



WORLD MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY 2022 REPORT

DATES: SATURDAY 28TH MAY 2022

VENUE: REAL HOPE COMMUNITY YOUTH ORGANIZATION, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA



THEME: 'MAKING MENSTRUATION A NORMAL FACT OF LIFE BY 2030'



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About Menstrual Hygiene Day

Menstrual Hygiene Day is a global advocacy platform that is commemorated every 28th day of May every year. The day is observed on 28 May because menstrual cycles average 28 days in length and people menstruate an average of five days each month. (May is the fifth month of the year.) The objective is to advocate for accessibility, affordability, and availability of safe menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) for women and girls. The constitution of Kenya under Article 43(1) states that; every person has a right to the highest attainable standard of health, which includes the right to health care services, including reproductive health care.

Legal Sister recognizes that dignified menstrual hygiene and health is a health right for every girl and woman and it's also paramount towards promoting the education of girls, a safe environment at school, and easy co-existent among peers.

This year we are commemorating the Menstrual Hygiene day under the Theme: “Making Menstruation a Normal Fact of Life by 2030” and our topic shall focus on: “Do the Boys really get it?” this year we shall be involving the boys in supporting the girls towards eradicating periods poverty, periods shaming and encouraging proper menstrual hygiene.

MHD Activities

The activity was carried out on the 28th of May 2022, at RHYCO in Kawangware.

The activities shall involve;

- Mentorship sessions, sexual education, menstrual hygiene, periods shaming, and period poverty.
- Taxation on menstrual hygiene products
- Discussion sessions (question and answers),
- Distribution of dignity packs to girls (two packets of pads, two panties, and one face towel)
- Distribution of vests and underwear to boys, and distribution of dignity packs to boys for them to give away to a woman or girl who is in need of menstrual



hygiene products. With the hope that this will encourage them to help the girls in need with menstrual hygiene products in the future.

- Concurrent to this, Legal Sister will hold a Twitter Space engaging the adult men in the conversation around the theme: “Making Menstruation a Normal Fact of Life By 2030”, Topic: “Do Boys Really Get It?”

Objectives of the Activity

- Engaging the conversation with women, girls and boys including PWDs to let them understand what it takes for girls to feel safe during their periods.
- To develop a policy brief on menstrual hygiene
- To break the silence, change negative social norms, and raise awareness to end the stigma surrounding menstruation.
- To distribute dignity packs to 20 girls and 20 boys who shall distribute to girls at RHYCO.
- To distribute two vests and two underwear to 20 boys at RHYCO.
- To have a pads bank at RYHCO.
- To have the boys involved in the conversation towards eradicating period poverty and period shaming.

Methodology

As directed by the program, the event organizing committee curated the event conversations and identified moderators, presenters, and discussants for the various subjects.

Interactive conversations, presentations, power talks, questions and answers, and gifting were among the tactics and approaches used at the event, which yielded positive outcomes.

Hosting

All session moderators were physically present for the Menstrual Hygiene Day, which was held at the RHYCO Rescue Centre. Later that day, the media and communications team hosted a Twitter space conversation, which was streamed live on Twitter.

Partnership



Legal Sister organized Menstrual Hygiene Day 2022 in collaboration with National Taxpayers Association, OneToAll, SheHacks, Mkhana Initiatives, Dada Mwenzangu, Pishi Bora, Bright Sparks, LADA, , and TeenTable Talk.

Opening session by Mr. John- Co-Founder RHYCO

Mr. John, RHYCO's Co-Founder, began his remarks by extending a warm welcome to everybody who had attended the occasion. He spoke about RHYCO's history, stating that the rescue center was started by four people in 2014 and that it currently houses 104 children. He went on to say that the safe



house contains JHC, which has 13 children, and that JHC is home to children with cerebral palsy, who are sometimes overlooked by PWDS data. Mr. John appreciated everyone who took the time to be there to share that special day with the children at the centers and thanked all the organizations who were present.

1. Introduction - Sheillah Magomere- Founder Legal Sister



The introduction of the event was made by Ms. Sheillah the Founder of Legal Sister, explaining why everyone was assembled on this day. She mentioned the date and explained that the day is observed on the 28th day of May worldwide because the menstrual cycle on average takes 28 days and people menstruate on an average of



five days each month, May is the fifth month of the year. She reiterated the importance of having both girls and boys commemorate this day because periods are a natural occurrence, and no one should be ashamed, it shouldn't be a secret and neither should anyone shame any girl who is on periods. She went ahead to explain that all the

speakers shall be educating everyone on what happens, how to prevent period shaming, how to eradicate period poverty, and how to maintain good hygiene during periods.

2. Menstrual Hygiene by: Ms. Zaphida –Legal Sister



She began her speech by defining the term "hygiene." She then went on to ask the participants what occurs if they don't practice good hygiene, to which they replied that they might experience diarrhoea or stomach aches. She went on to say that proper washing of the birth organ, healthy eating, drinking water, and

wiping from front to back were ways to keep the pH of the birth canal in check and maintain good hygiene during periods. She also mentioned that there are several menstrual products including super pads, reusable pads, disposable pads, tampons, and menstrual cups which have different hygiene procedures

Ms. Zaphida mentioned that depending on the blood flow, it's crucial to change pads every three to four times when menstruating.



She then went over the various reasons why women suffer cramps during their periods, including that it's a common occurrence, sometimes caused by medical disorders such as cyst, endometriosis or even fibroids, and vulva contraction.

Finally, she stated that it is important to maintain track of the cycle to avoid staining yourself, and for healthy flow checks.

3. Safe use of sanitary towels by Ms. Cynthia Ang'ana –Legal Sister

Cynthia gave a practical example of how to use a sanitary towel. Before she started



her demonstration, she asked the kids what the first signs of menstruation were, and they said shyness, stomach ache, terrible cramps, mood swings, and acne. She concluded by emphasizing the need for the children to wash their hands before and after changing their pads. She also mentioned that, depending on their flow, they should change their pad every

six to eight hours. She also shared a few techniques on the usage of pads at night to prevent leakage.

4. Safe usage of Menstrual cups by Ms. Emmanuella –Mhana Initiative

Emmanuella demonstrated how to put on a menstrual cup to the participants. During the demonstration, she stated that the menstrual Cup is a sustainable method of dealing with menses. She continued by stating that the cup is reusable and medically certified because it is made of



silicone rubber. She further mentioned that the cup can be worn for up to 12 hours, but regular pads can only be used for 6 to 8 hours, and each cup can be used for 3 years.

She described many procedures for sanitizing the cup, including boiling it. C-fold and punch down were demonstrated by Emmanuella as ways of cup insertion. In terms of cost, she stated that menstruation Cups are more expensive than regular



pads, but that they are more sustainable and come in a variety of sizes, including large, small, and medium.

5. Period poverty by Ms. Debbie -OneToAll Initiative

It was noted that when a girl or a woman does not have enough money to buy a pad during her period, this can lead to stigmatization, which can lead to transactional sex, which can lead to teenage pregnancy and school dropout. She called out to the participants if any has 50 shillings on them, but no one had it. She then mentioned



averagely a girl needs 100 Kshs to be able to afford the sanitary towels every month. This was a costly affair since not every girl can access the 100 shillings monthly.

Period poverty, therefore, makes it hard for girls to comfortably access the sanitary pads, the

need for the boys to understand this and offer support to girls during their menses in order to end stigmatization around menses, she also noted that it was important to have well-wishers and sponsors in terms of pad donation in order to facilitate a smooth month for the girls from underprivileged backgrounds.

6. Period shaming by Stephen Osedo – National Taxpayers Association

Stephen started his presentation by asking boys what they would do if a girl starts menstruating at school. They stated that if this occurs, they will inform a teacher and will assist them by covering them with a piece of cloth if they have soiled their

clothes. Inform them that their clothing has been stained.

He posed another question as to why period shaming was harmful. Period shaming, according to the boys, was harmful because it could lead to suicide, low self-esteem, self-





degradation, low self-confidence, stress, and school dropout. The boys were encouraged not to shame or humiliate girls during their menses but help them since it's a natural occurrence.

7. Recognizing challenges faced by people with disabilities (PWDs) during menses Presentation by Sharon from LADA

Recognizing the difficulties that people with disabilities (PWDs) confront during their menstrual cycle, Ms. Sharon continued by stating that there are numerous types of disabilities, such as mental and physical disabilities, which the children mentioned. She went on to say that it is critical to assist individuals with disabilities in putting on their pads during their periods and that sponsors should support menstrual kits for persons with disabilities so that they do not feel isolated.



8. Taxation of Menstruation Products by Stephen Osedo -The National Taxpayers Association

Mr. Osedo began his presentation on taxation by noting that the government should boost the supply of quality, sufficient sanitary towels to public schools so that all girls can access them and stay in school. He also mentioned that the tax on menstrual raw materials should be lowered or removed in order to lower the overall cost of sanitary towels and enhance public access to them. In as much as sanitary towels taxes have been removed, they are still expensive and unaffordable for every girl. He noted that currently, the government poses a 25% import duty and 16% VAT on raw materials thus making the cost of sanitary products very expensive. This is contravenes the efforts to make the menstrual hygiene products affordable, accessible and available to all women and girls in Kenya including PWDs.



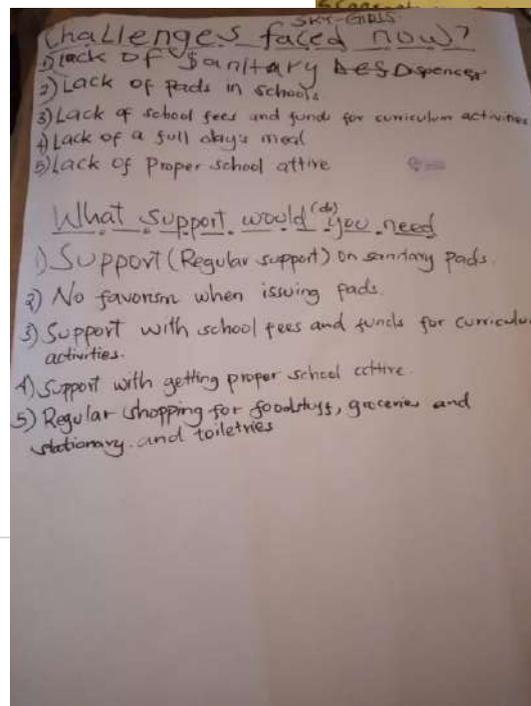
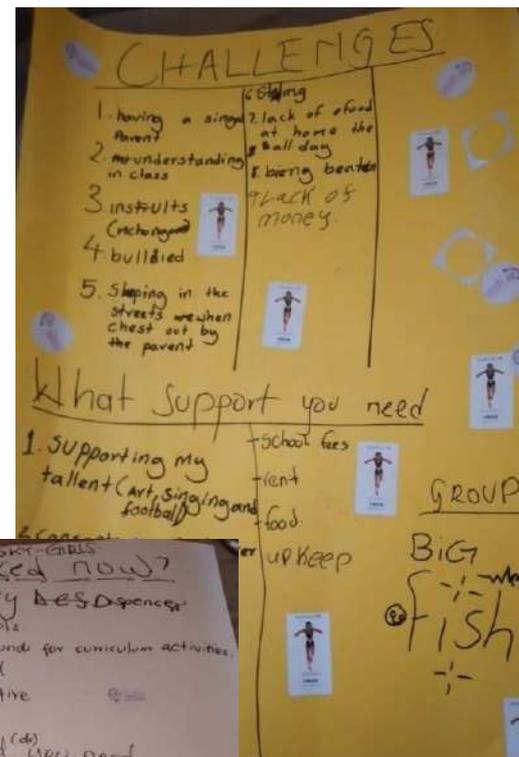
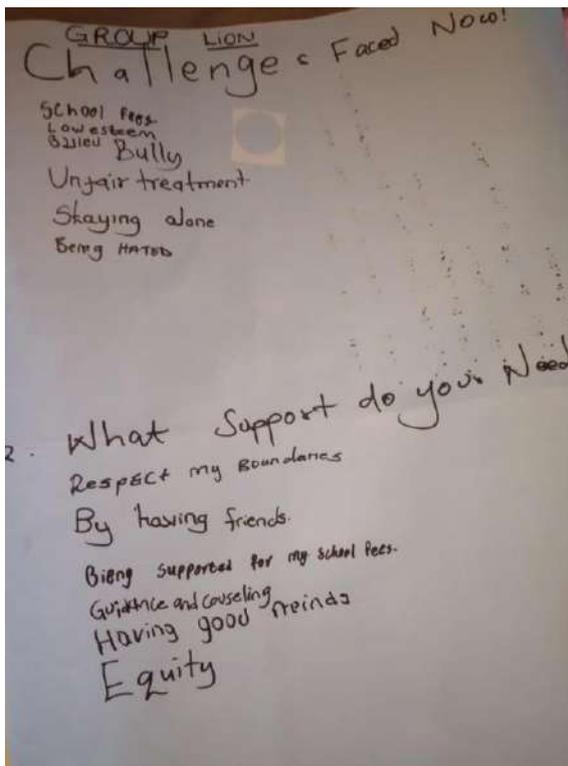
9. Group work by Ms.Evelyne Kilel-Shehacks

Evelyn organized the participants into four groups. With the help of a mentor in each group, they were required to write what they have learned, challenges they face during menstruation, and recommendations. Find annex 1 images on their feedback.

10. Closing Remarks

Ms. Sheillah gave final words, thanking all of the partners who helped make the event a success, and everyone who came to help make the event a success. She reminded the boys to gift the sanitary towels to any girl/mother of their choice and hoped that they can continue with such initiative which can eradicate period poverty. The children were given a GBV toll-free UNFPA number, which is 1195 by Tony from UNFPA.

11. Annex 1 Group work manila



1. Organize group
 2. Abstain from sex
 3. Nobody should touch your body
 4. How to control menstruation period by wearing your pad
 5. Periods is a normal thing that goes on in girls by flowing of blood.
 6. Period poverty can lower self-esteem of a girl.

Challenges

1. Early pregnancy leads to drop out of school.
2. Engaging in sexual intercourse because of lack of pads.
3. Lack of knowledge on menstruation.

Recommendation

1. Help each other.
2. Abstain from sex.
3. Offering guidance and counselling.



12. Annex 2 Pictorials

13. *Figure 1. During the group work presentation, the beneficiaries.*

Figure .2 A photo was taken during a fun game with the kids



Figure 3. A group photo after the donation of sanitary towels, pants and



towels.

