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



Stepping up action and investment in menstrual health and hygiene

27 May 2021

1-2:30 PM Bangkok | 8-9:30 AM Geneva | 4-5:30 PM Canberra

UNICEF East Asia & Pacific Regional Office







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.







Opening remarks



Marcoluigi Corsi
Deputy Regional Director
UNICEF East Asia and Pacific







Agenda

- Opening remarks (Marcoluigi Corsi, Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific)
- Learning from MHH work across the region (Abigail Tevera, UNICEF Pacific; Chelsea Huggett, WaterAid Australia; Getrudis Mau, UNICEF Timor-Leste)
- How to invest in MHH? (Lucy Wells, PacificRISE; Brooke Yamakoshi UNICEF)
- Panel discussion: Innovation and women's entrepreneurship in MHH (Varangtip 'Rung' Satchatippavarn, Ira Concept Thailand; Tungga Dewi, Perfect Fit Indonesia; Audrey Tangonan, Sinaya Cup Philippines)
- Closing (Gerard Cheong, Assistant Director Water Section Australian DFAT)







Learning from MHH work across the region

Abigail Tevera, UNICEF Pacific Chelsea Huggett, WaterAid Australia Getrudis Mau, UNICEF Timor-Leste







Strengthening the enabling environment for menstrual health and hygiene in schools in Solomon Islands

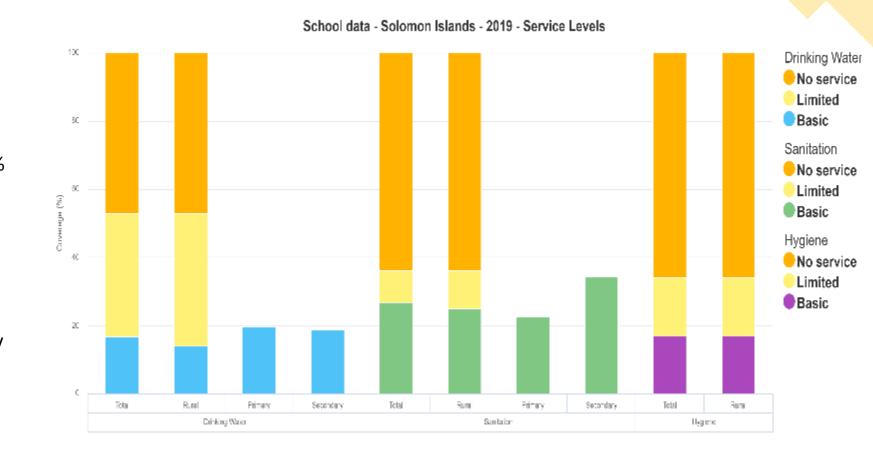




27 May 2021 Abigail Tevera, UNICEF Pacific, Solomon Islands Field Office

Context

- Population of 622,469: 27% women and girls aged 15-54 years
- Low levels of education
- High levels of violence against women and children and underlying discriminatory social attitudes,
- Adolescent pregnancy high, with 8-12% of girls aged 15-19 already mothers.
- Low level of women in leadership and decision making
- Adolescent girls and women in Solomon Islands face stigma, myths, lack of information and lack of services to manage their menstruation healthily and with dignity
- WASH facilities in schools, workplaces and public places are frequently inadequate to meet the needs of menstruating girls and women



UNICEF | for every child 8

Supporting the Rights of Girls and Women through Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHN

in the East Asia and Pacific Region

Realities, Progress and Opportunities



Joint initiative of the Education and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programmes – UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office

February 2016



Supporting the Rights of Girls and Women through Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM): 2016 regional review

Solomon Islands

Review found good progress on:

- Government leadership on MHM, coordination and MHM in policies
- Formative research
- Stakeholder engagement on MHM

A start had been made on:

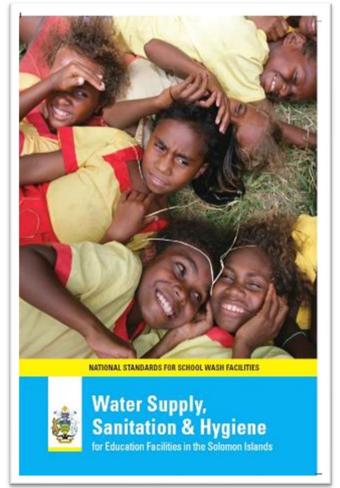
- MHM in the curriculum
- MHM in School WASH facilities

No progress on:

- Teacher training relevant to MHM
- Teaching and learning materials on MHM



Sector Policy & Strategy

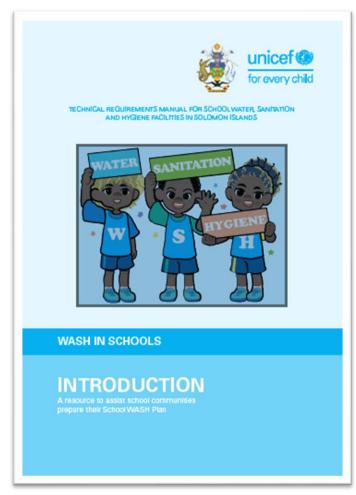


Solomon Islands National
Standards for WASH Facilities:
STANDARD 2: for all) in which
requirements for MHM are well
stipulated.



Made up of 5 categories or main areas of focus:

- 1. WASH Management
- 2. Water Supply
- 3. Sanitation
- 4. Hygiene
- 5. Menstrual Hygiene Management



The Technical Requirements Manual: checklist for MHM to assess the current state of individual school WASH facilities compliance with the National Standards.

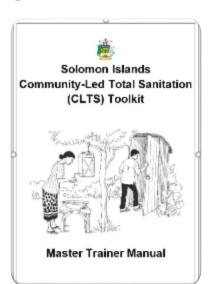
Institutional Arrangements

- MEHRD worked with MHMS to design WASH Facilities in Schools(MHM requirements included)
- UNICEF influence at school level: Advocating for allocation of budgets for MHM in schools: MHM budget includes, disposal sanitary pads, soap provision of extra pants, MHM hygiene kits for both students and teachers & waste management facilities(incinerators)
- Coordination with other partners:
 - Commemoration of WASH related events including MHM
 - CLTS working group



Capacity Building

- Teacher training: Master Trainers(26) & training of School Leaders, Head Teachers/Principals & teachers; target 355 schools(852 people) from 3 provinces, achieved to date: 119 schools(367 people; Teachers 119 & SMC 248)
- Aim: To help WASH stakeholders working in schools, including school communities & teachers
 - To make informed choices about appropriate WASH facility improvements,
 - > To improve maintenance and management practices.
 - Understand the key elements/concepts of Menstrual Hygiene Management
 - Understand what schools & teachers can do to support MHM in schools
- School Level teachers training on School MHM National Standards: 119 schools trained to date on MHM in Guadalcanal Province.
- Inclusion of MHM in CLTS Training Manual: promote elimination of stigma and discrimination against menstruating girls and women by promoting positive support for menstruators.



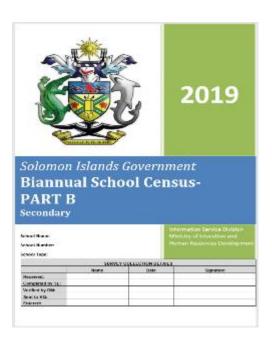








2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Initial discussion of WinS indicators to be incorporated in the school annual survey forms	development of wins indictors in the school annual survey form b (form b- normally disseminate bio annual - nationally	finalization of SDG indicator for reporting by strategic support unit (MEHRD) in December 2020	dissemination of school annual survey form to all schools in Solomon islands	MEHRD in a better position to measure all wins indicator annually
Measured through the Performance Assessment Reports produced annually by MEHRD through the Strategic Support Unit. The available report access at this time of report was for 2018. However, it does not capture any WASH indicators. This is because WinS indicators were not developed during these years.	Initial discussion to move from the current SIEMIS software to Open SIEMIS	Open SIEMIS consultation and development continues (Development Phase)	MEHRD is in transition period into Open SIEMIS	MEHRD is expected to adopt new Open SIEMIS – WASH indicators can be easily reported/ generated



- WinS added to SDG6 monitoring forms which feeds into the SIEIMS
- Monitoring indicators through project level monitoring, inform the national EMIS to capture data on WinS, including MHM
- The Technical Requirements Manual has checklist for MHM which assists schools and Provincial Education Authorities to assess the current state of individual school WASH facilities and the current state of compliance with the National Standards including MHM

How far have we come and what remains to be done?

Financing

- Sector financing analysis
- Costed plan
- Explore new financing mechanisms for accelerating market access and education

Sector Policy & Strategy:

- Strengthen Evidence
 Generation to inform
 planning and policy
 formulation & reviews
- Continued gvt leadership, sector reviews and improved designs for WinS incl MHM
- Funded MHM Strategy

Capacity Building:

- Complete roll out of WinS Guidelines & Tool kits in all schools
- Mainstreaming of MHM in CLTS programmes

Planning, Monitoring & Review:

- Monitor and evaluate implementation at school level
- Adoption of new Open SIEMIS – WASH indicators can be easily reported/generated
- Realtime Monitoring of WinS Indicators

THANK YOU

TANGIO TUMAS







Evidence & learning from 'Keeping Girls in School' Project (2017-2021)



Keeping Girls in School through Improved Reproductive and Menstrual Health



Implemented in **Timor-Leste** and **Papua New Guinea**: 2017-2021

Funded through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program's Gender Action Platform (GAP)

The project aims to:

- 1. Increase uptake and awareness of SRH services and MH practices
- 2. Improve accessibility of menstrual products
- 3. Strengthen knowledge and attention to MHH regionally

Key Project Results

57,000 girls, boys, and adults with improved awareness of SRHR, and MH practices

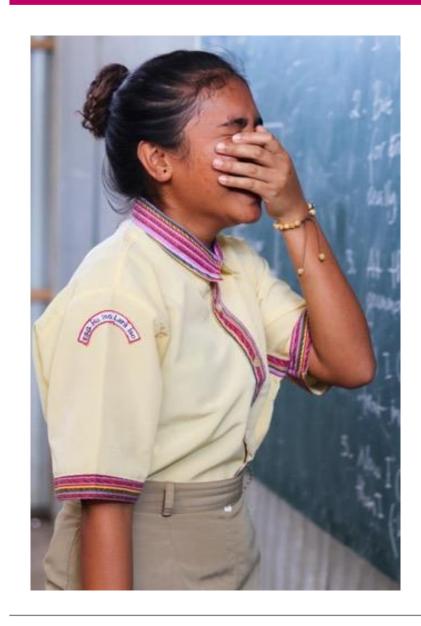
12,500 women and girls using their choice of contraception.

3,000 students accessing MH-friendly WASH facilities at school.

Over 1,400 locally produced, reusable MH materials sold through supply chain development activities

Community of practice on integrated approaches to MH in Asia Pacific established to improve awareness of SRH/FP and MH amongst key stakeholders and decisionmakers regionally





Project Activities

- Activities in Timor-Leste:
 - Education in schools
 - Youth Corners & Hotline through the MSTL program
 - SRH service provision
 - WASH facilities built in schools
 - Local market for reusable menstrual products strengthened
- Activities in Papua New Guinea:
 - Training for school teachers
 - SRH service provision
 - WASH facilities built in schools

Evaluation Findings: Increased uptake and awareness of SRH services and MH practices

- WASH + SRH and MH education enabled girls to better manage menstruation at school
- CSE government endorsement, and male teachers engage
- Uptake of family planning services by adolescents exceeded targets, however hard to attribute to school sessions
- WASH facilities human centred design girlfriendly, disability inclusive and contextualized school facilities





Teachers Reflections



Teachers reported:

- Boys attitudes more support and empathy towards menstruating girls
- CSE curriculum and training series increased their confidence to teach these topics
- "I can see big changes in the children, the way they think, the way they tend to respect each other. When a girl is having a period, it is normal. Unlike my previous experience of teaching, respect has come."

Some thoughts from girls in Timor-Leste & Papua New Guinea



"I knew that I would have a period every month, but I didn't know that it meant that you could get pregnant." 17-year-old mother from Liquisa, Timor-Leste

"Before it was difficult to change our pads in the old toilets, so we used to go to the toilets by the sea because it is more private."

15-year-old student in Central Province, Papua New Guinea

Findings: Reusable pad market

Despite achievement, of producing nearly 2,000 products barriers included:

- Limited consumer demand and a poor market for reusable pads
- Limited number of enterprises
- Issues procuring affordable materials
- Disposable pads affordable and girls reported available rurally
- Short time frame to enhance local micro-enterprises



Our learning

- Partnership of specialists crucial for holistic menstrual health solutions
- 2. Education materials development in collaboration with government
- Provision of SRH and menstrual health education beyond schools to influencers in girls' lives (mothers, grandmothers)
- **4. Reusable menstrual pads** is critical, but was too ambitious (Timor-Leste)
- Creating a 'model school' for inclusive and girlfriendly was an effective motivator (PNG)



Recommendations

- 1. Holistic menstrual health solutions require:
 - cross sectoral expertise
 - increased investment
- Private sector investments essential for scaling up
- 3. CSE core part of all curriculum and expanded to older students
- Menstrual health indicators to measure outcomes
- 5. CSO's, partners and government ministries collaborate towards shared menstrual health goals

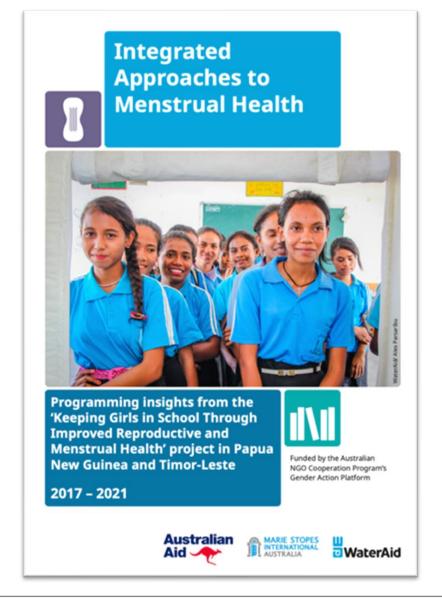


Thank you

Evaluation short report launched tomorrow on WASH Matters website, along with a blog about the project's learning:

www.washmatters.wateraid/blog/menstrual-hygiene

Chelsea.Huggett@wateraid.org.au





Menstrual Health and Hygiene progress and support in Timor-Leste

Getrudis Mau, UNICEF Timor Leste





Social support

Challenges:

- Girls may stay home during menstruation
- Teachers may physically punish girls who miss school



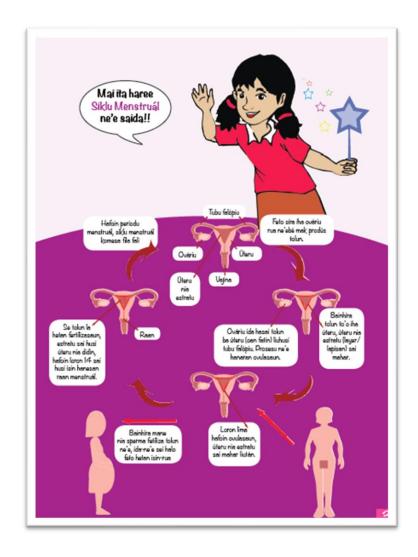
Response

- Trained all 26 municipal school inspector (ToT) to trained 120 teachers administrators and cascade training for all schools in the country (600 students)
- Teachers outreach to parents to destigmatize menstruation and give information on how to support children to continue to come to school
- Tutorial video about "the way dying reusable sanitary pads"



Knowledge and skills

- In partnership with MoE and MoH, UNICEF provided training to all schools' coordinators on MHH and the myths related to menstruation
- Developed an **adolescent friendly booklet** on "Menstrual Hygiene Management" and distributed it to schools, for teachers to provide information to 10- to 12-year-old girls, before menarche (grades 5-9)
- In partnership with a youth-led CSO, UNICEF provided trainings to student councils in schools about menstruation
- Promoted peer-to-peer learning among students about
 MHH through extra curricular activities
- 7000 student reached.





Facilities and services

Support access for girls at school

- Worked with MoE to develop an inclusive standard design for students with disabilities and for girls' changing room
- Engaged with school directors for segregation of toilets between girls and boys' in 20 schools 2019 - 2020
- Improved school toilets in 6 schools

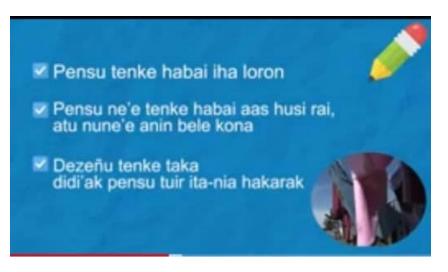
Supporting access for girls and women in emergencies

- Timor-Leste was affected by flash floods and landslides in the beginning of April 2021. Around 14,000 people were displaced, and more than 10 evacuation centers were established in Dili
- UNICEF provided water supply and toilets for the evacuation centers.
- UNICEF worked with the evacuation centers coordinators to ensure that toilets were segregated by gender.





Menstrual hygiene materials



Challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Access to materials during the COVID-19 lockdown was reduced because of supply chain disruption
- Because of the lockdown, the sanitary cordon and prohibition of public transports, the small shops in rural areas did not receive many products, including sanitary pads.
- Schools were closed during 1 month in 2020 and 3 months in 2021

Response:

- In collaboration with the MoE, UNICEF provide **2,200 reusable sanitary pads** to adolescent girls in rural areas. The pads are produced by 2 women's groups
- In partnership with MIT D-Lab, UNICEF is finalizing a "tutorial video" on how to use reusable sanitary pads. The video will be available on youtube and the online learning platform established by the MoE and UNICEF in 2020.

Enabling Environment











Support to Ministry of Education for integration of MHM into WinS Guidelines, standard designs and school health strategy (MoE and MoH)

Advocacy to MoE
to put WASH/MHM
as a line item for
school fee
administration;
preparation of
WinS costed action
plan for 5 years

Quarterly WinS
sector meetings
(including MHM) with
government, external
support agencies and
NGOs, CSOs chaired
by MoE Dept of Social
Action and MoH Dept
of School Health
(UNICEF co-lead)

Training for all municipal school coordinators through cascade model down to teachers
Teachers provide training to student councils and student councils committee continue shared in peers (grade 5 to 9)

Number of gender-specific toilets monitored through **EMIS** while other monitoring at project level

Enabling Environment: Challenges remain











Application of WASH Insufficient in schools is still a challenge

investment in MHH

Lack of coordination between the national and the municipal levels of Government

MHH is not a priority • for schools' coordinators, which are mostly men

Beliefs and misconceptions about MHH mean that stigma is difficult to change, most parents still not provided information to their 10- to 12-year-old daughters base on the information from most of the girls approached



- Insufficient data and knowledge on the KABP (knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices) related to menstruation in Timor-Leste
- M&E systems of the MoE or MoH do not include indicators related to MHH.

Opportunities and next steps

- Harness the power of the ICT in education and the recently established distance learning platforms to educate about MHH
- Develop SBCC products related to menstruation for social media
- Expand MHH in the curriculum of cycle 3 (grade 7 to 9) as part of the on-going curriculum reform
- Expand peer to peer learning about MHH as part of extracurricular activities
- Provide learning materials and experiences for **teachers** about MHH. Teachers are very interested on the topic.
- Address the needs of girls with disabilities related to MHH
- Train student councils on the handmade production of sanitary pads through partnership with women's groups





How to invest in MHH?

Lucy Wells, Pacific RISE and colleagues representing the Pacific Trade Finance Vehicle

Brooke Yamakoshi, on behalf of UNICEF EAPRO & Criterion Institute









Pacific Readiness for Investment in Social Enterprise



May 2021





Reducing the cost of key fabrics for enterprises that make reusable pads in the Pacific

Background

- September 2018: Pacific RISE MH Market workshop (inspired by "Last Taboo" research)
 - We heard from enterprises who make reusable pads, that fabrics represent 70-90% of the unit cost of a pad.
- 2019: Pacific RISE investigated the idea of a trade finance solution to the issue of high cost materials. This solution needed to not only reduce prices but also:
 - Be "Pacific Specific"
 - Accessible to all types and sizes of enterprises, in all Pacific countries
- **November 2019:** A design workshop for a trade finance solution. Resulted in a joint proposal from Red Hat Impact and Lotus Impact to design the trade finance vehicle we have today
- 2020: the TFV is designed!
- September 2020: fast-track a "first run" of the vehicle:
 - Investors commit US\$49,316 (AU\$67,710)
 - Fabric Purchased 9,800m PUL 3,200m Zorb
- December 2020: TFV 1.0 was named a winner of the Impact Investment Australia Award for Market Builder of the Year for 2020
- December 2020 January 2021: the first 3 enterprises receive their fabric & begin production

MH Day Webinar - PacRISE TFV LW

MH TFV 1.0 Key Design Principles

Market challenges are in the supply chain, not the enterprise.
Therefore, we solve for supply chain issues, not work to

"fix" the enterprise

Producers should not bear the risk of the financing

Enterprises should be strengthened by this effort to shift their market position in their community, through access to financing for the scheme

Producers are largely informal enterprises and should not have to formalise in order to participate in the scheme

The initial focus is solely on menstrual health enterprises, in future could expand to related products: nappies etc

Women Prospering in the Workforce

by supporting the stabilisation and growth of independently owned local enterprises that mainly employ women in the reusable pad production process

Women Succeeding as Entrepreneurs

by supporting the stabilisation and growth of women-owned, controlled and managed enterprises, through the provision of direct support to their stock acquisition, cash flow and working capital requirements

Women Enabled in the Economy

by building up a market solution designed by women for women, and placing women in positions of control and influence at every level of the solution

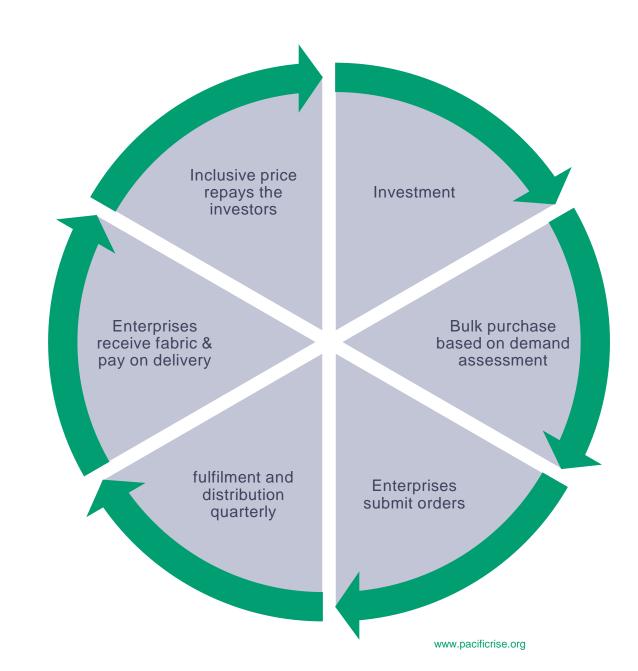
How does it work?

The function of **trade finance** is to introduce a thirdparty to a transaction to reduce the payment risk for the supplier and the supply risks for enterprises. In this particular instance, the trade finance (investing funding) sits in between the buyer and the seller to provide up-front payment to the seller and allow the enterprises to pay for the goods only once received.

The **price per metre** paid by the enterprise is inclusive of:

- Fabric cost
- Shipping and handling
- Insurance
- Cost of finance (5% return for investors, forex risk etc)
- TFV operations costs

This price – at present ~US\$5.5/m – is lower than the original cost for enterprises



MH Day Webinar - PacRISE TFV LW

How does this help enterprises?

(it's not just about \$\$)

- Access to a stable, predictable supply of lower cost key materials. This could lead to better margins, more working capital
- Access to materials that are otherwise hard to access in the Pacific (such as Zorb, for e.g.)
- No requirement for enterprises to enter a debt contract - formal and informal enterprises can participate
- The TFV does the "leg work" in negotiating/securing supply. Much less time and stress than current/previous possible arrangements
- Able to access materials 'on demand' production won't be held up because of lack of fabric
- Suppliers often have minimum order quantities (MOQs) that are too large for a single enterprise



Reusable menstrual pad produced by Mana Care, Samoa

MH Day Webinar – PacRISE TFV LW www.pacificrise.org

What do the enterprises think?

What's next?

- enterprises make and sell their products, repay the TFV.
- A 2nd run of the TFV
- Investigating further products (i.e. flannelette)
- Recruiting more enterprises & possibly investors
- Red Hat Impact, Lotus Impact and Criterion Institute work together to scale the TFV
- Pacific RISE case study on the MH TFV work sharing lessons learned, hopefully:
 - A proven model for meeting the same market problem in other sectors and products in the Pacific
 - A model that enables the market participation of informal enterprises across the Pacific
 - A model for meeting similar market problems in other regions with a similar context
 - Shifting the power dynamics around markets



Reusable menstrual health products

MH Day Webinar – PacRISE TFV LW www.pacificrise.org



Exploring innovative finance as a means of improving investments in menstrual health in the East Asia region

CRITERION INSTITUTE



What are the financeable aspects of menstrual health, and what tools could finance those aspects?

- First understand the MH market system, and identify what investments are needed to form the market
- Create a framework that allows for different types of financing mechanisms for different products within MH (products include range of programming across UNICEF MHH pillars)
- MH cuts across six SDGs which means there are a variety of investment agendas which could be accessed eg. Infrastructure, WASH, climate, environmental, women's economic empowerment
- The key to mobilizing new investments in MH is in the framing and narrative around MH
- Social impact is an underlying assumption in all these investments
- The need to shift to think of synergies between MH and a variety of markets (especially health)
- To have a wide impact, this work needs to be considering broader implications for other countries and regions in which UNICEF works





Overview of Opportunities to Explore

Design metrics

Implement/invest in the bond programming

(DIBs and SIBS)

	Level of Difficulty	UNICEF Level of Involvement	Level of Impact	Size of Investment
1. Revolving Loan Fund	Medium	Manage the fundProvide technical expertiseAccess funding	Low to Medium Direct investments in MH-related businesses and/or interventions	Limited to the size of capital raised for fund.
2. Menstrual-Sensitive WASH Investments	Low	Lead discussionsDevelop metricsTest in SE. Asia context	Medium to High Would fund the building of infrastructure connected to MH	If both public and private WASH financing are accessed this could potentially be a considerable source of capital.
3. Trade Finance & Supply Chains a) UNICEF Procurement Systems	Low	 Host the pre-financing facility for Asia-Pacific region Lead on ecosystem level activity to support this 	Low to Medium Lowers the cost of business and product cost for vulnerable populations served by enterprises	Limited to the size of the market. Could be more substantial if examined across the Asia-Pacific region to consider aggregated demand and/or bulk purchasing with NGOs as major buyers.
4. Innovation Through the Circular Economy	High	Provide technical expertiseSupport innovation process around new products	Medium to High New source of potential funding and product innovation	Linking MH to environment and climate change agenda could open up new avenues for funding from private/public sources.
5. Islamic Financing	High	Lead discussionTest implementation in Indonesia	Medium Possibility to mobilize capital as well as engage new set of actors to break menstrual taboo	Relevant for only countries with Islamic financing.
6. Impact Bonds	Medium	- Lead discussions	Medium to High	Dependant on if a DIB or SIB is chosen or

New source of capital for UNICEF

combination of both. If effective, could be

replicated in other contexts.

Financing Women's Health Enterprises - Revolving Loan Fund

Description

- Revolving, stand-alone fund to finance menstrual health enterprises and other adjacent health enterprises
- Provide debt to women-led or health-focused enterprises in emerging markets to be repaid and reinvested.
- Impact investors could be the source of capital pooling money into the fund.

Local/Regional Opportunities

- Funding mechanism for innovation and entrepreneurship
- Potential to target young women entrepreneurs.

Implementation

- Investments in enterprises need to be accompanied by demand creation and enterprise support
- Could be a stand-alone fund, or portfolio in an existing investment fund.

Potential Partners/Stakeholders

- Local asset managers or existing investment fund
- UNICEF and others interested in MHH, WEE and youth entrepreneurship
- The Equality Fund

Role of UNICEF

- Control and administration of the fund
- Providing pipeline of eligible businesses for consideration
- Technical expertise to design and delivery of the fund
- Member of investment committee

Next Steps

- Further research to design the potential fund structure and local investor landscape
- Determine the value of stand-alone fund, or portfolio in existing investment fund.





Financing MH innovation through the Circular Economy

Description

- Regenerative approach around product creation and innovation could align with reusable or compostable products from MH enterprises
- Focus on environmental impacts could increase opportunities to access capital (sustainable fashion, femtech)

Local/regional opportunities

Partnerships with actors in circular economy to catalyze innovation and design

Possible Partners/Stakeholders

- Circulate Capital
- Second Muse
- Circulate Initiative

UNICEF Role

- Designing investment framework/guidelines for menstrual-sensitive WASH investments with key MH indicators for WASH related investments
- Convening key experts to align agendas
- Designing menstrual-sensitive investment framework/guidelines for innovation in product design

Next Steps

- Further desk research on circular economy and environmental lens on MH
- Discuss possibilities for a menstrual lens on existing activities by partners
- Virtual design session to draw experts together





Entrepreneurs driving change in East Asia and the Pacific Panel discussion



Rung Satchatippavarn
Ira Concept
Thailand



Tungga Dewi Perfect Fit Indonesia



Audrey Tangonan Sinaya Cup Philippines







Celebrate tomorrow with the Water for Women Fund





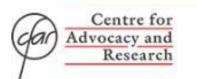


WASH &LEARN

28th May | 1 - 2:15 pm AEST

Pivotal not peripheral: **Ending period poverty by prioritising** menstrual health and hygiene in WASH













Closing

Gerard Cheong
Assistant Director Water Section
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade





