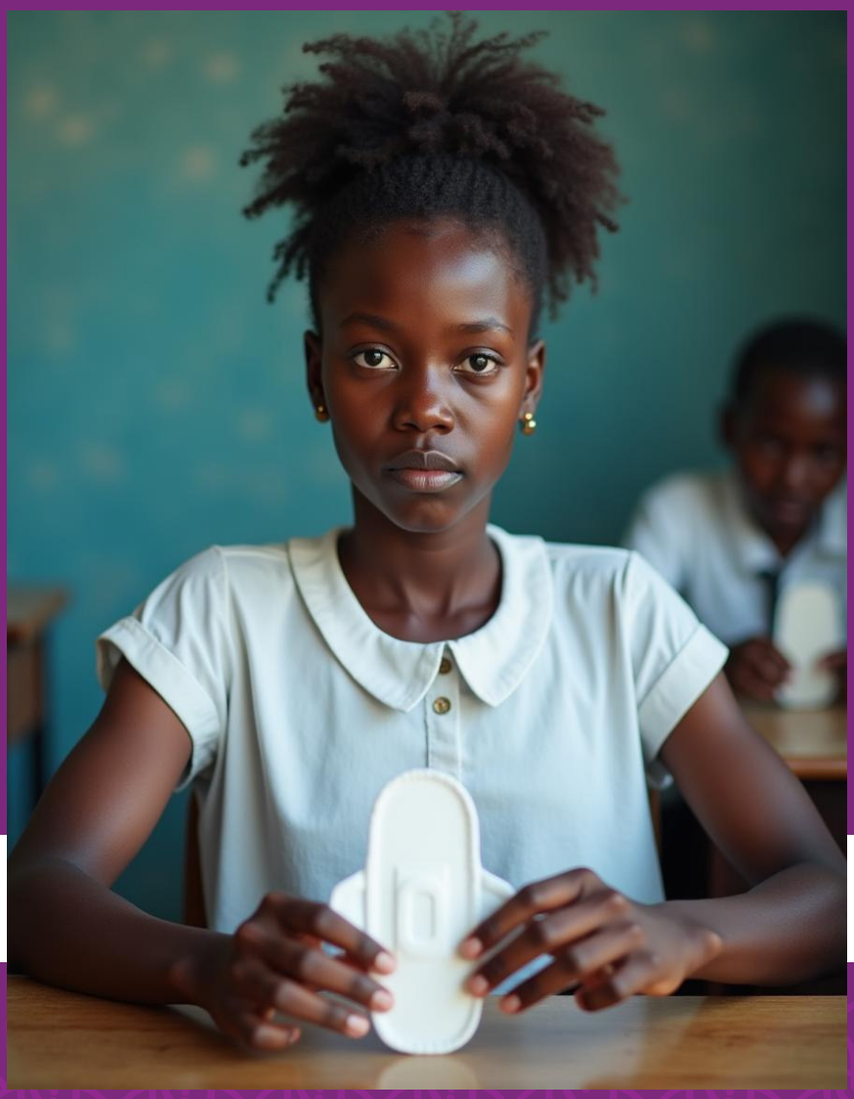
Facilitators' Guide on Menstrual Health



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MH-NoW
Care. Confidence. Change

Facilitators' Guide on Menstrual Health

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The contributions of various members of the technical working groups at both national and state levels were instrumental in the success of this manual's development. We express our profound gratitude and highest regard to the leadership of the Ministry of Women Affairs, particularly the Honorable Minister, Hon. Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, FSI, as well as the Permanent Secretary, Dr. Maryam Ismaila Keshinro, for their invaluable support of this initiative.

Special recognition is also extended to the Director of the Child Development Department, Mr. Ali Andrew Madugu, and the Deputy Director of Child Development, Mrs. Mariam Shaibu, for their insightful contributions and unwavering commitment throughout the development process.

This training manual was made possible through the generous financial support of our group of Anonymous Donors, whose dedication to advancing menstrual health and hygiene has been invaluable.

We remain grateful for the collective efforts that have brought this resource to fruition and hope it serves as a vital tool in empowering Menstrual Health Champions across the country and beyond.

Foreword

It is with great pride and unwavering commitment that I present this Facilitators' Guide for the Training Manual on Menstrual Health and Hygiene. This guide is a vital step in our collective journey toward addressing Period Poverty and promoting menstrual health, hygiene and dignity for all women of reproductive age and adolescent girls in Nigeria.

At the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, we recognize that Menstrual Health and Hygiene is not merely a health and hygiene issue; it is a matter of human rights, gender equality, and social justice. However, lack of education, misinformation, stigma, and limited access to menstrual hygiene products continue to marginalize many women and girls, these barriers often lead to missed educational opportunities, attainment, health challenges, and diminished self-esteem.

This guide has been carefully developed to equip facilitators with the necessary tools, knowledge and sensitivity needed to train and empower women, girls, men and boys in schools, institutions and communities by fostering understanding and creating safe spaces for open conversations around menstrual health and hygiene, with the hope of breaking the silence and dismantling harmful taboos.

I commend Population Services International and all our partners who worked diligently to develop this comprehensive and user-friendly resource. It reflects a shared vision of ensuring that no girl or woman is left behind because of a natural biological process.

I urge facilitators who use this guide to approach their role with sensitivity, respect, and a spirit of inclusiveness to build a future where every woman and girl in Nigeria has the knowledge, resources, and support to manage her menstruation with dignity and confidence.

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs which serves as the National/ Coordinating Secretariat for Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management (MHHM) in Nigeria, I reaffirm my unwavering commitment to Ending Period Poverty and ensuring Menstrual Equity in Nigeria. Together we a building a future where menstruation is never a barrier to growth, education or opportunity.



Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, fsi
Honourable Minister of Women Affairs

Acronyms

FMWA – Federal Ministry of Women Affairs
FSH – Follicle Stimulating Hormone
LH – Luteinizing Hormone
MH – Menstrual Health
MHHM – Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management
PSI – Population Services International
SBCC – Social and Behavior Change Communication
ToT – Training of Trainers
WHO – World Health Organization

Introduction to the Facilitators' Guide

The Menstrual Health (MH) Facilitators' Guide is a comprehensive resource designed to equip trainers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to effectively train and engage Menstrual Health (MH) Champions. The guide has been developed in response to the growing need for accurate, culturally sensitive, and practical education on menstrual health and hygiene across diverse communities.

With a focus on addressing the knowledge gaps, myths, and misconceptions surrounding menstruation, the guide provides evidence-based content that empowers individuals to manage their menstrual health with dignity, safety, and confidence. It also recognizes the socio-cultural barriers and taboos that often hinder open discussions on menstruation, offering strategies to navigate these challenges. This guide is a critical tool for building capacity in trainers who will, in turn, cascade this knowledge within their schools, communities and organizations.

The Menstrual Health (MH) Facilitators' Guide serves as an instructional material for the Menstrual Health (MH) training manual, providing structured, easy-to-follow modules that can be adapted to various learning environments. Its purpose is to ensure that trainers can confidently deliver comprehensive and interactive sessions on menstrual health education, and dialogues, ultimately fostering a well-informed cohort of MH Champions.

By using this guide, trainers will benefit from a clearly defined curriculum, ensuring consistency and high-quality delivery across training sessions. Moreover, the guide will help enhance trainers' ability to address community-specific needs and challenges of adolescent girls and young women, making menstrual health education more accessible, impactful, and sustainable. The benefits extend to the broader community, as well-trained MH Champions play a crucial role in promoting positive behavior change and creating an environment that supports menstrual health and hygiene for all.

Overview of Training Modules

Introductory Sessions
Session 1: Welcome, Introduction and Climate Setting
Session 2: Participants' training expectations

Module 1: Adolescent Health and Development
Session 1: Stages of human development
Session 2: Puberty and puberty changes

Module 2: Understanding Menstruation
Session 1: The female reproductive organs
Session 2: The menstrual cycle
Session 3: How to track menstrual cycle and prepare for menstruation
Session 4: Menstruation and how to manage menstrual discomfort

Module 3: Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management
Session 1: Normal and abnormal menstruation
Session 2: Menstrual hygiene and maintaining menstrual proper hygiene
Session 3: How to use and dispose used menstrual products

Module 4: Communicating about Menstruation
Session 1: Guiding conversations about menstruation
Session 2: Engaging boy and men during conversations about menstruation
Session 3: Linkage to affordable menstrual products and support

Module 5: Addressing Challenges faced by Girls and Women during Menstruation
Session 1: Myths, Misconceptions and Cultural beliefs
Session 2: Addressing misconceptions and harmful beliefs about menstruation

Module 6: Safeguarding in Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management
Session 1: Safeguarding in MHHM Programs
Session 2: Reporting abuses

Introductory Sessions

Introductory Session 1: Welcome, Introduction and Climate Setting

Duration: 20 – 30 minutes

Session Overview:
This session is designed to set the stage for the training by introducing the training program, participants and facilitators. This session will help participants and facilitators learn more about each other and create room for building trust between participants and facilitators.

Objectives:
1. To introduce the training program and overview of the training purpose and structure.

2. To encourage participants and facilitators to get to know each other and build rapport.

3. To establish a welcoming and create a positive learning environment conducive for active engagement and participation.

Procedure/Instructions:

Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Greet the participants warmly and thank them for attending the training.
- Share and read through the training agenda with the participants and present the objectives, sessions and timing.
- Invite the senior authority from the program team, government ministry, agency or organization to make a few remarks and officially open the training and welcome participants.

Introductions and climate settings
- Use an engaging icebreaker activity or game to help participants introduce themselves.

- Ask them to choose a partner- someone they do not know. Use either of the methods to assign partners.

Method 1:
Randomly assign numbers 1 and 2 to all the participants including the facilitators. Ask a participant assigned '1' to partner with another participant assigned '1'. Ensure all participants are in pairs of 1 and 2.

Method 2:
Write out the names of different fruits in two comfortably split syllables on very small pieces of paper, for example pine-apple, water-melon, coco-nut, banana etc. Then, wrap them up. Ensure that the number of fruits split and wrapped up is equal to the number of participants engaging in the game.

- For either of the method chosen, ask participants to sit in pairs and share the following information with their peer:
  - *Name*
  - *Community/organization they are coming from*
  - *Role in the community/organization/workplace*
  - *Name they would like to be called in the workshop*
  - *One interesting fact they would like to share about themselves*
  - *Favorites, likes and dislikes*

- Allow five minutes for this exercise and get participants to return to plenary.

- Ask participants to take turns to introduce their peers. Allow each peer to take turns till you reach the last pair.

- Ask each participant to write the name they want to be called in the workshop on the nametag provided or on a small piece of well cut-out cardboard paper.

- Encourage everyone to participate including the facilitators.

Ground rules
- Collaboratively set expected and allowable behaviors.
- Ask the participants to suggest the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of the training.
- Wrap up this session by setting the tone and encouraging an open and positive mindset as well as emphasizing the value of learning from one another.
- Conduct a quick game or fun activity such as an energizer or puzzle to energize the participants and prepare them for the next session.

Materials:
- Flipchart papers
- Sticky notes
- Markers
- Name tags
- Plain sheets of paper

Introductory Session 2: Participants' training expectations

Duration: 15 –20 minutes

Session Overview:
This session helps to manage the expectations from the training. It provides clarity and alignment, reduces misunderstandings and motivates participants. It helps create a shared understanding of training goals, content, participants' knowledge needs and ensures that everyone is prepared to make the most of the training experience.

Objectives:
1. Clarify and understand the purpose, goals, and expected outcomes of the training to align them with the training focus.
2. Establish a learning environment.
3. Define participants' expectations and concerns for attention during the course.

Procedure/Instructions:
1. Distribute sticky notes to participants to think through why they came for the training and what they hope to gain from the training.

2. Ask each participant to write two to three expectations they have about the training on their sticky notes.

3. Ask participants to share their expectations for the training one after the other.

4. Use a flip chart or digital tool to document key points.

5. Talk through the key points and link relevant ones to the training objectives i.e. summarize the key learning outcomes that the participants should aim for by the end of the training.

6. Wrap up and allow the participants to seek clarification if required.

7. Put aside the flip chart where you have jotted the expectations and revisit them at the end of the training to check if they have been addressed.

Materials:
- Flip-chart papers
- Sticky notes
- Markers

Module 1: Adolescent Health and Development

Module 1:
Adolescent Health and Development

Duration: 40 minutes

Session Overview:
This session on 'Adolescent Health and Development' forms the foundation of the training and sets the stage for all subsequent modules. It introduces participants to the critical concepts of adolescence, puberty and changes that occur during this period. It also helps establish a comfortable and engaging environment, where participants feel empowered to explore sensitive topics and reflect on their own experiences.

Session Outline
- Adolescent Development Stages
- Puberty Changes
- Boys & Girls
- Exercises

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
1. Define puberty.

2. Generate empathy and understanding of each other's unique experiences

3. Identify and understand the changes that occur during puberty for both boys and girls.

Methodologies
1. Presentation
2. Brainstorming
3. Group discussion
4. Use of energizers

Preparation
- Review and get familiar with the PowerPoint presentation.
- Prepare a free wall space by allocating a section of the room for pasting flip charts, sticky notes and other materials generated during presentations and group work.
- Ensure that participants are seated comfortably, preferably in small groups, to

promote interaction. The seating arrangement should ideally be circular or U-shaped to promote open discussions and interactions.

- Encourage open and non-judgmental environment for sensitive discussions as well as the use of inclusive and non-judgmental language throughout the session.
- Set ground rules to guide discussions.
- Ensure all training materials including flip charts, markers, whiteboards etc. are prepared ahead of the session, as well as educational resources like SBCC materials, diagrams and other visual aids to enhance learning.

Materials

1. Flip chart papers
2. Markers
3. Sticky notes
4. Anonymous question box
5. Safeguarding slips

Procedures/Instructions

Session 1: Stages of Human Development

- Introduce the topic and explain the learning objectives to keep both the facilitator and participants focused on the goals of the session.

- Start the session by presenting the PowerPoint on the stages of life. Ask the participants to take a few minutes to study the picture and answer the questions on the slide.

- Use the picture on the slide on stages of human development to identify the different stages of life in the previous slide.

- Explain the events at each stage of life.

- Allow 5-7 minutes for the brainstorming session. Ask the participants to take a 'Safari' down to their adolescence years. Ask them to take a couple of minutes to think back to their adolescent years and share the good and not too good experiences. Show empathy and wrap up the discussion highlighting that experiences differ, have their unique characteristics and needs.

- Define who an adolescent is and make the distinction between adolescent, youth and young adult. Specify the age range as defined by WHO and mention that there are different age range definitions. Add that the Menstrual Health program as did other adolescent health programs have adopted the definition by WHO.

Session 2:
Puberty and Puberty Changes

- Explain the adolescent developmental stages and puberty with the slides. Summarize the four key developmental tasks an adolescent encounter for growth and maturation.

- Allow 5 minutes for the participants to brainstorm on the changes that occur in girls and boys during puberty and use this to explain the physical changes in boys and girls.

- Explain the physical changes that occur in boys and girls. State that boys and girls do not experience the same changes, and it could differ amongst boys and girls.

- Ask the participants to take the quiz and address any incorrect responses.

- Use energizers or warm-up activities at relevant points of the session.

Facilitators' Note

Who is an adolescent?
Summarize that there are different age range definitions for adolescent, but for this program, we have adopted the UN definition of 10-19 years. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations defines:

- 'Adolescents' as individuals in the 10-19 years age group
- 'Youth' as individuals in the 15-24 years age group
- 'Young People' covers the age range 10-24 years

As children up to the age of 18, most adolescents are protected under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Puberty and Puberty Changes
Adolescents encounter four primary developmental tasks essential for growth and maturation.

Independence: Adolescents try to assert their autonomy during this stage. There is strong drive to become more independent from parents.

Establish relationships: Adolescents begin to place more emphasis on close relationships outside of the family, forming deeper friendships and romantic relationships.

Identity formation: They work to understand and form their own identities, exploring who they are, what they value and how they fit into society. This includes self-reflection on personal beliefs, values, career interests and a sense of individuality apart form family influences.

Moral reasoning: Adolescents advance in moral reasoning, moving from following instructions to questioning and understanding the principles behind them. This development is influenced by role models, cultural values, personal experiences etc. They also explore educational interests and begin to focus on future goals.

Module 2: Understanding Menstruation

Module 2:
Understanding Menstruation

Duration: 2 hours 30 minutes

Session Overview:
This session is designed to educate participants on key aspects of menstruation, the female reproductive organs, how the process of menstruation happens, the menstrual cycle and how it is tracked and the ways of managing menstrual discomfort. In addition, it includes interactive discussions, practical demonstrations and hands-on activities to enhance participants' understanding. It is also important to explore their expectations from the session at the beginning of this session.

Session Outline
- The female reproductive organs
- The Menstrual cycle
- What is menstruation?
- How does it happen?
- How to track menstrual cycle
- What girls and women may experience during period
- Managing menstrual discomfort
- Exercise & Quiz

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:
1. Understand the basics of the female reproductive system.

2. Familiarize themselves with the stages of the menstrual cycle and gain the ability to track their cycle.

3. Understand what menstruation is and how it occurs.

4. Gain improved knowledge of menstruation and its impact on health.

5. Recognize the changes that happen when they are about menstruating and how to prepare for it.

6. Know what to do when they experience discomfort during their menstrual period.

Methodologies

1. Presentation
2. Brainstorming
3. Group discussion
4. Use of energizers

Preparation

- Review and get familiar with the topic in the MH training manual.
- Ensure all training materials, including flip charts, markers, whiteboards etc., are prepared ahead of the session. Include educational resources like SBCC materials, diagrams and other visual aids and charts to enhance learning.
- Prepare a conducive and private space for the session and comfortable for discussions.
- Ensure that participants are seated comfortably, preferably in small groups, to promote interaction. The seating arrangement should ideally be circular or U-shaped to promote open discussions and interactions.
- Set ground rules to guide discussions.
- Encourage open and non-judgmental environment for sensitive discussions as well as the use of inclusive and non-judgmental language throughout the session.

Materials Needed:

1. Flip chart papers
2. Markers
3. Unannotated and annotated diagrams of the female reproductive system
4. Samples of tracking tools e.g. calendar, menstrual cycle charts
5. Visual aids
6. Anonymous question box
7. Safeguarding slips

Procedures/Instructions:

- Introduce the topic and explain the learning objectives to keep both the facilitator and participants focused on the goals of the session.
- Start the session with an ice-breaker activity by asking the participants to voluntarily share expectations from the session.
- Use the diagram/ chart to clarify the biological process.
- Use real-life experiences or examples when discussing menstrual cycle tracking or managing menstrual discomfort.
- Be sensitive to participants' privacy and comfort levels during discussions (be mindful of cultural sensitivities).

Session 1:
Overview of the female reproductive organs, sex hormones and how they work

- Start with an exercise to understand what they know.
- Ask the participants to draw the diagram of the female reproductive organs and label the parts.
- After about 10 minutes, display the labeled charts and ask them to exchange their notes with the next participant sitting to them to score.
- Introduce the female reproductive system and explain that it consists of both external and internal structures.
- Present the slide on female external and internal organs, describe each organ and explain their functions using the diagram in the manual or the annotated diagram prepared prior to the session.
- Using the labeled chart, describe each organ and explain their functions.
- Use a flip chart or whiteboard to list the key hormones- FSH, LH, estrogen and progesterone. Explain the roles of each hormone.
- Highlight the influence of hormones on emotions and mental well-being.

Facilitators' Note

Estrogen- This sex hormone is produced in the adrenal glands, ovaries and fatty tissue. Its foremost function is to assist breast growth in puberty, help in the growth of uterus lining during the menstrual cycle and maintaining the bones strength by collaborating with vitamin D, calcium, and minerals. A little amount of estrogen is present in man's body also.

Progesterone- This is also produced in the adrenal tissue and ovaries. The progesterone hormone performs its function in the second half of the cycle. It forms the uterus lining for the eggs to be implanted after ovulation. Low levels of progesterone could be behind symptoms like mood swings, irritability, depression, weight gain, osteoporosis, and other

Session 2:
The Menstrual Cycle

- Introduce the session by defining what menstrual cycle is and highlighting the events and phases.
- Use the diagram to explain that the menstrual cycle is a continuous event that occurs monthly (21-35 days) and on an average every 28 days.
- Present the diagrams of the ovarian and uterine events during the menstrual cycle.
- Guide the participants through the diagrams step by step and explain how FSH and LH trigger the ovarian events.
- Link ovarian events to the changes in estrogen and progesterone levels.
- Describe how these hormonal changes affect the uterine lining.
- Mention that menstruation happens because pregnancy did not take place.
- Discuss how the fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone levels lead to mood swings, irritability and sadness and how it impacts the overall emotional and mental health of girls and women.
- Invite participants to share their experiences or observations related to these changes.

Session 3: Menstruation

- Present the slides on menstruation (what I need to know and what to expect) and how it happens including what to expect and why it happens. Mention the ages it begins and ends.
- Ask the participants to share their current understanding of what menstruation is or what they have heard prior to the session.
- Start the topic by asking the participants to share their first experience of menstruation.
- Explain the process of menstruation using the diagram of the uterus to explain visually.
- Highlight that it is a healthy and normal part of growing up and that the bleeding lasts 2-7 days on average.
- Explain a woman's menstrual cycle journey (menarche and menopause) and ensure that participants understand the significance of these stages.
- Ask the participants how they felt during menarche and what they know about menopause.
- Explain what to explain during menstruation- the flow.
- Address common questions such as why is my period late or irregular, what is the flow like, why do I miss my period? Why Does Menstruation Happen?
- Allow participants to ask questions and encourage a brief discussion on how this understanding can support menstrual health management.

Activity 1:
Divide the participants into pairs or small groups.

In their groups, ask the participants to share their first experience of menstruation for 10 minutes.

After the discussion, ask the participants to share their experiences randomly including what they learned from their peers.

Session 4:
Tracking menstrual cycle

- Start with a brief discussion of why tracking the menstrual cycle is important. Explain how it helps with preparedness, managing symptoms and understanding one's body.

- Briefly share an overview of the methods to be discussed.

Calendar or Diary method:

- Mark the start and end dates of each period on a calendar. Determine the number of days in the cycle by counting from the first day of one period to the first day of the next.

- Track for at least three months to calculate the average cycle length.
  - e.g. July= 28 days, August = 29 days, September = 28 days
  - Average = 85 days/3= 28.3 days

- Highlight that this method is useful and effective for girls with regular cycles to predict their next period.

Activity: Provide sample calendars for participants to practice marking and calculating. Ask participants to mark their expected period date based on a 28-day cycle and follow the above steps.

Cycle beads:

- In explaining the standard day method, introduce the cycle beads as a tool for girls and women with regular cycles.

- Demonstrate how to move the marker along the beads starting from the first day of the period.

- Explain the significance of the colors and let the participants practice the same.

Menstrual Tracking Apps

- Demonstrate how to set up a profile and track cycle using one of the apps.

- Encourage participants to download and explore a menstrual app (if smartphones are available).

- Introduce popular apps including Clue, Flo, Period Tracker My Cycle etc. and highlight the apps' features.

Symptoms-Based Tracking

- Explain the method
- Share how this method can be helpful for girls and women with irregular cycles.
- Discuss with the participants which methods they are most likely to use and the challenges they may face while tracking cycles.
- Address questions and clarify doubts.
- Summarize the topic by emphasizing the benefits of tracking their menstrual cycle and encourage them to choose a method that suits their lifestyle and preferences.

Preparing for menstruation

- Ask girls how they prepare for menstruation.
- Take the participants through a step-by-step guide on how to create their own menstrual kit. Itemize the materials.
- Ask what else they can include in the kit.
- Encourage girls who haven't started their period yet to create a 'First Preparatory Kit' with the same items.
- Explain why it matters to be prepared.
- Distribute SBCC materials related to the topic.

Facilitators' Note

Every phase of the menstrual cycle is influenced by estrogen, progesterone, FSH and LH. The variation in the level of each of these hormones decides the phase which a girl undergoes.

Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinizing hormone (LH) are secreted by the anterior pituitary. FSH stimulates the growth of ovarian follicles that secrete estrogen while progesterone is secreted by the corpus luteum.

From the diagram, the secretion of FSH and LH gradually increases during the follicular phase. They stimulate the development of follicles and the release of estrogen from them. Estrogen stimulates the proliferation of the endometrium. The level of LH and FSH peaks in the middle of the cycle. LH induces ovulation. There is a sudden surge in LH level just before ovulation. After ovulation, the ruptured follicle develops into the corpus luteum, which secretes progesterone, hence the level of progesterone increases in the luteal phase. Progesterone is required for the maintenance of the endometrium for implantation. In the absence of fertilisation, corpus luteum regresses and progesterone level decreases. It leads to the disintegration of the endometrium and menstrual flow occurs.

Activity 2: Brainstorming session:
Ask the participants to mention the local names of menses or menstruation in their community.

Managing Menstrual Discomfort

- Ask the participants what girls and women may experience during period.
- Explain further or add any experiences they might not have mentioned.
- Mention that girls and women also experience emotional and psychological changes.
- Introduce each strategy with demonstrations of how to use a heating pad, visuals or videos of exercises and interactive discussions.
- Allow participants to ask questions.
- Ask participants to write down one thing they will do better to manage menstrual discomfort.
- Quiz the participants to evaluate what they have learned during the session.

Facilitators' Note

Girls and women are to seek help or visit the hospital when they experience severe menstrual cramps.

Module 3: Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management

Module 3:
Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Session Overview:
Menstrual health and hygiene management is crucial for the well-being and empowerment of girls and women. Poor menstrual hygiene management can lead to health problems, social stigma and reduced educational opportunities. This session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to manage their hygiene and access appropriate and affordable products.

Session Outline
- What is normal menstruation?
- What is abnormal menstruation?
- Causes of abnormal menstruation
- Menstrual hygiene management
- Hygienic & affordable sanitary products
- Maintaining hygiene
- What happens when we don't stay clean
- Exercises & Quiz

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:
1. Identify the differences between normal and abnormal menstruation.
2. Be able to adopt the use of hygienic and affordable menstrual products.
3. Understand how to adopt and maintain menstrual hygiene practices.
4. Know what to do when they experience abnormal flow.

Methodologies
1. Presentations
2. Practical demonstrations (physical demos & use of videos)
3. Role Play
4. Brainstorming and discussions
5. Use of energizers

Preparation:

- Review and get familiar with the topic in the MH training manual.
- Ensure that participants are comfortable, the room is well-lit and spacious enough to accommodate demonstrations. A U-shape or circle seating arrangement would be ideal for this session to promote participation and discussions.
- Prepare a conducive and private space for the session and comfortable for open discussions.
- Encourage open and non-judgmental environment and language for sensitive discussions.
- Set ground rules to guide discussions.
- All the materials, including the teaching aids and energizers to be used should be prepared ahead of the session.

Materials Needed:

1. Flip Chart papers
2. Markers
3. Chart on menstrual blood colors and their meanings
4. Samples of the different menstrual products.
5. Handwashing station (water, soap and veronica bucket)
6. SBCC materials
7. Anonymous question box
8. Safeguarding slips

Procedures/Instructions:

- Introduce the topic and explain the learning objectives to keep both the facilitator and participants focused on the goals of the session. Explain that the session will help participants better understand what is normal and when they should consult a healthcare provider for help.
- Start the session with an ice-breaker activity by asking the participants to voluntarily share expectations from the session.
- Use interactive methods such as group discussions, role playing, practical, energizers to actively engage participants and make the session relatable.

Session 1:
Normal and Abnormal menstruation

- Present the slides on normal and abnormal menstrual characteristics. Highlight when they need to be worried, explaining the conditions and symptoms using relatable examples.
- Follow this up with discussion questions- Have you experienced any of these? How do these conditions affect school attendance or daily life?
- Refer any girl with abnormal symptoms to a nearby health facility or worker.

Colors of menstrual blood and their meaning.

- Present the charts showing menstrual blood colors; colors to be worried about and the happy color. Explain what the colors may indicate.

Interactive Activity:

- Provide a printed chart of the colors and a reshuffled list of meaning.
- Ask the participants to match the color with its potential meaning.
- Summarize the differences between normal and abnormal menstruation and emphasize that the participants should visit a healthcare provider if the color of their menstrual blood is not normal.

- Open the floor for participants questions.

Session 2:
Menstrual Hygiene

- Ask the participants 'what comes to mind when you hear the word 'hygiene'?
- Define the word 'hygiene' according to WHO and define menstrual hygiene.
- Explain the key aspects of menstrual hygiene and the steps required in maintaining menstrual hygiene.
- Discuss why it is important to maintain menstrual hygiene.
- Show the participants the different safe and appropriate menstrual products to use and explain how to use each one using the step-by-step guide/chart.
- Ask the participants how they dispose used menstrual products and present the table of 'dos and don'ts' to explain the proper ways of disposing used products.
- Emphasize that proper disposal helps maintain hygiene and protect the environment.

Session 3:
How to use and dispose used menstrual products

Demonstration and return demonstration:

- Explain what each product is and the components.
- Demonstrate how each of the product is used and disposed highlighting its pros and cons.
- Demonstrate proper handwashing techniques with soap and water.
- Explain why handwashing is crucial during menstruation (before and after handling menstrual products).

Group work

- Divide the participants into 3- 4 groups (depending on the total number of participants in the room).

- Ask them to select a note taker, presenter and someone to lead the discussions within each group.

- Provide each group with flip chart paper and markers and a menstrual product.

- Ask each group to discuss the following:
  - How would you explain menstrual hygiene to an adolescent girl?
  - Explain and demonstrate how to use and dispose one of the menstrual products.
  - Give each of the group one or two of the products depending on the number of groups available.
  - After about 10 minutes of group work, ask the groups to return to plenary and take turns to present their discussions.

- Summarize the importance of maintaining menstrual hygiene and emphasize best practices to maintain hygiene and health.

- Quiz the participants to evaluate what they have learnt from the session.

Module 4: Communicating about Menstruation

Module 4:
Communicating about Menstruation

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Session Overview:
Inadequate resources and open conversations about menstruation are barriers to accessing education, products and support by girls and women. This session aims to provide practical guidance and equip participants with the knowledge and communication skills to talk about menstruation in open, respectful ways that empower young girls, include boys and men in the conversation.

Session Outline
- Importance of open communication about menstruation
- Talking to girls about menstruation
- Engaging boys and men in menstrual health conversations & programming
- Linking girls to affordable menstrual products and support
- Activity: Demonstration

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:
1. Understand the importance of open communication about menstruation.

2. Understand how to engage girls and boys in meaningful conversations about menstrual health.

3. Gain the confidence to discuss menstruation with young girls and women to empower them with knowledge and support.

4. Know the available sources of affordable menstrual products and support and get links to these sources.

Methodologies
1. Presentation
2. Group Discussion
3. Role Play
4. Brainstorming
5. Story telling
6. Use of energizers

Preparation:

- Review and get familiar with the topic in the MH training manual.

- Ensure that participants are comfortable, ideally in a U-shape or circle seating arrangement that facilitates open discussions and allows the facilitator to engage with each participant while maintaining an inclusive atmosphere.

- Encourage open and non-judgmental environment for sensitive discussions. Ensure there is space for small-group discussions where the participants will break into smaller clusters for discussion and presentations to the larger group.

- Set ground rules to guide discussions.

- All the materials including the teaching aids and energizers for use should be prepared ahead of the session.

Materials Needed:

1. Flip chart papers or whiteboards
2. Markers
3. SBCC materials on menstruation
4. Anonymous question box
5. Safeguarding slips

Procedures/Instructions:

- Introduce the topic and session objectives as well as explore their expectations from the session. This will prepare them ahead of what the session is all about and enhance their understanding and active participation and why the participants are in the training or session (why am I here?). This will help the participants understand their roles and participate better.

- Begin the session with a recap of the last session and the importance of this module. Highlight their role in promoting open conversations on menstruation and the benefits to them, and the broader community.

- Use positive and non-judgmental language while facilitating the session.

- Use interactive methods such as group discussions, questions and answers, energizers to actively engage participants.

Session 1:
Guiding conversations about menstruation

- Present the slide on 'Importance of open communication about menstruation'.
- Explain why open communication about menstruation is important.
- Highlight the challenges caused by cultural norms, taboos, stigma, inadequate education and how they hinder open and positive conversations about menstruation.
- Share examples of positive statements and ask the participants to explain how each statement encourages open discussion about menstruation.
- Present the slide on 'How to talk to girls about menstruation'.
- Ask the participants to brainstorm other ways to create safe space for discussions.

Activity 1: Role Play: Ask two participants to volunteer for this exercise: One participant is to act as a MH educator and the other as an adolescent girl.

Scenario 1:
An adolescent girl aged 12 years approached the educator with a worried look. She mentioned that she started her menses 3 months ago and has only seen it twice. She is worried and concerned because those two times, she used tissue paper as her mother is not aware that she has started menstruating. She doesn't know how to tell her.

Scenario 2:
One evening, the MH educator in the community saw a girl hiding around the bend of her house. On approaching her, the girl said that she was stained with blood and a group of boys laughed at her on her way to the educator's house. Just before the girl finished narrating her story, the boys passed still giggling and pointing at the girl. What should the educator say/do and how will he/she approach the matter?

Session 2:
Engaging boys and men during conversations about menstruation

- Present the slide on engaging adolescent boys and young men and explain the importance of engaging boys and men in MH.

- Present the slide and explore the roles and responsibilities of boys and men in promoting MH.

- Discuss the benefits of engaging boys and men in promoting MH.

Activity 2:
Brainstorm additional ways boys and men can contribute to promoting menstrual health and hygiene.

Explore their contributions and the benefits to the lives and health of girls and women

Facilitators' Note

Many boys and men find it difficult to have open conversations about menstruation due to taboos and cultural norms.

The implications of limited engagement include lack of support for girls and women, perpetuation of stigma, and missed opportunities for community-wide change.

Benefits of engaging boys and men:
- Stigma reduction
- Improved school attendance for girls
- Promotion of gender equality
- Healthier relationships

Highlight data or case studies that demonstrate the positive impact of male engagement in MH programs. Strategies for Engaging Boys and Men include:
- Use age-appropriate and culturally sensitive approaches.
- Conduct school-based MH sessions for boys.
- Involve men and boys in community education programs.
- Create platforms for boys and men to share their experiences and learn.
- Develop inclusive policies and programs that involve male stakeholders.

Session 3:
Linkage to affordable menstrual products and support

- Brainstorming session: Ask the participants to recall the types of menstrual products that was discussed in previous sessions.

- Ask the participants - which products do they use and are familiar with? What are the sources of menstrual products i.e. where are they likely to go to get the products? How do they get these products or what are the steps they take to access these products, and who provides them?

- Present the slide on 'linkage to affordable menstrual products and support'.

- Link girls to the identified sources of menstrual products in the community: issues referrals, fliers and contacts of vendors around.

- Summarize the importance of engaging boys and men in MH conversations, their roles and responsibilities and the strategies and benefits of involving them effectively.

- Ask participants to share one insight or lesson they will take away from the session.

- Reinforce the importance of their roles as champions or advocates for open conversations.

- Distribute SBCC materials related to the sessions.

- Quiz the participants to evaluate what they have learned from the sessions.

Module 5: Addressing challenges faced by girls and women during menstruation

Module 5: Addressing challenges faced by girls and women during menstruation

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Session Overview:
Menstruation is surrounded by many myths and misconceptions, often fueled by cultural beliefs, social norms and inadequate information or lack of awareness. These misconceptions can negatively affect the way girls and women experience and manage menstruation, creating barriers to accessing proper hygiene, menstrual products and education. In all, this session helps to differentiate myths from fact, reduce stigma and promote healthy attitude towards menstruation.

Session Outline
- Common myths & misconceptions
- Cultural beliefs around menstruation
- Impact of myths & unhealthy beliefs on MHM
- Facts: addressing misconceptions
- Challenging myths & cultural barriers
- Exercise & Quiz

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:
1. Identify and understand the common myths, misconceptions and cultural beliefs around menstruation.

2. Understand the impact of myths and misconceptions on menstrual health and overall well-being.

3. Understand the facts and gain confidence in debunking myths and challenging harmful cultural barriers around menstruation.

Methodologies
1. Presentations
2. Group Work
3. Brainstorming
4. Use of energizers

Preparation:

- Review and get familiar with the topic in the MH training manual.

- Ensure that participants are comfortable, with a U-shape or circle seating arrangement that facilitates open discussions and allows the facilitator to engage with each participant while maintaining an inclusive atmosphere.

- Encourage open and non-judgmental environment for sensitive discussions. Ensure there is space for small-group discussions where the participants will break into smaller clusters for discussion and presentations to the larger group.

- Set ground rules to guide discussions. All the materials including the teaching aids and energizers for use should be prepared ahead of the session.

- All the materials including the teaching aids and energizers for use should be prepared ahead of the session.

Materials Needed:

1. Flip chart papers
2. Markers
3. Sticky notes
4. Prepared list of common myths, misconceptions and facts
5. Anonymous question box

Procedures/Instructions:

- Introduce the topic and explain the learning objectives to keep both the facilitator and participants focused on the goals of the session. Explore their expectations from the session. This will prepare them ahead of what the session is all about and enhance their understanding and active participation.

- Begin the session with a recap of what menstruation is, highlighting how normal and important it is to reproductive health. While exploring the topics under this module, allow participants to reflect on their own experiences or cultural norms that influenced their understanding of menstruation.

- Use interactive methods such as group discussions, questions and answers, energizers to actively engage participants.

Session 1:
Misconceptions, myths and socio-cultural beliefs

- Present the slide on misconceptions, myths and socio-cultural beliefs and highlight key discussion points.

- Provide examples of and discuss some myths and socio-cultural beliefs

- Ask participants about additional myths and beliefs they have heard about menstruation in their local communities.

- Highlight the origin and persistence of these beliefs

- Explore the impacts of these beliefs and restrictions on girl's and women's access to education and menstrual health services, hygiene and health including emotional and psychological well-being.

False Beliefs & Facts

- Present the slide on 'know the facts about menstruation'.

- Provide facts with clear explanations that counter common myths.

- Use respectful and non-judgmental language; offer medical-related solutions if possible.

- Use the handout with myth-busting facts to support these discussions. Show the factual counterpoints to each myth.

- Share real-life stories of girls and communities who successfully addressed these beliefs.

Session 2:
Addressing Harmful Beliefs

- Discuss the steps in addressing harmful beliefs.

Activity 1: Group Discussion

Divide the participants into 2-3 groups depending on the number of participants in class.

Ask them to choose a note taker, presenter and someone to lead the discussions from each group.

Each group is to discuss the common myths and cultural beliefs in your community.

Each group highlights the role of individuals, families and communities in addressing these myths and misconceptions (who will they engage, what resources or support do they need and what steps will they take especially in communicating the impacts and facts?).

Ask the groups to return to plenary and take turns to present their discussions.

Summarize and draw conclusions

Facilitators' Note

Steps to Address Harmful Beliefs:

- Identify the Barrier: Use open-ended questions to explore the root of the belief.
- Clarify and Empathize: Show understanding and respect for their concerns.
- Analyze the Impact: Discuss how the belief affects health, education, and well-being.
- Provide Facts and Solutions: Share evidence-based information to debunk the myth.
- Summarize and Agree: Collaboratively decide on actionable steps.

Activity 2: Role- play:
Ask the participants to nominate two people for this exercise or request volunteers.

Set-up a scenario by using one of the myths or cultural beliefs on menstruation and ask the volunteers to address the myths with the 'steps in addressing beliefs' and with factual information taught earlier.

Ask the participants to switch roles and practice how they will address these issues in real life.

Reflection exercise

- Ask the participants to write down one myth or belief they had or heard before or during the training about menstruation and state what the facts are.
- Summarize key points and conclude.
- Reflect on the insights, summarize the key points from the session by reiterating the importance of addressing myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation.
- Encourage the participants to take back what they have learnt to their communities, promoting open and respectful conversations about menstruation.

Module 6: Safeguarding in Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management Programs

Module 6:
Safeguarding in MHHM Programs

Duration: 1 hour

Session Overview:
Safeguarding in MHHM programs ensures that girls can access, menstrual health education and resources safely and without fear of harm. This module will equip participants with knowledge on safeguarding principles, focusing on the specific needs and risks girls may face within the program. Participants will explore why it is vital to protect girls and how safeguarding creates a safe, supportive environment where they can learn about and manage their health without risks.

Session Outline
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- MH Champion's in Safeguarding and Child Protection
- What is 'Do No Harm'?
- Why is the concept of 'Do No Harm' important in protecting adolescent girls
- Safeguarding Tips
- Reporting Abuse

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
1. Understand the concept of safeguarding and its importance in MHHM programs.

2. Describe what child safeguarding is and why it is important.

3. Recognize child safeguarding responsibilities that apply to all individuals and professionals that interact with children.

4. Identify specific risks girls may face in MHHM programs and understand the protective measures required.

5. Report child safeguarding concerns safely and confidentially

Methodologies
1. Presentations
2. Brainstorming
3. Use of energizers

Preparation:

- Review and get familiar with the topic in the MH training manual.
- Ensure that participants are comfortable, with a U-shape or circle sitting arrangement that facilitates open discussions and allows the facilitator to engage with each participant while maintaining an inclusive atmosphere.
- Set ground rules to guide discussions.
- All the materials including the teaching aids and energizers for use should be prepared ahead of the session.

Materials Needed:

1. Flip chart paper
2. Markers
3. Sticky notes
4. Safeguarding videos

Procedures/Instructions

- Introduce the topic and session objectives as well as explore their expectations from the session. This will prepare them ahead of what the session is all about, enhance their understanding and active participation.
- Highlight importance of this module and participants' role in safeguarding and in protecting children.
- Use interactive methods such as group discussions, questions and answers, energizers to actively engage participants.
- Begin the topic by introducing the concept of safeguarding as the proactive and protective measures taken to ensure safety, well-being and dignity of children, specifically girls in MHHM programs.
- Mention that safeguarding goes beyond physical protection. It includes addressing emotional, psychological and social safety to provide a supportive environment for girls to learn about and manage their menstrual health confidently.
- Present the slides on 'Safeguarding and Child Protection', why it is critical in MHHM programs, and the importance of protecting girls and young women from harm, exploitation and abuse.
- Further discuss the importance of child protection. Ask participants why it is important and link their responses to general safeguarding principles.

Safeguarding tips

- Present and discuss the safeguarding tips, highlight the Things TO DO and Things NOT TO DO.

- Present and discuss how safeguarding issues and abuse should be reported

- Support participants to identify and strengthen safeguarding responses in their various institutions and communities including the communication tree/ reporting line.

Case study on Safeguarding:

You observed that a fellow MH Champion talking to a girl aged 17 years during her session. She mentioned that the girl is developing and slightly fondled with her breasts while talking to the girl.

- Ask the participants:
  What would you do? Emphasize MH Champions' responsibilities in:
  - *o* Keeping girls safe.
  - *o* Reporting cases of abuse or harm.
  - *o* Protecting themselves by maintaining discretion and confidentiality.

Other Activities

Understanding "Do No Harm Map Exercise"

- Provide participants with cards listing potential areas of harm in MHHM programs (e.g., stigmatization, misinformation, exclusion).
- Ask participants to map these on a chart divided into categories: Physical, Emotional, Social, Cultural.
- Facilitate a discussion on how to mitigate these harms using the "Do No Harm" principle.

Interactive Wrap-Up: Safeguarding Commitment Wall

- Provide the participants with sticky notes and markers.
- Ask participants to write one safeguarding commitment they will uphold in their MHHM work.
- Participants place their notes on a "Commitment Wall" (a flip chart or designated space).
- Conclude by reading a few aloud and acknowledging everyone's role in safeguarding.
- Quiz the participants to evaluate what they have learned from the program.
- Ask the participants to reflect on one new thing that you have learned about safeguarding and how you will apply it to your role as an MH champion?

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