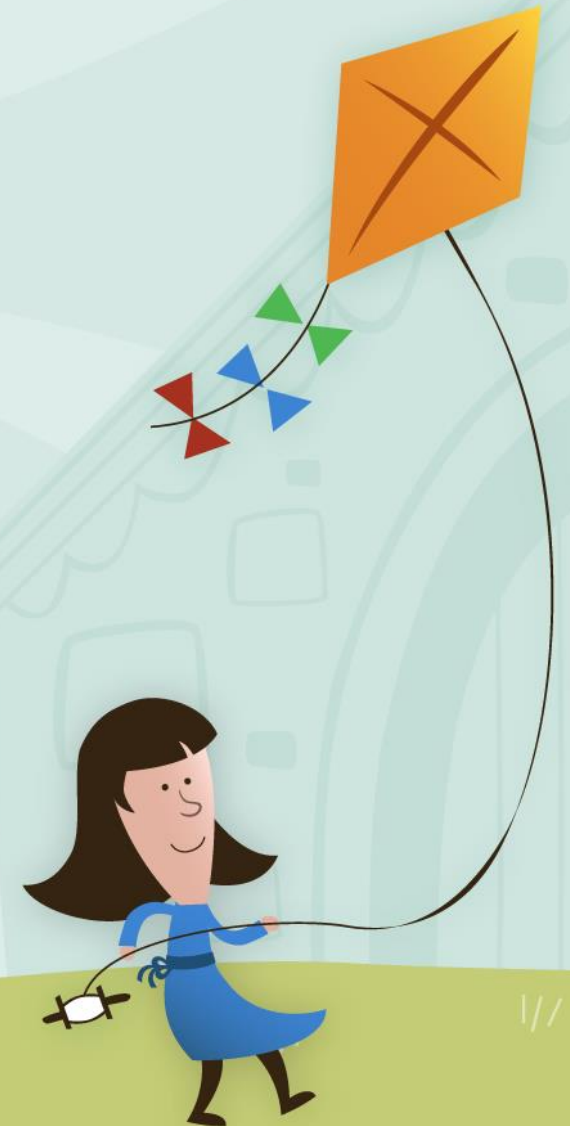


Menstrual hygiene management in Macedonia

by Natasha Dokovska Spirovska, JHR

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Location

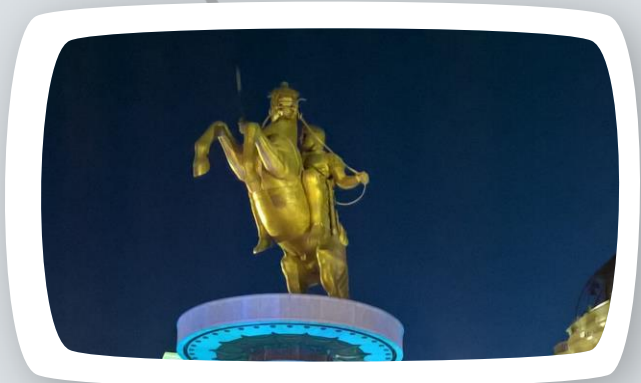


Macedonia is one of the few countries in Europe that does not meet the criteria for safe access to water and sanitation related to safe menstrual hygiene managements.





Infrastructure?!?



Infrastructure...

Despite investments in infrastructure (in the last 10 years more than 2 billion euros and around half billions for building monuments), only 1% was invest in school infrastructure, from which 85% was for building sport facilities, but without access to water and sanitation.



MHM and MDG - SDG

- **MHM** has no specific goal within the **sustainable development goals** but is found in several of the **17 targets**, which shows its importance.
- Hence the commitment to 2030 girls and women should be able menstrual hygiene management to make **it safe, in privacy and with dignity.**



Menstruation matters to everyone, everywhere

ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS SHOULD BE ABLE TO MANAGE THEIR MENSTRUATION HYGIENICALLY, SAFELY, IN PRIVACY AND WITH DIGNITY.

Good menstrual hygiene management (MHM) requires the following:

- Education
- Tablets, Water, Soap
- Menstrual Products
- Disposal

Additional systemic factors that impact good menstrual hygiene management (MHM):

- Informed Professionals
- Positive Social Norms
- Policies
- Health Services

MENSTRUATION MATTERS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGs

While there is no specific goal or indicator for MHM, menstruation matters to the following goals:

Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Goal 6	Goal 8	Goal 12
3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.	4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.	5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	6 Ensure availability and sustainability of water and sanitation by all.	8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
FACT ASK	FACT ASK	FACT ASK	FACT ASK	FACT ASK	FACT ASK
 If women and girls lack access to affordable and hygienic menstrual products, they often use old rags, cloth or other unhygienic materials. This leads to an increased incidence of reproductive tract infections (RTIs).	 41% Girls in developing countries miss up to 5 days of school/month when they menstruate. In a study from Nepal 41% girls reported missing school during their menstruation.	 Taboos and myths related to menstruation often portray women and girls as inferior to men and boys.	 2.4 billion people lack access to improved sanitation facilities. Women and girls are particularly affected by the lack, and when facilities do not ensure privacy and hygiene.	 Female Bangladeshi factory workers use contraceptive pills to stop their menstruation and so they avoid having to manage menstruation in male-dominated facilities and stop work.	 25% A research from Ethiopia showed that 25% of girls both in rural and urban settings do not use any menstrual products. Commercial menstrual health supplies are made more expensive by import and sales taxes, effectively caring women for their physiology.
 Include menstrual hygiene management as a critical component of reproductive health and an important entry point for adolescent sexual and reproductive health programming.	 Provide factual information on MHM and puberty as part of the school curriculum. Build the capacities of teachers to teach about these issues with comfort.	 Ensure that women and girls can manage their menstruation with normalcy and in dignity. Break down taboos and build positive social norms around menstruation.	 To manage menstruation in privacy and dignity, women and girls need water and sanitation facilities that are safe, socially and culturally acceptable, and where they can safely dispose of menstrual products.	 Menstruation should not limit women's ability to work. Ensure that employers provide adequate sanitation facilities at workplace, including water, soap for washing and disposal.	 Encourage policies and quality standards that promote safe and affordable options and dynamic markets for menstrual products. Promotion of sustainable, environmentally-friendly menstrual products and their disposal.

MHM required several criteria:

- Gender sensitization
- Appropriate education
- Adequate facilities
- Equitable access to facilities

**Macedonia does not meet either of the above
CRITERIA for MHM**



Primary and secondary schools are in desperate situation in MHM

- **90%** of female students in rural areas in Macedonia do not attend school 4-5 days a month during menstruation.
- **75%** of female students in urban areas do not attend school 2-3 days a month.
- More than **80%** of students to avoid using school toilets, often due to inadequate hygiene due to lack of proper infrastructure (broken doors, windows)
- Increasing the number of urinary tract infections by **28% in boys and 40% girls**



Primary and secondary schools are in desperate situation in MHM

- **over 60%** of women and girls in rural areas and **20%** in urban areas do not use any kind of commercial menstrual products. The reason for this is the high cost.
- For a family of five women/girl with minimum monthly income of 9,000 denars, **15-17%** of income is used on hygiene products for **MHM**.



In refers to pride, dignity, education and needs:

- Unable to cope with the natural process that characterizes healthy girl, they are forced to skip school **2-3 days**.
- In rural areas, even more.
- Justification of missed classes only confirms the **institutional poor educational process**, as well as other social stakeholders: municipalities, the state ... to deal with this problem.



Stereotypes and prejudices

- Menstruation is not a disease.
- Mocking and insufficient education, not having access to hygiene products and what negligence by other social stakeholders prevent uninterrupted development.
- These flaws may leave deep traces in the development of the person because of the age and the threshold that is crossed to enter the world of adulthood.



Stereotypes and prejudices

Within the pilot project for access to water, sanitation and hygiene in schools were targeted **500 students** in **12 elementary schools** with mixed ethnic composition. On the question of whether home discuss menstruation and how to manage it,

- Only **6% of girls responded positively.**
- Only **1% of the boys back home said that talk this topic and only those boys who have sisters ...**

From 400 surveyed girls aged 12-16 years, **over 80%** of them about the monthly cycle first heard from an older sister or a friend

- All respondents surveyed said that **never in school** speaking on the subject with teachers, nor that they had class on this topic



Good and bad examples



Journalists for Human Rights in its commitment to equitable access to water, sanitation and hygiene, requires the state to provide:

- **Access to accurate and pragmatic information about menstrual hygiene** (in educational system - We propose to use it Compendium for WSSP part C, where is special chapter for MHM)
- **Access to facilities that provide privacy**
- **Access to water and soap in a place that provides the appropriate level of privacy**
- **Access to facilities for the disposal of waste**



In Macedonia has lack of...

- There is **no access to accurate and pragmatic information for menstrual hygiene** (in the educational system)

- There are **no accessible facilities**

- There is **no access to water and soap in places that provide an adequate level of privacy**

- There is **no equipment for waste disposal**



Thank you😊))

Contact: www.jhrmk.org
detstvo@detstvo.org.mk

