

**Menstrual hygiene management in secondary schools
The case of Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

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Learning about menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is a vital aspect of life for adolescent girls. This study was conducted in 12 secondary schools of Kinondoni district. The schools were selected by cluster sampling technique among public and private schools. Data were collected through questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and guide checklist. A total of 149 girls participated in the survey and out of them, 84 participated in the FGD. A total of 23 head/deputy head of schools and matrons participated in semi-structured interview. The tools collected information about MHM education, hygienic practices during menstruation and MHM facilities. All surveyed schools were found to offer some sort of MHM education to girls and 3 schools out of 9 co-education schools involved in the study, provide education about MHM to boys. A large majority of girls said they need more information and preferably, be provided at school. Lack of soap, hand wash facilities, privacy in toilet and free pads to attend emergencies need were identified as main problems. A supportive environment for MHM has to be provided in schools and to achieve this, instruction about MHM has to be incorporated into compulsory health education in primary and secondary schools curricula with separate sessions for girls and boys. Moreover, there is an urgent need for girl's friendly toilet designs and appropriately final menstrual products disposal facilities in schools. The efforts do not always mean large investments but in many instances, it suffices with just small investment.