

MHM Introduction/Background

- An estimated **52%** women, including school girls experience menstrual flow (**UN, 2010**)
- In Ethiopia, **51%** of the population is female and **23%** of women are of reproductive age
- The majority of them have **no access**
 - to clean & safe sanitary products,
 - or clean & private space to change
 - menstrual cloths or pads to wash.
- **Cultural practices and taboos** around menstruation impact the lives of women and girls negatively.



MHM Introduction.....

- In Ethiopia, girls reached **puberty & start menstruating** often **without** adequate information & the **psychological** readiness to manage it.
- **UNICEF** in collaboration with **FMoH and regions** has conducted **KAP base** line survey in six regions, in selected woredas and primary and secondary schools

Findings of the Baseline Survey (UNICEF, Ethiopia, 2017)

Societal Factors

- MHM is not included **in the school curriculum**
- **No formal training** is provided on MHM so far
- The challenges of girls during menstruation **is not well recognized** in the schools as well as communities
- **Schools mini media and girls clubs** serve to create awareness on **reproductive health & HIV/AIDS**, but not on MHM



Findings of the Baseline Survey....

- **Multiple response analysis revealed that :**

- **50.9%** of girls reported that they discuss now about menstruation with their close friends,
- **24%** with their sisters, and **16.3%** with their mothers
- There is misconception that **a girl can not experience menstruation** below the **age of 15**
 - **Taboos & secrecy** about menstruation overshadowed school girls & limited them from speaking and discussing issues of menstruation in public.

Findings of the Baseline Survey....

- Most boys don't discuss & think that menstruation is **girls' affair** that doesn't need their engagement.
- In this regard, **39%** of girls reported that they afraid of being treated differently if others know that they are on menses.

As per findings ,the reasons not discussing about menstruation was

- It makes me **embarrassed/**
- It is **taboo** in my society
- To avoid being **teased** by others
- Afraid of being **ostracized** from the society

Findings of the Baseline Survey....

- Menstruation is also believed by most of the society as **dirt coming out of girl's body**
- Out of total , **452 (48.7%)** reported that they agree and strongly agree on girls in Menstruation
 - **Should not attend religious events/conferences.**
- This indicates that they perceive themselves **as “unfit” to participate in holy practices** during menstruation.

The survey findings have concluded

- The **knowledge gap** was observed at every level of the society;
 - ✓ These include **parents, teachers, students, health officers, and school WASH representatives**
- The overall **good knowledge was significantly higher** among **urban girls**, girls in **higher grade** and girls from **Oromia and SNNPR**.
- Existence of deep **silence & taboos** have made MHM activities very challenging

The survey findings have concluded

- The overall favorable attitude was **significantly higher among girls from medium and rich families**
- The use of commercial **sanitary pad** is significantly **higher among girls from higher grade, rich family and urban residence as compared to low grade, poor family and rural residents**
- The practice gap is mainly related to lack of **knowledge and poor WASH facilities** in the school environment

The findings has concluded...

- **Commercial sanitary pads** are expensive for most of the schools girls to buy.
- **Economic status, place of residence and grade level significantly associated** with use commercial sanitary pads and knowledge of girls.
- **Menstrual Hygiene Management** is not incorporated into **WASH policies at all levels; namely at national, regional, woreda and school levels.**

The findings has concluded...

- **WASH facilities** in schools are poorly designed and constructed, don't consider gender-related needs and number of students
- **Critical shortage of water, poor sanitation, offensive smelling of toilets**, and poor WASH facility management have been the other serious problems
- Poor menstruation hygiene management in school setting has also **affected girls' performance** in school. As result a **significant number of girls get absent from classes** on each menstruation cycle

Menstruation hygiene management

- FMoH ,in collaboration with UNICEF and partners **has conducted high level advocacy on MHM**
- For the first time, the country has celebrated **National event on MHM, on the 30th of May 2017.**



MHM Manual endorsed



Panel Discussion on MHM

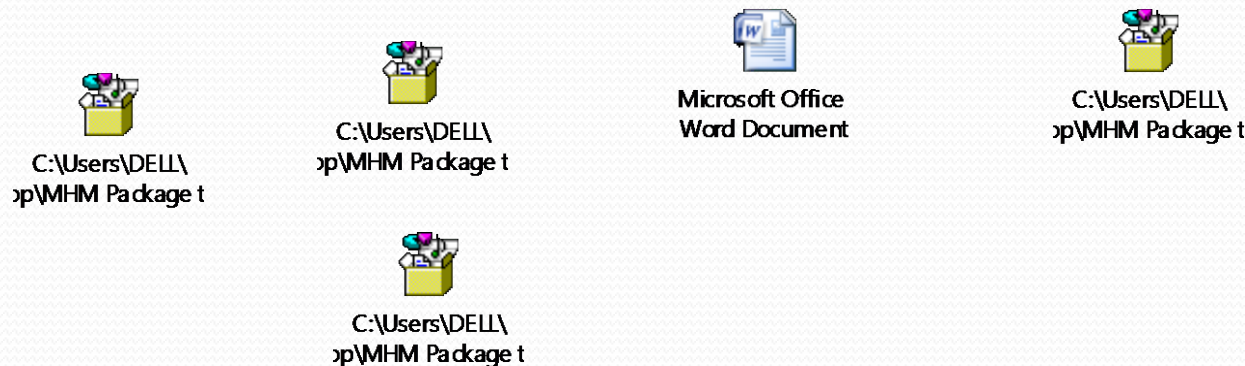
Menstruation

- The event was broadcasted through national TV, FM radios and in news papers, the message addressed to millions



To alleviate the problem

- The federal Ministry of health with partners has prepared MHM guidelines, posters



- In collaboration with UNICEF and National Standard authority ,preparation of Sanitation standards on disposable and Reusable Sanitary pad is ongoing

Challenges

- Culture
- Taboo
- Tradition
- Awareness
- Economy to buy
- Hard to reach areas and community culture

Recommendation

- Use existing guidelines, Manuals
- Include in curriculum ,in HEP
- Cascade to the lower level
- Advocacy using local media
- Appreciate MHM at all level
- Break the silence at all level
- Scale up the best experiences



I THANK YOU !

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