



Issue 193 | May 28, 2015 | Menstrual Hygiene Management

This WASHplus Weekly focuses on issues related to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) and is well-timed, as May 28 is Menstrual Hygiene Day. Menstrual Hygiene Day is meant to serve as a platform to bring together individuals, organizations, social businesses, and the media to create a united and strong voice for women and girls around the world, helping to break the silence around menstrual hygiene management.

Resources in this issue include a WASHplus MHM toolkit, a listing of upcoming and past MHM conferences, webinars on dealing with the disposal of sanitary pads, a special *Waterlines* issue on MHM, and recent articles, reports, videos, and key MHM-related websites.

WASHPLUS RESOURCES

Menstrual Hygiene Management Mini-Toolbox for Teachers and Schools in Zambia, 2015. SPLASH. [Link](#)

Menstrual Hygiene Management or MHM is an important component of a "WASH-Friendly School." Schools Promoting Learning Achievement through Sanitation and Hygiene (SPLASH) designed this toolkit to help classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and other school personnel in Zambian primary schools establish MHM programs or activities in their schools as a way to improve girls' attendance. With suggestions for incorporating the topic into lessons, the toolkit also includes games, role-plays, and pad-making instructions.

Small Doable Actions: Making Reusable Menstrual Pads, 2014. [Link](#)

This counseling card, developed for WASHplus/Uganda, shows the process and steps for making reusable sanitary pads.

Keeping Girls in Schools: Mainstreaming Menstrual Hygiene Management in Zambia. S Fry. [Link](#)

This poster displays information about the importance of MHM, small doable actions to tackle the issue, MHM challenges, and a checklist for school MHM.

SPLASH's Public-Private Pad-Making Partnership, 2015. SPLASH. [Link](#)

In its efforts to boost girls' attendance at school, USAID/Zambia's SPLASH project, run by WASHplus, looks for opportunities to partner with the private sector to supply comfort kits with products such as menstrual pads for girls to access at school when in need. In January 2015, SPLASH signed a memorandum of understanding with YASH Pharmaceuticals to

produce and supply reusable pads to a number of intervention schools. YASH and SPLASH had previously worked together during the 2014 MH Day celebrations when the company donated 125 MHM kits to Kabulonga Girl's Secondary School in Lusaka.

Uganda – Menstrual Hygiene Management: Breaking the Secrecy, 2014. [Link](#)

WASHplus's approach to menstrual hygiene management has the community talking about this previously taboo subject and enlisting men, women, and children in creating reusable sanitary pads for family members and schools.

EVENTS

May 28, 2015 – The Voices of Why Menstruation Matters, Washington, DC. [Registration](#)

Diana Sierra, Founder of BeGirl, tells her story and how she channeled her passion for MHM into extremely affordable, aspirational, and high performance products and economic opportunities for girls and women. Hear the voices of young women from around the world share their MHM stories. Watch creative and compelling presentations on why menstruation matters. View exciting exhibits that demonstrate solutions to the MHM challenge from global organizations.

The Top 10 Groundbreaking Events to Have on the Radar for Menstrual Hygiene Day, *WASHfundamentals Blog*, May 2015. [Link](#)

Menstrual health and hygiene continue to be among the most challenging areas to address within the development arena. Not only do deep-rooted taboos and myths create the illusion that menstruation is inherently shameful or dirty, but in places such as South Asia or sub-Saharan Africa, there is often a lack of adequate sanitary materials and hygienic conditions (i.e., toilets, clean water, and soap) to maintain good menstrual hygiene management.

June 4–6, Suffolk University, Boston – 21st Biennial Conference of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research – Menstrual Hygiene Management Campaigns & Menstrual Activists: What Can We Learn from Each Other? [Link](#)

The biennial conference will feature presentations of the latest research by members of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research, an organization that strives to be the source of guidance, expertise, and ethical considerations for researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and funding resources interested in the menstrual cycle.

WASH in Schools Empowers Girls' Education: Proceedings of the Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools Virtual Conference, 2014. UNICEF. [Link](#)

This publication brings together the key elements of 16 presentations in a case study format. Each case study outlines the context in which the program or research is being undertaken, the methods or approaches used, the accomplishments realized, and challenges faced. Each case study also provides a number of recommendations to help guide future work.

Uganda: First National Menstrual Hygiene Management Conference, 2014. NETWAS. [Link](#)

Held last August in Kampala, this conference had four objectives: to raise awareness on the impact of poor menstrual management; advocate for policy review; develop strategies for operationalizing existing policy; and demonstrate sustainable good practices on menstrual management. The overall aim was to explore how best the School Health Policy can ensure girls receive the support they need to complete school and reach their full potential.

WEBINARS

Period of Change Webinar 2: The Development of the MHM Sector in India: Disposable Sanitary Napkins: A Blessing or a Curse? 2015. The Kachra Project.

| [Link/Video](#) | [Listing of Other Kachra Project Webinars](#)

Panelists, all of whom have experience in MHM, first provide an overview of the historic development of this sector, the inherent developmental challenges in the sector, and the government and nongovernment initiatives that have been taken to meet this challenge, including the provision of subsidized disposable pads. Then, the panelists debate the pros and cons of disposable pads, both commercial disposable pads as well as pads made by women's self-help groups or social entrepreneurs.

Period of Change Webinar 3: Dealing with Menstrual Hygiene Waste, 2015. The Kachra Project. [Video](#)

India is already reeling from the magnitude of menstrual hygiene waste being produced. This growing stream of reject waste, due to ambiguities inherent in India's waste laws, confounds researchers, social workers, and policy makers alike. In this panel, waste management experts discuss the pros and cons of various collection and disposal methods and examine the best field-tested practices for dealing with this form of waste. An environmental lawyer also gives an overview of the laws that pertain to this form of waste.

Period of Change Webinar 4: Reusable Menstrual Hygiene Products Pros and Cons, 2015. The Kachra Project. [Video](#)

Recognizing that sustainability is linked to reusable products rather disposable products, this panel invited reusable product manufacturers as well as people outside the sector to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of cloth pads and menstrual cups in the varied social landscape of India. The debate also touched on the viability of using cloth, traditionally the most common means of menstrual hygiene protection, in India.

SPECIAL JOURNAL ISSUES/BLOG POSTS

Fixing the Global Pain Over Periods, May 2015. WaterAid. [Blog post](#)

Menstrual Hygiene Day is a chance to draw attention to the plight of the millions of girls and women who are not able to manage their periods with hygiene, comfort and dignity. Louisa Gosling, Programme Manager for Principles at WaterAid, highlights why 2015 is an exceptionally important year for talking about menstruation.

Menstrual Hygiene Management, *Waterlines*, Jan 2015. [Link](#)

This special issue on MHM presents innovative ways in which development practitioners in the field are helping girls face the challenges of managing their periods. It also captures the range of evidence-based research, advocacy, and programmatic interventions in MHM. All of the articles in this issue can be downloaded free of charge.

REPORTS/ARTICLES

Putting Menarche and Girls into the Global Population Health Agenda. *Repro Health*, Feb 2015. M Sommer. [Link](#)

It is important for the public health community to ensure that girls receive the education and support they need about menstruation, so they are able to feel more confident about their

bodies, and navigate preventable health problems—now and in the future. For too long, the global health community has overlooked the window of opportunity presented by menarche. Family planning programs have generally focused their efforts on married couples, and HIV programs have focused safer sex promotion on older adolescent girls and boys. Starting the conversation at menarche with girls in early adolescence would fully use this window of opportunity.

Menstrual Hygiene Matters: Training Guide for Practitioners, 2015. SHARE. [Link](#)

This training guide builds on the Menstrual Hygiene Matters manual and presents a range of plans, handouts, presentations, and films that a facilitator could use in sessions or workshops on MHM amongst development practitioners.

Bringing the Dirty Bloody Linen Out of the Closet – Menstrual Hygiene as a Priority for Achieving Gender Equality, 2014. I Winkler, NYU School of Law; V Roaf, advisor to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation. [Link](#)

This article discusses how menstrual hygiene is situated in the human rights framework, in particular gender equality, how MHM can be defined in human rights terms, and how using the framework of human rights and substantive equality may contribute to giving MHM greater visibility and prioritizing the development of appropriate strategies and solutions.

Measuring What Matters: Analysis and Proposals for Indicators on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2015. WaterAid. [Link](#)

A working briefing note prepared by WaterAid for use by member states in discussions on targets and indicators.

Menstrual Hygiene Management and School Absenteeism among Female Adolescent Students in Northeast Ethiopia. *BMC Public Health*. 2014; 14: 1118. T Tegegne. [Link](#)

Though there is an effort to increase girls' school enrollment, lack of basic needs, like sanitary napkins that facilitate routine activities of girls at early adolescence, are observed to deter girls' school attendance in rural Ethiopia. Special support for girl students, especially when they have their first menstruation, and separate, functioning sanitary facilities are necessities that should be in school at all times if gender equality and girls' empowerment is to be achieved.

Menstrual Hygiene Management – WSSCC/UN Women Studies on Behaviour and Practices in Senegal, Niger and Cameroon, 2015. WSSCC. [Link](#)

The Joint Program on Gender, Hygiene, and Sanitation combines the expertise and technical skills of two institutions with different but complementary mandates with the common goal of having women's voices heard in order to enable women and girls to achieve their human rights. Implemented in Senegal, Niger, and Cameroon, the program aims to establish a framework within which all women and girls in this region will be able to benefit in a sustained manner from WASH services.

The Effect of Wearing Sanitary Napkins of Different Thicknesses on Physiological and Psychological Responses in Muslim Females. *J Physiol Anthropol*. 2014; 33(1): 28.

N Mohamed. [Link](#)

Menstruation is associated with significant unpleasantness, and wearing a sanitary napkin (SN) during menses causes discomfort. In addition, many Muslim women use a thick type of SN during menses due to the religious requirement that even disposable SNs be washed before disposal. Therefore, the objective of this study was to measure the physiological and psychological responses to wearing SNs of different thicknesses during menstruation and nonmenstruation phases at rest and during physical activity/exercise among Muslim women.

VIDEOS

Dealing with Menstrual Hygiene for Peers: My Secret, 2015. UNICEF/Bolivia. [Video](#)

In 2012, UNICEF and the Center for Global Safe Water at Emory University initiated a program to support collaborative research focused specifically on exploring the MHM challenges faced by female students in Bolivia, the Philippines, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone. The project includes developing or strengthening MHM-related programming in schools in those countries.

Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools, 2015. WASH in Schools. [Video](#)

This video gives an overview of MHM issues in schools.

WEBSITES

WASH United - [Link](#)

Whether a handwashing campaign around an international football tournament in Uganda, a traveling WASH carnival across northern India, a campaign in public toilets in Kenya, or our trademark WASH in Schools program, WASH United's interventions always harness the power of fun, interactive games, superstar role models, and strictly positive communication.

The Kachra Project - [Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

The Kachra Project is a social movement to bring awareness among the people of India and bring all stakeholders of the garbage and waste management sectors together to push for policy change.

Menstrual Hygiene Day - [Links](#)

This website contains MHM fact sheets, advocacy materials, and other resources.

Society for Menstrual Cycle Research - [Link](#)

The Society for Menstrual Cycle Research is a nonprofit, interdisciplinary research organization. Membership includes researchers in the social and health sciences, humanities scholars, health care providers, policy makers, health activists, artists, and students with interests in the role of the menstrual cycle in women's health and well-being.

WASHplus Weeklies highlight topics such as Urban WASH, Household Air Pollution, Innovation, Household Water Treatment and Storage, Handwashing, Integration, and more. If you would like to feature your organization's materials in upcoming issues, please send them to Dan Campbell, WASHplus Knowledge Resources Specialist, at dacampbell@fhi360.org.



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About WASHplus - WASHplus, a multi-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health, supports healthy households and communities by creating and delivering interventions that lead to improvements in access, practice and health outcomes related to water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and household air pollution (HAP). WASHplus uses at-scale, targeted as well as integrated approaches to reduce diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, the two top killers of children under five years of age globally. For information, visit www.washplus.org or email: contact@washplus.org.