



## **Project: “Improvement of school environment to combat Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) challenges to Stop Adolescent Girls’ School Dropouts in Uganda”**

### **Activity: Child-child MHM, gender awareness and sex education by MHM peer clubs**

(Activity2-2-3 Facilitating Sex Education session by MHM peer club)

#### **Date and Location:**

November/ 7<sup>th</sup>/ 2018      Kibalinga P/S  
November/ 8<sup>th</sup>/2018      Precious Child Learning Centre  
November /9<sup>th</sup> /2018      Lwawuna Primary School

#### **Introduction**

SORAK with the help of senior female and male teachers from the 3 project schools formed 3 MHM clubs of 8 girls and 4 boys per school. The purpose of these clubs was to act as a spearhead of MHM, gender awareness and sex education by reaching out to fellow students through the Child-to-Child approach, in order to ensure sustainability and ownership of the project. The 3 MHM clubs were formed from the 3 targeted schools which were trained in MHM, gender awareness, sex education including sexual and reproductive health rights. At first, these clubs from the 3 project targeted school conducted a training of gender awareness session. In November 2018, they conducted sex education. This activity delayed because schools were preparing for the Primary Leaving Examinations, however it was conducted in November.

#### **Purpose of the training**

To build the capacity of pupils especially girls to defend themselves from issues of sexual exploitation and harassment

#### **Process of the activity**

Before the training, the facilitators, who were at the same time the MHM clubs from the 3 project schools, prepared the contents for presentation for their peers (pupils). The content was drawn from the training manual that was given to all the 3 schools as a guiding document for the MHM club members. All of these preparation were done in presence of their senior female and male teachers, and these teachers were there to guide the learners. The training facilitation was participatory, as some MHM members took lead in the facilitation, and others supplemented plus giving feedback to questions raised from pupils/learners.

#### **Content Covered:**

The MHM clubs from the 3 project schools covered the following contents;

- **Understanding reproductive health and sexuality issues**

MHM club members explained what reproductive health is, and they said that reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or

infirmity. Reproductive health addresses the reproductive processes, functions and systems at all stages of life. They also said that each person regardless of sex, tribe, religion, and background has a right to demand and pursue their reproductive health rights and said that failure of having their reproductive health rights enhance, it can even lead to death.

- **Understanding puberty**

MHM clubs in all the 3 schools explained what puberty means, and some of the explanations included; Puberty is the time when a boy or girl becomes sexually mature and a process that usually happens between ages 10 and 14 for girls and ages 12 and 16 for boys. It causes physical changes and differently affects boys and girls.

Some of the physical changes that occurs at this stage for girls include, development of breast, enlargement of hips, starting menstruation, and development of pubic hair among others. For boys they pointed out changes of voices, having wet dreams, development of body mussels, growing pubic hair among others. They urged learners that in case they see such changes happening to them, they should not be scared as it is a normal process while developing/ growing.

- **Early sexual intercourse and dangers associated with it**

Pupils were taught about what sexual intercourse entails, and MHM clubs showed that early sexual intercourse is bad and all children and adolescents should stay away from such bad acts and concentrate on their studies. They further mentioned some of the danger/risks a person exposes to as a result of early sexual intercourse include exposure to HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, death as a result of maternal related complication, forced/ early marriages, development of illnesses like fistulas among others. All clubs requested pupils to away from early sex intercourse and also to avoid being in bad groups that can persuade them to go into such acts.

- **Examples of cunning words that boys and sugar daddies use**

MHM clubs further warned pupils the danger of having sugar daddies and not to receive gifts instead of having sexual intercourse.

They also pointed out some of the examples of the cunning words that sugar daddies use including; Don't be afraid, everything will be alright./ Do it for me because I love you./ If you don't do it, I will hurt you./ Don't worry I will give you money to eat while at school among others. Learners/ pupils were very attentive and enjoying this session, and they acknowledged that this is real common examples especially among bodo boda (bike taxi) drivers and cassava sellers (men). Pupils also said by giving these facts, they will continue defending their sexual rights and will not to go into early sex intercourse but rather will concentrate on their studies.

- **Forms of sexual violence**

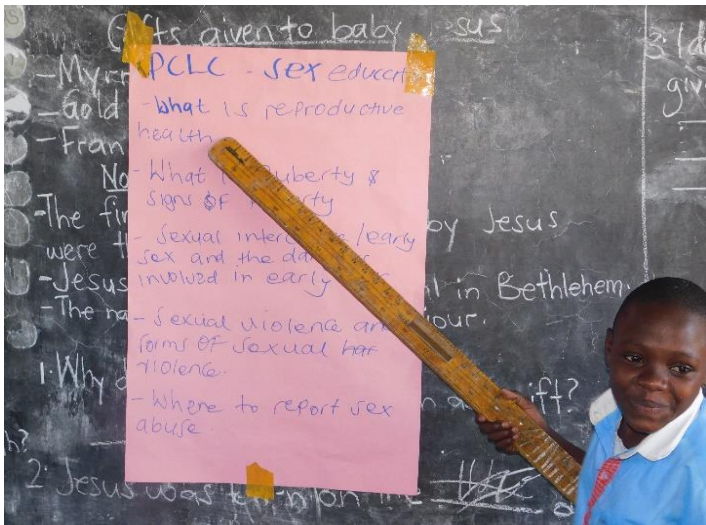
The forms of sexual abuse (molestation) and harassments were pointed out by MHM club members included bad touches that involves touching someone on privates parts like breasts, buttocks, waist etc.), rape, defilement, early and forced marriage among others. MHM clubs members requested pupils that in case of coming across such acts, they should immediately report for solving problems.

- **Where to report sex abuse and harassment**

The MHM clubs talked about where/ to whom to report in case of sexual abuse and harassments. Police stations, schools, parents, community leaders like Village Chairpersons, churches, Organizations, local leaders including political and technical leaders, and elders were mentioned. They encouraged pupils to always report in case they are being victims of sexual violence.

- **Value of education**

The MHM clubs from the 3 schools requested members to continue valuing education. They pointed out role models who are educated such as their fellow teachers and district female members of parliament, who are at the same time state ministers for Kampala and metropolitan. The MHM clubs clearly said that an educated person does not remain the same, he/ she gets connections that can help him/ her improving their situations. They requested learners to stay in school and complete their studies.



*Atuhirwe Shania, a MHM club member at PCLC conducting a training on sex education to fellow pupils*

*Pupils responding questions raised above*



**Kibalinga P/S MHM club conducting sex education training**



**Pupils are so attentive**



**Sex education session going on at Lwawuna P/S by the club**



**Pupils answering questions raised by the club**

### **Training outcome**

- Pupils became to explain the body changes that occur in both boys and girls such as growth of armpit hair, development of breasts and hips (girls), getting beards and voices changes (boys). The club members emphasized the pupils to be aware of such physical growth and development changes.
- By the end of the trainings, pupils were able to mention some of danger for a person being exposed in early sexual intercourse. Some of the things pupils mentioned include death, unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, and STIs (sexually transmitted infections), dropping out of school among others.

- Pupils were also able to mention some of major forms of sexual harassments that mostly occur include; molestation, rape, defilement, early and forced marriages. They were also asked to be vigilant and to report such cases to relevant responsible authorities.
- At the end of the trainings, pupils were able to mention places where they can report sexual abuse and violence and to whom they can report including police, leaders including political, religious, technical and other opinion leaders, schools, elders, relatives among others.
- Pupils understood the value of education and the purpose of staying in school. The long term impact will be the decrease in school dropout.

### **Conclusion**

SORAK appreciates the support extended to her partner GBN and LUSH Japan to promote sexual and reproductive health rights among pupils in the 3 project targeted schools in Mubende district Uganda. The MHM clubs formed are now able to conduct more trainings in the Child-to Child approach.