-shop for development of lesson plans and learning materials
- Development of distance learning modules
- *Kwenturuan* module for engaging parents
- Use of pre-COVID videos and print materials

Future Directions

- Linking to OKY Period Tracking App
  - Adaptation to Muslim context in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
  - South-South Collaboration with Indonesia
- Impact assessment of piloting
- Scale-up nationwide by the Department of Education

For more information, please contact

MARYSOL ASTREA BALANE

WASH Officer

mbalane@unicef.org

JON MICHAEL R. VILLASENOR

WASH Officer

jmvillasenor@unicef.org

United Nations Children's Fund

14th flr North Tower

Rockwell Sheridan Business Center

Sheridan St. corner United St.

Mandaluyong City

Philippines

www.unicef.ph

Thank you!

OKY

Period Tracker App for Girls
UNICEF EAPRO

Designing MHH solution with girls for girls

User-centered design and co-creation with 400 girls and their close social circles in pilot countries Indonesia and Mongolia.

Girls determined 'look and feel' and name of the app, and desired features to meet their wants and needs.

Building to girls' digital realities

Reality	Solution
Low end phones	Light-weight app
Limited connectivity/data costs	Offline functionality
Low (digital) literacy	Text-to-speech; tutorials; easy to navigate by design
Phone sharing (family or peers)	Multiple user login; password protection
No access to google play store	Downloadable via link; via QR code
Discretion, privacy & security	No personal identifiable information; highest data protection
Parental permission & support	External facing website for parents, teachers, communities

UNICEF | for every child
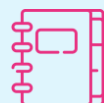
Oky: a girl-centered mobile period tracker

- Fun, games, colorful, positive & personalized
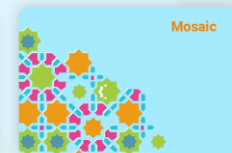- Calendar
- Individual cycle tracker
- Diary
- Data summary
- Accurate, trustworthy info
- Quizzes, Reminders, Avatar messages

UNICEF | for every child

Evidence-based, girl-friendly information

Oky provides evidence-based information about menstruation, puberty, and reproductive health in girl-friendly language.

Menstruation information delivered in different formats:
- factual content (Encyclopedia)
- gamified content (Quizzes, Reminders, Pop-ups).

There is also referral information directing girls to online and offline SRH advice or services.
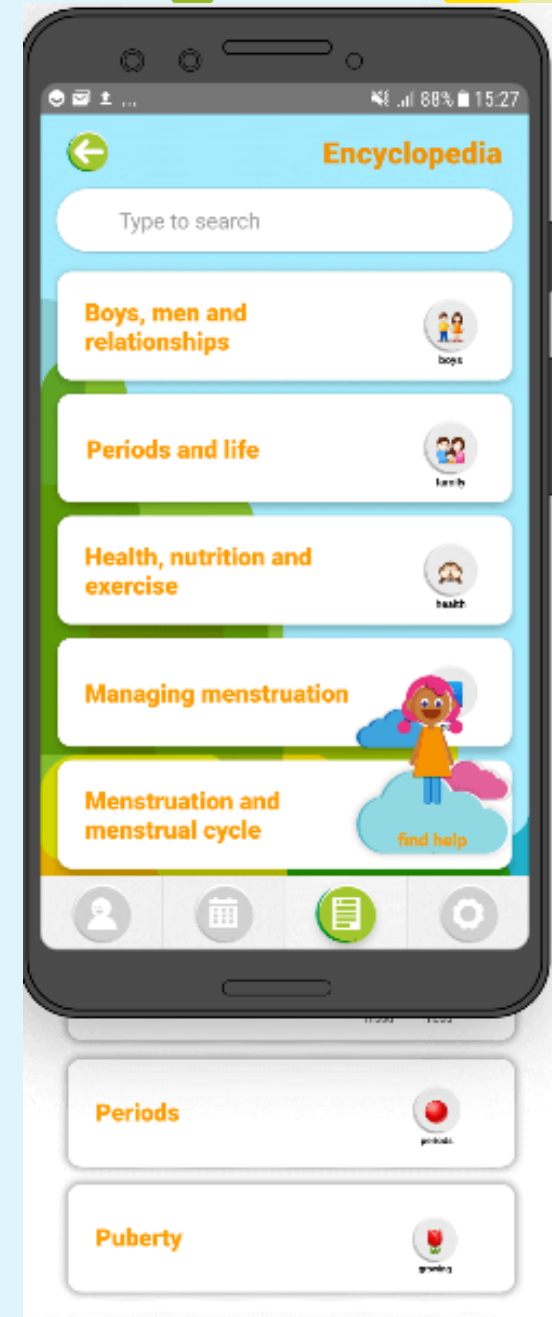
Individualized cycle tracker

Oky provides individualized cycle tracking with period predictions, reminders, and notifications.

Oky applies algorithms and machine learning to improve accuracy.

Oky does not overpromise and pauses predictions if periods are irregular.

UNICEF | for every child

Open source for scaling

Oky's code and content is open source.

Oky's white-labelled code on GitHub has already been used by Kosovo's SHNET app to include a cycle tracking function.

Oky's open-source content is already being used by GirlEffect to include more MHH content in their Big Sis chatbot.

The vision for Oky scaling is for partners and girls themselves to write, amend, and improve the app's code, design, features, and content, and bring Oky to new markets.

Oky partnership and franchise model

Key implementing partners (franchisees) will lead localization and deployment of Oky in their market.

These partners, such as LVCT in Kenya, will host and build out localized Oky versions as part of their services and programmes for adolescent girls.

And receive support from the Oky community and contributing partners.

Contributing partners can be from all sectors:

technology, design, marketing, mobile operators, content, communications, research, UX/UI, girls engagement

MONGOLIA

INDONESIA

prospects & in planning
scaling interest

Implementing franchise partners

➤ Commitment to girls

➤ Deep rooted presence in-country

➤ Willing to adhere to Oky's privacy and ethical standards

➤ Openness to working with others

➤ Enthusiasm for digital technology

UNICEF | for every child

Key stages of Oky localization & deployment
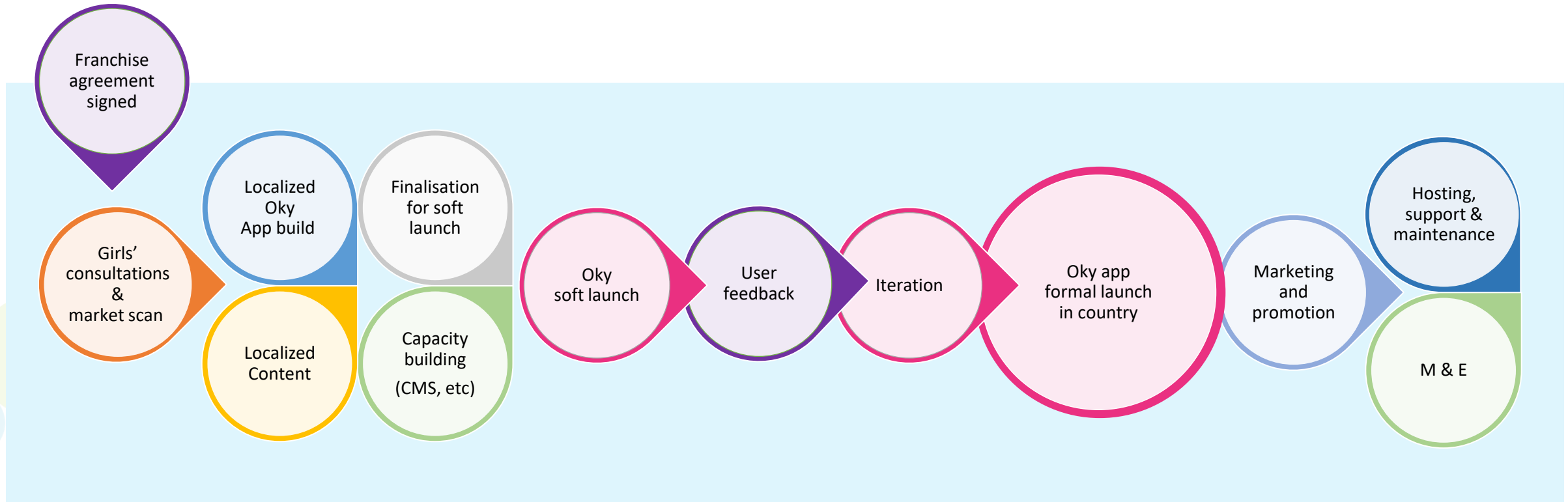
Oky eco-system of partners to date

Technology
T4D, ThoughtWorks, TherapyBox
GeyChain, Portonics, ...

Co-Creation & Localization
Unicef COs Indonesia, Mongolia,
Kenya, Nepal, Mexico, ...

Private Sector Companies
Softex, Essity, ...

Resources
Gucci, VentureFund, WASH, COs, Duke-Unicef
Accelerator, TheCaseForHer, ...

Content
CSE Experts, UNFPA, USAID, GirlEffect, ...
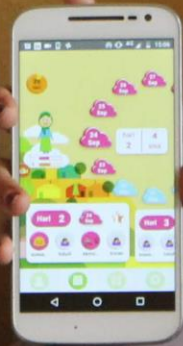
Implementing (Franchise) partners
Kopernik, WASH Action NGO, LVCT, NFCC,
Simavi, SPASH, PSI, BeGirl, ...

Promotion
Unicef COs, Local Partners, MoH, TheCaseForHer,
Dfid, Dutch govt, Austria NatCom, US Fund,
Innovation Office, ...

Telecom
Safaricom, ...

OKY

For Girls. By Girls. Period.

Building digital solutions for and with girls: UNICEF GenderTech toolkits

Alex Tyers-Chowdhury

What are women and girls' digital realities?

393 million women in LMICs do not own a mobile phone.

Women are 8% less likely to own a mobile phone than men.

In South Asia are 23% less likely to own a mobile phone and 51% less likely to use mobile internet.

53% of men use the internet compared to 41% of women in LMICs.

Women are 23% less likely than men to use mobile internet.

Why a gender lens in 'WASHTech' matters

When it's considered, you get:

- Oky!
- Sanitation services platform in Bangladesh

When it's not considered, you get:

- Smart water taps in Benin
- Utility customer reporting app in Ghana

The UNICEF GenderTech tools

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef for every child

How to build digital solutions for girls' digital realities

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef for every child

How to co-create digital solutions with girls

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef for every child

How to include girls in digital product user testing

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef
for every child

How to build digital solutions for girls' digital realities

- supports innovators and designers in developing digital products that work for young women and girls as well as male users
- 8 key tips with practical advice and steps to take
- has examples of best practice

Example tip:

Design for a range of digital literacy levels: create simple user journeys; use audio and visual for low literacy; use clear instructions at the beginning of a sentence rather than at the end.

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef
for every child

How to co-create digital solutions with girls

- supports innovators and designers in running co-creation sessions with girls
- 8 key tips with practical advice and steps to take
- has examples of best practice

Example tip:

Pair girls up with a digital buddy; usually older peers with more digital know-how, who can support and mentor their younger counterparts during the co-creation process.

UNICEF EAPRO Gender and Innovation
Building digital solutions with a gender lens

unicef
for every child

How to include girls in digital product user testing

- supports innovators and designers to make sure girls are included in any user testing
- 11 key tips with practical advice and steps to take
- has examples of best practice

Example tip:

Conduct user tests individually or in pairs. Female users are often less confident in their digital skills than male peers and may be embarrassed about difficulties or asking for help. Pairs can support each other.

Find the tools here:
https://www.unicef.org/eap/innovation-and-technology-gender-equality

Summary points

- COVID-19 pandemic is affecting women and girls differently than men and is impacting MHH

- Digital platforms are opportunities to consult with girls and reach them directly with MHH learning opportunities during the pandemic

- Oky period tracker app is building partnerships to reach girls at scale, with localization and deployment guidance available for interested countries

- Consulting with girls to understand their digital realities and co-creating solutions with them is the foundation for good programming and tech devt, and new tools available to do so learning from Oky

What are your plans for MH Day?

Theme: Action and investment in good MHH in the post-pandemic recovery!

- Share your plans with us in the chat box or on Yammer for UNICEF staff

- For online advocacy, download the campaign materials from www.menstrualhygieneday.org

- Bring your menstruation bracelet (virtual or IRL) to the next webinar on 27 May

WaterAid
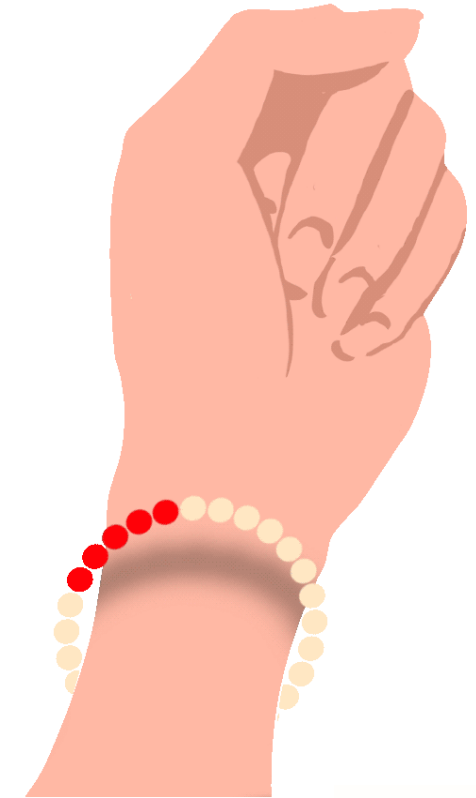
#MHDay2021
#ItsTimeForAction

unicef
for every child

Theme: More action and investment in menstrual health and hygiene now!
Hashtag #MHDay2021 #ItsTimeForAction

Together, we can end period stigma by 2030.
#MHDAY2020 #ItsTimeForAction

average 28 DAYS of CYCLE

average 5 DAYS of PERIOD

28.05.
MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY

Menstruation Bracelet Action

English, French, Hindi, Arabix & others, Add your logos, add your text

#HelpTheNeedy
02 May 2021 21:06

月經不平等：原來港台與非洲沒那麼遠遠

#MenstruationMatters – Let's talk about it
02 May 2021 22:00

BLOODY FABULOUS: A PANEL ON MENSTRUAL EQUITY

Share with us your event plans!

Studio MH Day on 3rd June

Studio MH Day on 3rd June

https://menstrualhygieneday.org/
Ina.jurga@wash-united.org
Newsletter https://menstrualhygieneday.org/
mhday-blog/newsletter/
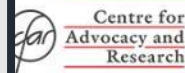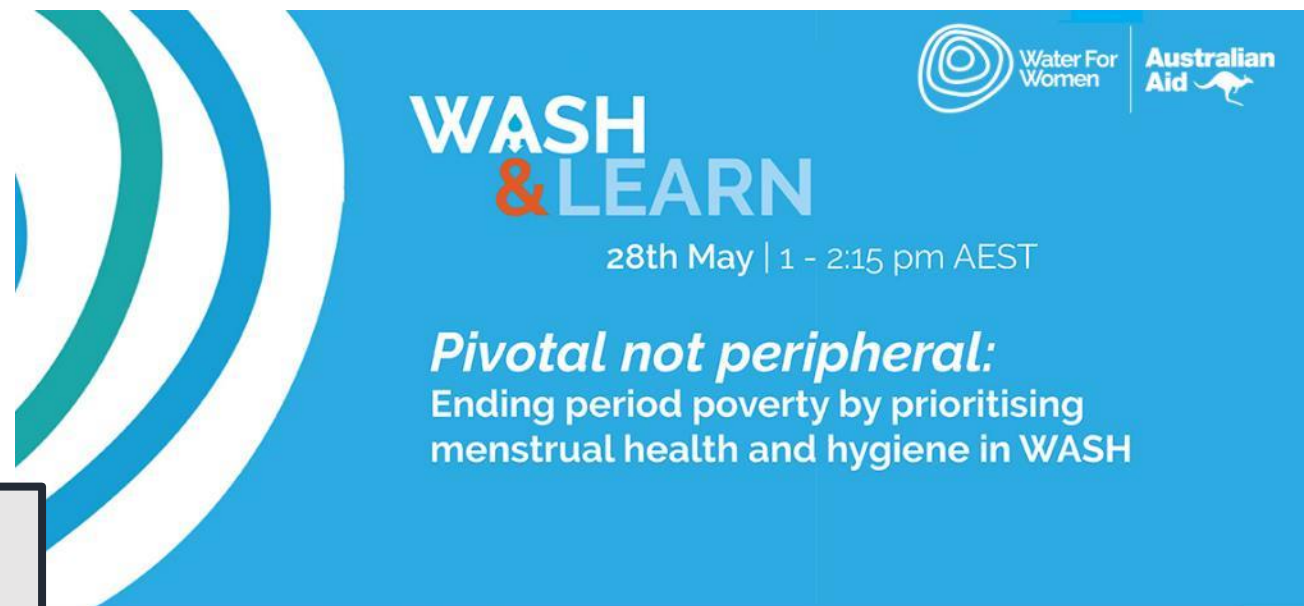
FURTHER RESOURCES
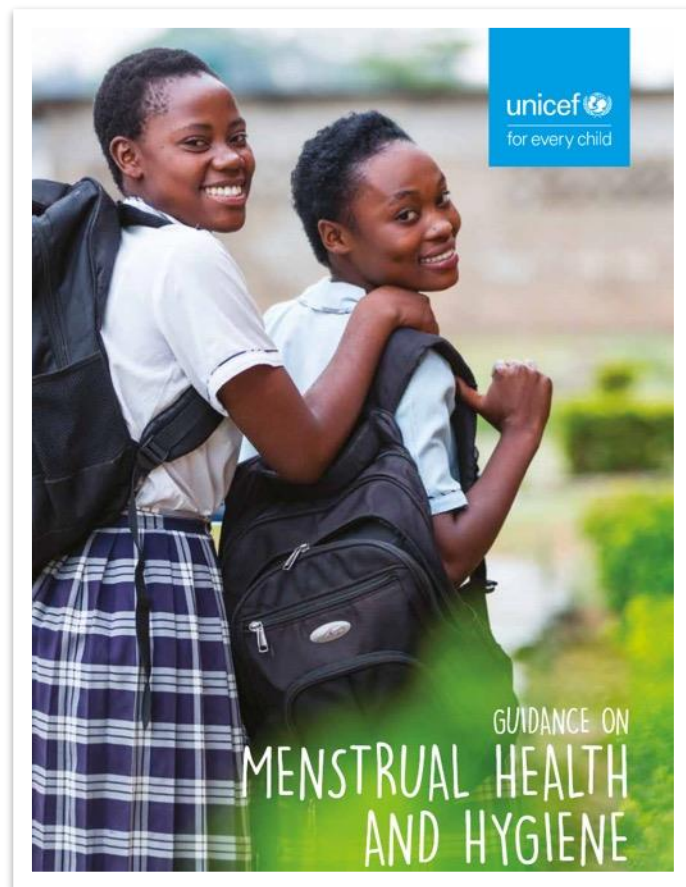
Guidance on menstrual
health and hygiene

https://www.unicef.org/
documents/guidance-
menstrual-health-and-
hygiene

Guide to menstrual
hygiene materials

https://www.unicef.org/
documents/guide-
menstrual-hygiene-
materials

MHH monitoring guide
(v1)

https://www.unicef.org/
documents/guidance-
monitoring-menstrual-
health-and-hygiene
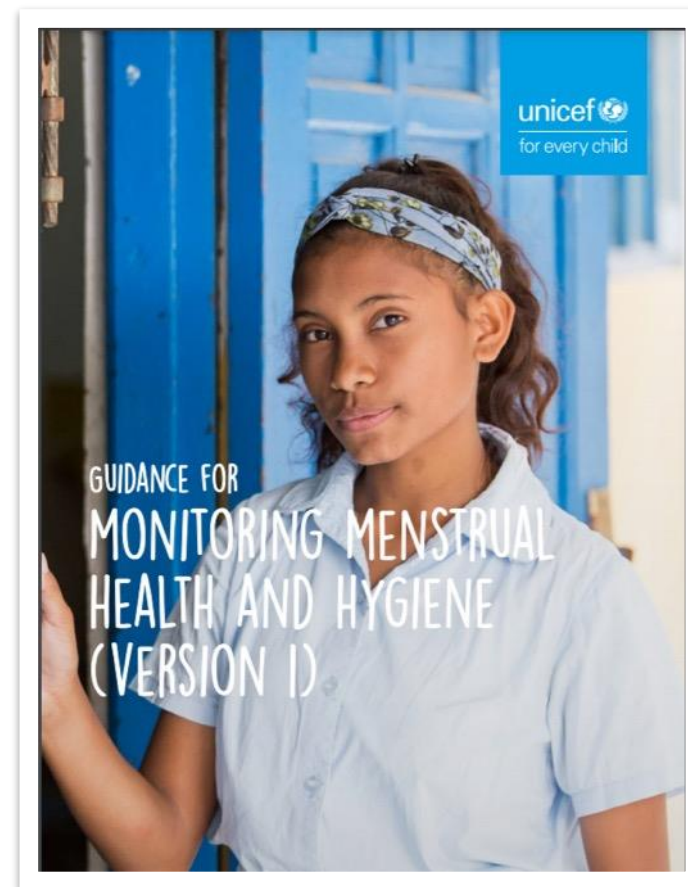
Title, author and link	Relevance
Supporting the Rights of Girls and Women through Menstrual Hygiene Management in the East Asia and Pacific Region: Realities, Progress and Opportunities UNICEF (2016)	A comprehensive overview and analysis of the experiences of girls and women, to establish the current status of MHM programming and action across the East Asia and the Pacific region. The review not only focuses on the school context linked to WASH in Schools programming, but also explores MHM in relation to out-of-school youth, as well as MHM at community level, in humanitarian contexts and in the workplace. The findings are presented in two documents: (1) A regional synthesis report titled "Realities, Progress and Opportunities" (2) An implementation guidance note with selected good practices titled "Regional Good Practice Guidance Note"
Menstrual Hygiene Matters: A resource for improving menstrual hygiene around the world SHARE & WaterAid (2012) Module & Toolkit 1 Menstrual hygiene – the basics	This resource brings together knowledge and practice on MH programming from around the world to encourage the development of comprehensive and context-specific approaches to menstrual hygiene. Module 2 provides information on institutional and sector responsibilities, amongst other practical information.
WinS4Girls distance learning course book and materials Emory University, UNGEI and UNICEF (2015)	The WinS4Girls e-course was developed and delivered as part of the 14-country UNICEF project funded by the Government of Canada. The WinS4Girls e-course was designed by the Center for Global Safe WASH at Emory University, UNGEI and UNICEF to help strengthen the capacity of WASH practitioners and policymakers to carry out rigorous research that investigates local MHM practices and challenges. It includes step-by-step modules for planning formative research into MHM.
Tools for Assessing Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools UNICEF and Emory University (2013)	In 2012, UNICEF and the Center for Global Safe Water at Emory University initiated a programme to support collaborative research focused on MHM in Bolivia, the Philippines, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. The assessment results are now published as a series of reports. All of the tools presented here are meant to be used and adapted for assessments around the world.
UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis UNICEF (2015) E-learning course available on Agora Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC)	In order to ensure the protection of, and respect for, human and child rights within all research, evaluation and data collection processes undertaken or commissioned by UNICEF, this guidance illustrates procedures designed to achieve the following objectives: to establish minimum and binding standards for ethical research, evaluation and data collection and analysis processes in UNICEF globally; and to ensure effective processes and accountability for ethical oversight of these processes.