Menstrual hygiene and WinS: Tracking progress towards SDGs

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Session objectives

1. Common understanding of importance of menstrual hygiene in schools for Global Goals

2. Exchange experiences on approaches to monitoring progress of MHM in Schools

3. Identify steps to roll out SDG indicators, and to develop knowledge and capacity for improving menstrual hygiene in schools across the region/s.

Session outline

- Setting the scene – menstrual hygiene in schools

- MHM and the SDGs – targets and indicators

- Monitoring menstrual hygiene in schools – experiences

Coffee break

- Identifying priorities, opportunities and challenges for monitoring at country level

- Next steps for roll out of MHM related SDG indicators

A window of opportunity - closed

- Most girls start to menstruate between the ages of 10-15

- Over 250 million girls in this age group living in less-developed countries

- For many girls puberty marks an accelerating trajectory into inequality

- Adolescence is a 'critical window' to break cycles of poverty and transform gender roles

"*It felt like we are not allowed to do anything now…*

When we did not have our menstruation we were allowed to go anywhere but now they say that we must not go anywhere."

Girl from Sindhuli District, Nepal

The power of the adolescent girl

"*Ensuring that girls are able to exercise their rights, can pursue their education and have the skills and opportunity to join the workforce is essential for their own well-being, and a critical foundation for the health and prosperity of families, communities and nations.*"

Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director UNFPA

Girls' voices – menstruation at school

WaterAid/ Sushma

"This is our school. All of us should openly talk and discuss about menstruation. If we are not able to open ourselves there are higher chances that guys will tease us and like to let us down. We should also seek and provide help and suggestions in need." Sushma

(WaterAid participatory photography project in Sindhuli District, Nepal)

Girls' voices – menstruation at school

WaterAid/ Sushma

"This is the girl's toilet of our school. We are in urgent need of MHM friendly toilet. The one we use doesn't lock properly. If someone is inside, other person has to wait outside pushing the door for her. Because of lack of latrines in our school, we have to wait in the long line." Sushma
(WaterAid participatory photography project in Sindhuli District, Nepal)

Girls' voices – menstruation at school

WaterAid/ Sushma

"This is my friend who is returning home because there is no availability of pad in school. When we menstruate we use homemade pad meaning it is reusable. Sometimes we forget to carry pads along with us, and sometimes the situation is unpredictable." Sushma
(WaterAid participatory photography project in Sindhuli District, Nepal)

Menstrual hygiene requires

- access to accurate and pragmatic **information**

- access to menstrual hygiene **materials**

- access to **facilities** that provide **privacy**

- access to **water and soap** within a place that provides an adequate level of **privacy**

- access to **disposal facilities** for used menstrual materials

A pivotal issue for Global Goals and Strategies

MHM is essential for the attainment of several of the SDGs:

- **SDG 6 (water and sanitation)** – hygiene and the *specific needs of women*

- **SDG 4 (quality education)** – including gender sensitive infrastructure

- **SDG 3 (good health and well-being)** – including reproductive health

- **SDG 5 (gender equality)** – ending all forms of discrimination

..and the Global Partnership for Education

MHM can contribute to the achievement of two out three goals of the GPE strategy:

- **Goal 1 - Improved and more equitable learning outcomes**

- **Goal 2 - Increased equity, gender equality, and inclusion**

And requires a cross sectoral response involving education, reproductive health and WASH, to reach all girls.

Global priorities for MHM in Schools

1. Build a strong cross-sectoral evidence base for MHM in schools

2. Develop and disseminate global guidelines for MHM in schools

3. Advance MHM in schools through evidence-based advocacy

4. Allocate responsibility to designated government entities for the provision of MHM in schools

5. Integrate MHM and the capacity and resources to deliver inclusive MHM into the education system

Ref: *A Time for Global Action: Addressing Girls' Menstrual Hygiene Management Needs in Schools (*Sommer et al) (http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1001962)

Tracking performance of SDGs for WinS
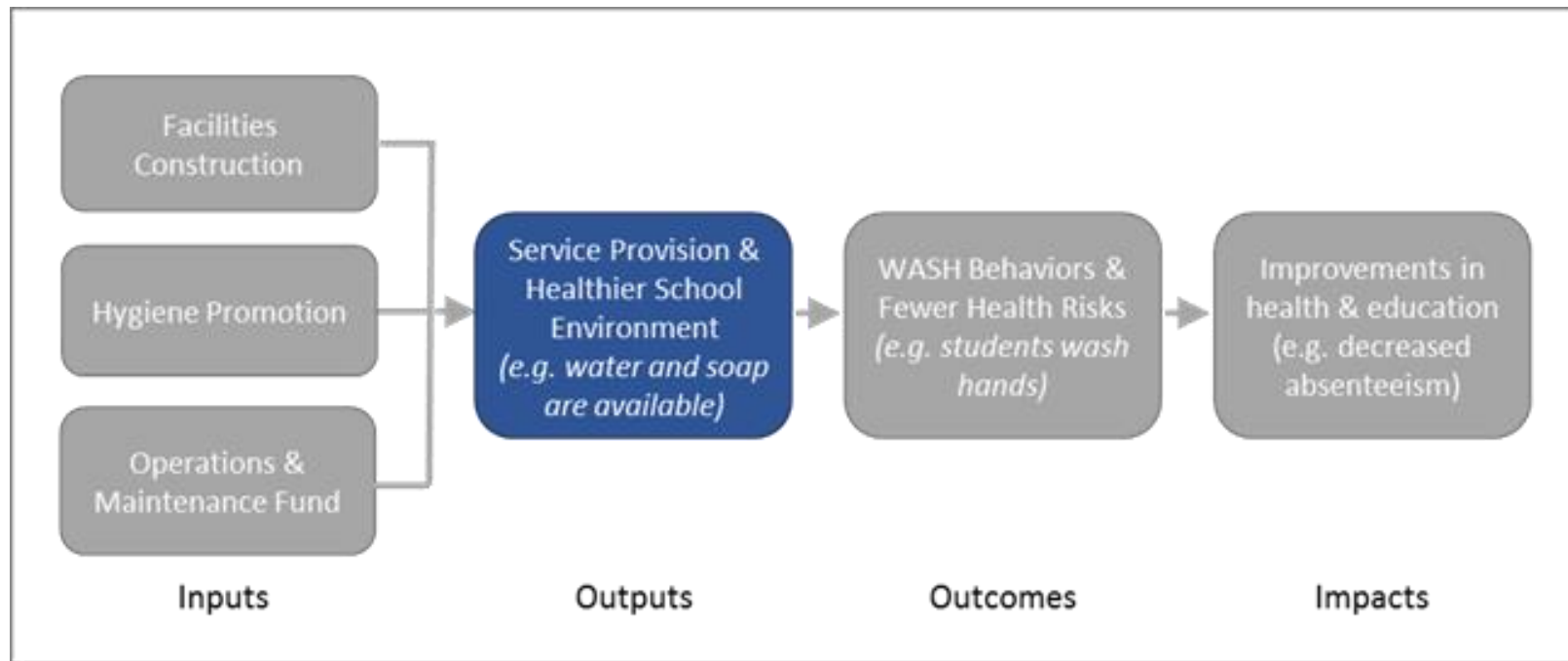
What to monitor? Definition of MHM

*Women and adolescent girls are **using a clean menstrual management material** to absorb or collect menstrual blood, **that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary** for the duration of a menstrual period, **using soap and water for washing the body as required**, and having **access to safe and convenient 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**.*

Joint Monitoring Project UNICEF/WHO

![WaterAid]

Indicators for MHM in SDG4 monitoring

Sanitation

Hygiene

Advanced service
May include: facilities are accessible to all, of sufficient quantity, inspected for cleanliness & appropriate facilities for menstrual hygiene management are provided
(to be defined at national level)

Advanced service
May include: handwashing facilities available at critical times and accessible to all; menstrual hygiene education and products provided

(to be defined at national level)

Expanded Indicators – collected at national level

Basic service
Improved facilities, which are **single-sex** and **usable** at the school

Basic service
Handwashing facilities, which have **water and soap** available

Core Indicators – reported by JMP

Core indicators *related* to MHM

- S3. Are the toilets/latrines separate for girls and boys?

- H1. Are there handwashing facilities at the school?

- H2. Are both soap and water currently available at the handwashing facilities?

Expanded indicators *specific* to MHM

- XS1. Is water and soap available in the girls' toilet cubicles for menstrual hygiene management?

- XS2. Are there covered bins for disposal of menstrual hygiene materials in girls' toilets?

- XS3. Are there disposal mechanisms for menstrual hygiene waste at the school?

Expanded indicators *specific* to MHM

- XH6. Which of the following provisions for menstrual hygiene management (MHM) are available at the school?

  1. Bathing areas

  2. MHM materials (pads, etc)

  3. MHM education

  4. Other (specify)

Expanded indicators *related* to MHM

- Cleanliness of toilets

- Accessibility and location of toilets

- When students are allowed to use toilets

- Functional lighting in toilets

- Solid waste management

- Bathing spaces in boarding schools

Buzz group – discussion

Guiding questions:

- What are the MHM in Schools priorities for your country?

- Are these captured by the indicators?

- Do you have any reflections/questions?

  ➤ Discuss in small groups of 2-3 (10 mins)

  ➤ Feedback one point to plenary (10 mins)

Feedback

- CAMBODIA: Need to review the policy and integration into the curriculum; endorsement of WASH minimum requirements (3 Star Approach)

- Philippines: have indicators for water and sanitation. EMIS reflects SDG indicators. Integrated MHM into the curriculum and provision of tools for teachers

- Nepal and Bhutan: developed standards for toilets (separate changing rooms for toilets); incinerator

- Pakistan: developing WinS standards and strategies on MHM for provinces; plans to include indicators in the EMIS; allocation in the budget of the school

- Sri Lanka: have a national policy for toilets and water; designs for toilets; ___; Sanitation First – funded by central government; school head promotion program includes database (availability of safe water)

- PNG: improving the WinS standards for WASH facilities; conduct of study on MHM; getting the baseline data in line with the SDGs

Proposed roll out of WinS monitoring for SDGs

- Country level consultations to understand indicators and contextualise them where needed

- National plans for achieving basic levels of service and to address gaps in national monitoring systems

- National plans to identify priorities and set targets for achieving advanced levels of service and how to monitor

- Collect actual or estimated baselines

Group work – country priorities

- Each country represented in the group to complete the template (15 minutes)

- Identify which indicators are already monitored at national level – and provide the data source

- For those indicators where data is not collected – select 2-3 that are priorities within national education plans

- Identify challenges and opportunities to incorporate these

Plenary discussion – next steps and reflections

- What are the key points / guidance for how we should roll this out at country level?

Plenary discussion – next steps and reflections

- Afghanistan – curriculum being revised – key opportunity. Advocacy with MoE to include in policy and curriuclum aligned with SDG

- Pakistan – have EMIS that includes WinS – but a challenge is that it is already packed. Also data collection is a challenge due to taboos. Disposal we don't yet have a solution

- Bhutan – lot of advantage at this point in time – as curriculum revised so can include. Also EMIS is being revised.

- Nepal – we have EMIS with some data e.g. gender separate toilets – will try to include

Plenary discussion – next steps and reflections

- Cambodia – endorsement of WASH minimum requirement 3* approach and incorporate MHM

- Philipines –. EMIS limited to national planning framework, but include monitoring of 3* approach – need to link the two. 3* approach – enable national planning that is reflective of local priorities

- Sri Lanka – have identified priorities – need to aware stakeholders to include in EMIS – separate part for school health promotion programme where this can be incorporated

- Community based education for out of school children including adolescent girls – can be target for policy change (Afghanistan)

- Indonesia all indicators except H2 – has not included soap so will add this – for expanded indicators awareness in education and health still low – possibility to include expanded in EMIS – strengthen advocacy strategy for this

- Unique opportunity now with SDG baselines – we do have some indicators – can use the expanded set but also need to esnure we are still looking at enabling environment and kAP

On the right track

WaterAId/ Rita

" *My sister's name is Debika Baral.. She has a very good knowledge on menstruation. What is menstruation? How and why it occurs? What are the things that we should take care during menstruation? What are the problems? How to solve? She knows very well. Her menstruation has not started yet but she is aware.. Probably with this knowledge she is very confident.* " Rita

(WaterAid participatory photography project in Sindhuli District, Nepal)