

JICA Monthly Report March 2023

IMPROVING SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS BY ADDRESSING MENSTRUAL HYGIENE CHALLENGES

<Activities conducted>

1. Project midterm review meeting (Butambala and Mubende)
2. Radio talk shows
3. Spot Messages to raise awareness on support for girls' education and increase on reusable sanitary pad users
4. School to School visits (Butambala and Wakiso)
5. Happy pad promotion centre (Wakiso and Butambala)

1. Project midterm review meeting

The meetings were conducted on the 20/03/2023 in Mubende and 24/03/2023 in Butambala respectively with the objective of assessing the progress of project activities to generate lessons that will guide decision making during the implementation of the remaining project activities. The participants included; the Head teachers. Senior teachers. Members of the School Management Committee, representative of the MHM club, member of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and other key stakeholders like the District Education Officer, the Local Councill III chairperson, Kibalinga Sub- County chief for Mubende and in Butambala the Probation officer, Sub County Administrative Secretary for Ngando, District Health Officer, DEO and the RDC.

The total number of participants during the meetings were; 41 for Mubende and 18 for Butambala.

The table below shows attendance of participants per district

No	District	Number of male participants	Female	Total
1	Mubende	17	24	41
3	Butambala	8	10	18
	TOTAL	25	34	59

Mubende District

		
<p>The executive director takes participants through the project overview</p>	<p>Remarks from the Kibalinga Sub- County chief</p>	<p>The MHM club president for Christ the King appreciate the project work</p>
		
<p>The District Education Officer encourages teachers to create time for MHM issues at their schools</p>	<p>The Senior Man teacher for Kasasa Primary School appreciates the project intervention at their school</p>	<p>The sub county chief gives her remarks</p>

Butambala

	
<p>District officials</p>	<p></p>



Participants for the review meeting

Findings from the baseline survey

2. Radio talk shows

In Mubende, one talk show was conducted in a duration of one hour at Luna FM Kibalinga on 23/3/2023. Community members were reminded about the need to support adolescent girls especially those that cannot afford sanitary material so that they can comfortably stay at school. The major talking point was about the findings from the midterm review meeting where the schools were appreciative of the project intervention but noted that parents still need to be brought on board especially the male parents in order to create a friendly MHM environment both at school and home.



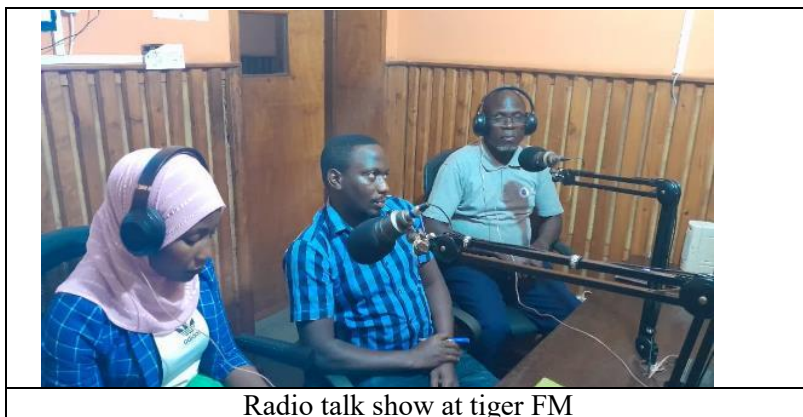
Community mobilizer (right side) informing the community about the relevance of supporting the girl child during menstruation while at home and school Project officer (left side) educating the community about the relevance of male involvement in MHM issues.

In Butambala the radio talk show was conducted on 5th /03/2023 at Voice of Butende. The team leader discussed inclusion of people with disabilities and supporting them to properly manage their menstrual health. Focus was centered on guardians and care takers of girls with hearing, physical and intellectual impairments. Care takers were urged to look for information about menstruation and to kindly disseminate the same to the children with difficulties. Teachers in the community were advised to be accommodative for girls with learning difficulties as they train them about menstrual health management.



Radio talk show at voice of Butende

In Wakiso, a one hour talk show was conducted at Tiger FM on the 24/03/2023 beginning from 7:00pm to 8:00pm in the evening hours. The participants included the Executive Director, projects manager and the projects officer where the community was taken through the project overview and the achievements attained so far and the MHM needs for persons with disabilities.



Radio talk show at tiger FM

3. Spot Messages to raise awareness on support for girls' education and increase on reusable sanitary pad users

Spot messages about Menstrual Hygiene Management, girls' education and reusable sanitary pad are aired as follows;

- Mubende: via Luna FM 6 times a day.
- Wakiso: via Voice of Kiryagonja 10 times a day.
- 21 spot messages were aired at Voice of Kikambwe whereas 11 spot messages were aired at Voice of Butende.

4. School to School Visits

In Butambala

On 16th March 2023, the IT officer at the promotion center invited all 10 target schools to

Budinse Memorial School venue for an exchange program aimed at assessing MHM knowledge, practices and impact of the project in the respective beneficiary schools. Among the invited participants were the head teachers, senior teachers and MHM club members of each school. The activity commenced on the 20th March 2023 for the entire day. 30 Random questions were prepared about menstruation health management, sexuality reproductive health and gender. The quiz was conducted in two phases (first session in the morning and the second session in the afternoon).

Independent adjudicators were appointed to conduct a quiz rewarding marks according to the responses from the participants. MHM club members were grouped by school and questions asked randomly without prejudice.

Nawango primary school emerged winner of the day’s contest with 84 points and Hajjati Kigongo Fatuma gave the school MHM club twenty thousand shillings as a means of appreciation to the school.

The table below shows the performance of the different schools;

Names	1st phase	2nd phase	Total
1.LWAMASAKA UMEA	31	44	75
2.BULE UMEA	27	40	67
3.BUTENDE UMEA	30	32	62
4.KITAGOBWA C/S	21	40	61
5.BUTALUNGA C/S	10	40	50
6.NKOKOMA C/S	34	36	70
7.KIWALA UMEA	26	44	70
8.NAWANGO C/S	36	48	84
9.KAYENJE C/S		56	56
10.NTOLOMWE UMEA		44	44



MHM clubs grouped by school



Senior men and senior women actively participating



MHM club members raising hands to respond to a question



MHM club member of Butende Primary school responds to a question

Attendance per school

In total, 124 students and 19 teachers attended the school visit activity which was highlighted by the MHM knowledge assessment competition. 36 male MHM members and 88 Female MHM members attended the activity from the 10 target schools respectively. Apart from Kayenje primary school which was represented by one senior woman teacher, the other 9 schools were each represented by both a senior man and a senior woman where a total of 19 senior teachers attended the activity.

The table below shows the attendance of the students

Name of School	Male	Female	TOTAL
Kitagobwa Primary School	5	10	15
Butalunga Primary School	3	10	13
Kayenje Primary school	3	7	10
Nawango	4	13	17
Butende	3	11	14
Bule	5	9	14
Kiwala	4	11	15
Lwamasaka	7	8	15
Ntolomwe	2	9	11
TOTAL	36	88	124

Findings from the school visits

- Self confidence among MHM members has greatly improved. They are no longer shy to discuss menstruation.
- MHM club members are more informed especially about menstruation and reproductive health.
- Senior teachers exhibited that they are still interested and find the project impactful in their schools.







- Senior Teachers continue to participate as evident from the child participation in the quiz
- MHM clubs are still focused and continue to perform their roles

In Wakiso

Mobilization for school learning visits was conducted

Of all the project schools Jinja Karoli primary school seems to be most prepared when it comes to tailoring and would be good to host in the learning visits since they are incorporating vocational skilling in the primary curriculum. The school now has four sewing machines of which one was donated by GBN. They also have an overlock machine and a fulltime female tailor at school to attend to the learners in their free time.

The project team visited the school to see what they are up to and witnessed a full demonstration of how the pad is made in the presence of MHM club members at the school. The session was led by the tailor the head teacher. Accessing the machine is after learning the parts and their functions. The learners are soon starting to use the machines for pad making.

		
<p>Chat showing parts of the sewing machine</p>	<p>Chat showing other part</p>	<p>Head teacher cutting cotton piece during the lesson</p>
		
<p>Finished pad assembled ready for sewing</p>	<p>During sewing of the pad by the tailor</p>	<p>Finished pad on the overlock machine as students look on.</p>

5. Happy pad promotion centre (Wakiso and Butambala)

In Wakiso

Training of the 147 learners at the promotion center is ongoing. A total of 80 pads were made. No sales were made.

Mask production and distribution

Total 900 masks were distributed to vulnerable populations in Mubende and Wakiso during the Ebola period in 2022 November -2023 January. These were a total of 600 units in Mubende where Ebola had hit hard on addition to COVID-19. A total of 300 units were distributed in Wakiso to learners in the project schools.

In Butambala

Training at the promotion center continued steadily with several community members picking interest and visiting the center to explore opportunities of enrolling for the training in reusable pad making. On 14th March 2023, a nurse came to the center and showed interest to purchase reusable pads. The trainer promised to contact her as soon as the products are ready for sale.

Number of trainees

Students		Community members		TOTAL
Female	Male	Female	Male	
7	2	1	1	11



Trainees learning at the Happy pad Promotion Center

Attendance Records at The Happy Pad Promotion Center:

Attendance records for the second week of March are shown below;

	Female student	Male student	Female community member	Male community member
Number of trainees	7	2	1	1
13th Mar	6	2	0	1
14th Mar	5	1	1	1
15th Mar	6	2	1	1
16th Mar	6	2	1	1
17th Mar	7	2	1	1
18th Mar	6	2	1	1
19th Mar	0	0	0	0

Pad Production

- Production of pads for sale is pending procurement of a button pressing machine and overlock machine. Pads will be ready by end of April 2023
- Packaging and pad specifications were submitted to GBN and were approved for use moving forward.

Number of pads produced by the trainees:

DAYS	NUMBER OF PADS MADE
Monday 13, March	10
Tuesday 14, March	20
Wednesday 15, March	15
Thursday 16, March	10
Friday 17, March	5
TOTAL	60

Challenges faced at this Promotion center

- Team cannot produce happy pad for sale due to lack of the button pressing machine and an overlock machine used for making a finished product.
- Student trainees can only attend over the weekend or in the evening after normal school hours which limits them from attending on daily basis to enable them to easily learn how to conduct the entire process of making reusable pads.
- Although community members often visit to inquire about the availability of training slots for reusable sanitary pad making, their enrollment is still low.
- Male trainees are fewer than the target at a ratio of Girls to Boys standing at 7:2.
- Shortage of enough materials for making the re-usable pads.

Positive influence of this month's activities

- Listeners appreciated SORAK for the project work which has greatly improved the standards of the schools for Mubende.

Challenges

- It rained for more than an hour during the school learning visit for Butambala.
- Most of the participants turned up late which made the activities to begin late at Butambala during the school learning visit and in Mubende during the midterm review meetings. This was partly due to rain and the long distances where the participants come from.
- Whereas the team encouraged the beneficiary schools to attend the promotion center training for free and whereas the schools loved the idea, the distance still challenges the participants in Butamabala
- Water continues to hinder proper sanitation especially in Ntolomwe, Bule, Kiwala and Kitagobwa primary schools in Butambala and Kiyita and Dyangoma Primary schools in Mubende who still must fetch water from very distant community wells especially during the dry seasons.

Lessons Learnt

- Assessment of MHM club members at the school visit represented the situation in their respective schools. A more practical approach is recommended for the next visit especially pad making.
- From the assessment still it was observed that; the pupils have learnt how to make pads, how to advise others when they are experiencing their menstruation periods. They learnt how to manage personal hygiene and sanitation better than they used to and are no longer fearing when they are in menstruation ie they know that its normal to menstruate.
- District key stakeholders showed more support and positivity about the subjects of menstruation health management in the target schools, gender and reproductive health education.
- There is positive change in attitude towards MHM issues in the project schools for Mubende and Wakiso.

Recommendations

- More marketing of pads needed and the use of social media platforms may come in handy (Wakiso)
- Community sensitization about issues of MHM should be conducted from time to time .
- Head teachers, chairpersons school management and P.T.A to mobilize for funds from parents such that schools buy materials for pad making. (Mubende)

- Incorporate music when passing on information about MHM since many of the parents love music dance and drama. (Mubende)