



Rationale for Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools

Orientation and Planning Workshop on the Implementation of the #MeronAko Distance Learning Package in Region VIII



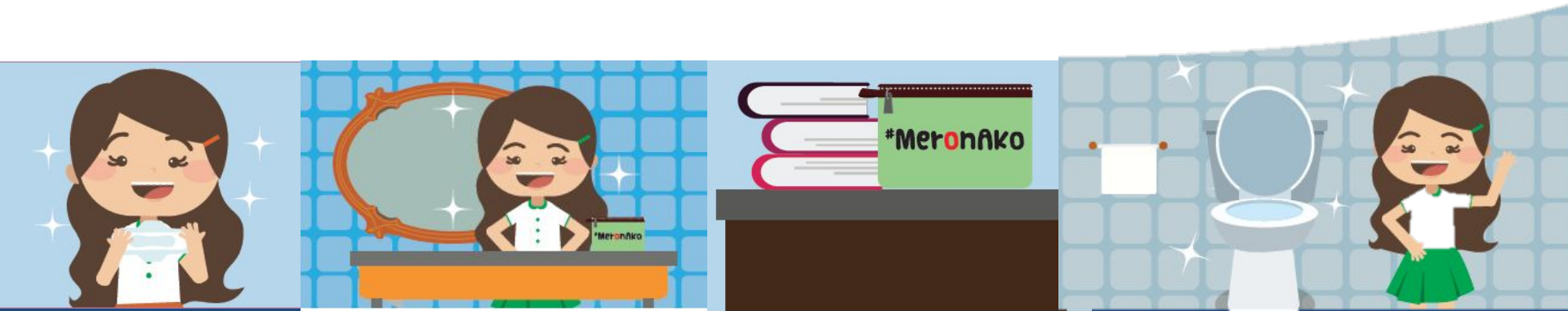


MHM AND WASH IN SCHOOLS

What is Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)?

Women and adolescent girls

- Use clean menstrual management materials to absorb or collect menstrual blood
- Can change in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of a menstrual period, using soap and water for washing the body
- Have access to safe and convenient facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials
- Understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear



Why is MHM important?

- Meeting the hygiene needs of all adolescent girls and women in all settings enables human rights, dignity and public health
- Social pressures and biological needs may prevent girls from participating in schools, clubs, sports or religious life
- MHM challenges can negatively impact learning experiences of girls (school absenteeism, decreased participation, distraction and falling behind in course work).



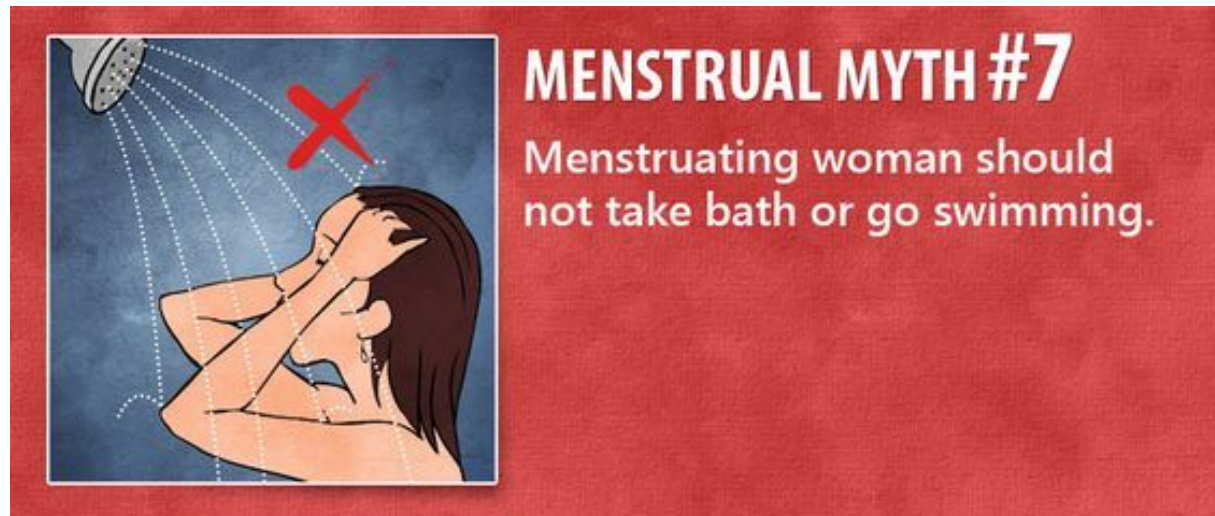
MHM in Schools in the Philippines

- Girls hear & learn about menstruation from **female** relatives & friends.
- Most of what girls know about managing menstruation is **inaccurate**.
- Most **teachers** feel ill-equipped to teach or talk about menstrual hygiene.
- Most girls feel **ashamed** about having their menstrual period.
- **Poor WASH conditions** in schools pose significant challenges to effective MHM among school girls.

MHM in Schools in the Philippines

ISSUE

- *Invisible problem*
- *Sporadic efforts*
- *Need for enabling environment*
- *Integration in curriculum implementation and learner support services*



Ideal Health Belief System



Knows that menstruation is a **normal**

& **important** milestone of fertility.
Feels **ready** to manage

personal menstrual **hygiene**.

Feels **safe** & **confident** to consult
teacher/nurse about menstruation.

Takes a **bath** & observes **proper**
hygiene.

Talks to **teacher/nurse/guidance**
officer about menstruation.

Seeks accurate medical advice to
manage menstrual **pain**.

Global MHM in Ten Priorities (2014-2024)

Priority 1: *Build a strong cross-sectoral evidence base for MHM in schools for prioritization of policies, resource allocation and programming at scale.*

Priority 2: *Develop and disseminate global guidelines for MHM in schools with minimum standards, indicators and illustrative strategies for adaptation, adoption and implementation at national and sub-national levels.*

Priority 3: *Advance the MHM in schools movement through a comprehensive, evidence-based advocacy platform that generates policies, funding and action across sectors and at all levels of government.*

Priority 4: *National governments will have allocated responsibility for the provision of MHM in schools to specific government entities, including adequate budget and M&E; and will report through global channels and to constituents.*

Priority 5: *Integrate MHM and the capacity and resources to deliver inclusive MHM into the education system.*

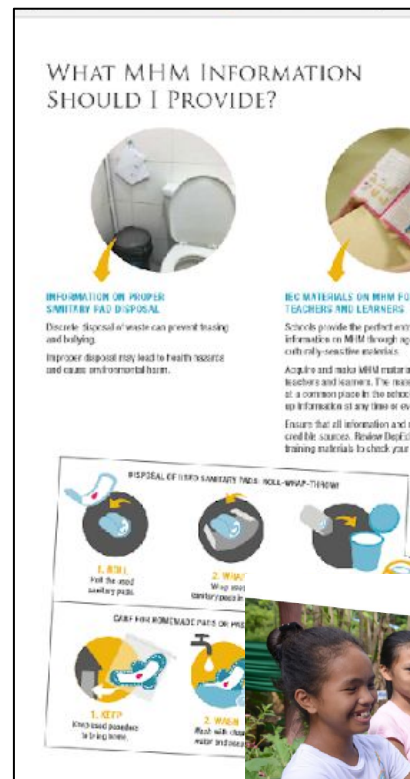
MHM as Driver of WinS

- MHM is a key component of WASH in Schools under the National WinS Policy
- WinS Policy provides a gender-responsive WinS program as a whole
- MHM indicator – access to sanitary pad – in DepEd Enhanced Basic Education Information System (E-BEIS)
- MHM as one of five critical indicators in WinS TSA

MHM as Driver of WinS

MHM in Schools Resources

- **MHM Booklet Philippines**
<https://www.susana.org/en/knowledge-hub/resources-and-publications/library/details/3604>
- **DepEd WinS Hygiene Booklet**
<http://www.fitforschool.international/resource/philippine-department-of-education-wash-in-schools-three-star-approach-implementation-booklet-on-hygiene/>
- **DepEd WinS Sanitation Booklet**
<http://www.fitforschool.international/resource/artment-of-education-wash-in-schools-three-star-approach-implementation-booklet-on-sanitation/>
- **WinS Monitoring Results: Menstrual Hygiene Management**
- [TSA-WinS-Monitoring-MHM-201920.pdf](https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/TSA-WinS-Monitoring-MHM-201920.pdf)
([deped.gov.ph](https://www.deped.gov.ph))

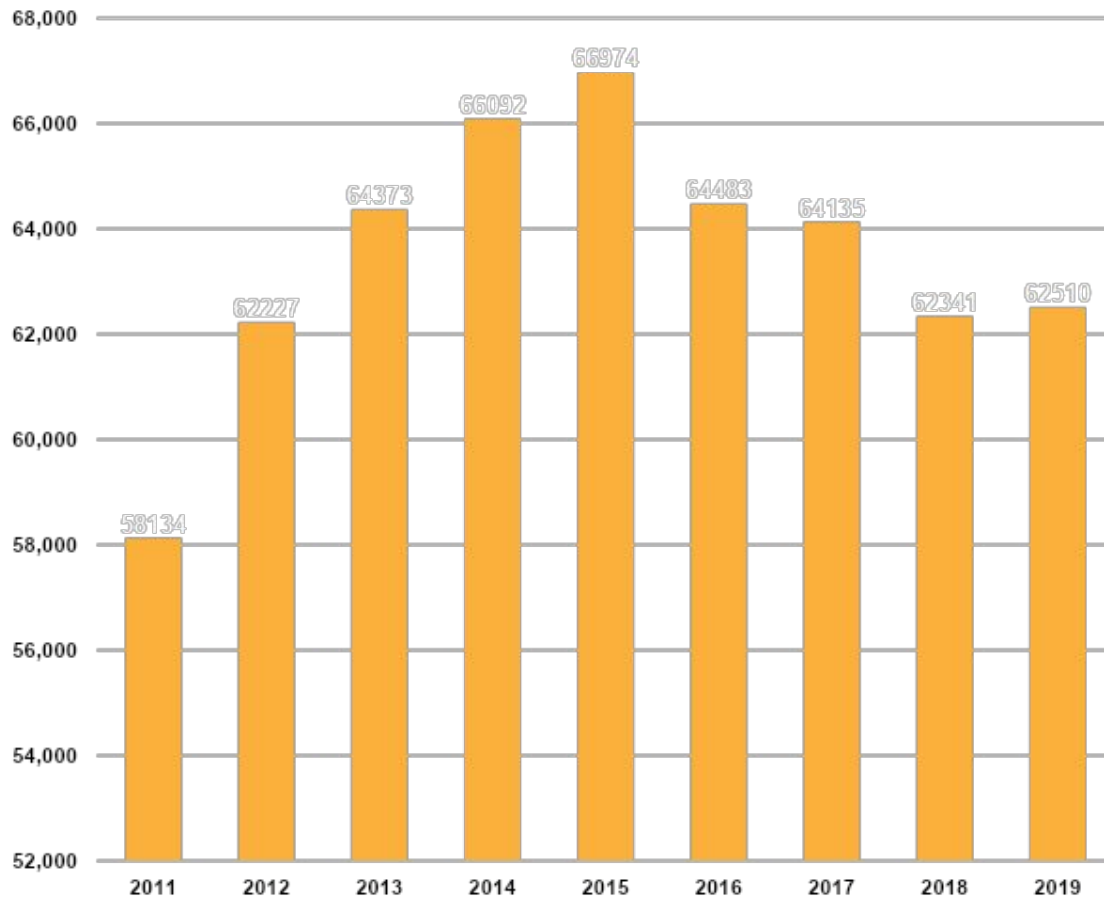




MHM AND COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CSE)

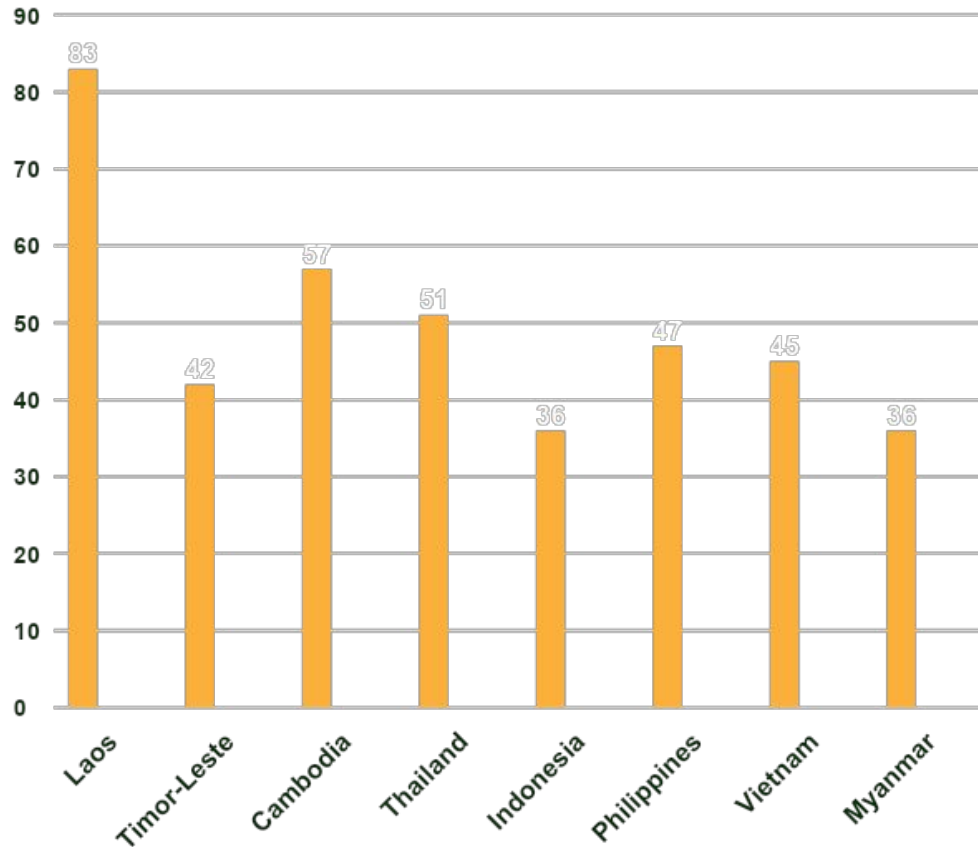
*State of Teenage Pregnancy in the
Philippines*

Number of births from Mothers 10-17 years old: Philippines, 2011-2019



**About
171 livebirths
were born to
minors every
day in 2019.**

Adolescent Birth Rate in Southeast Asian Countries

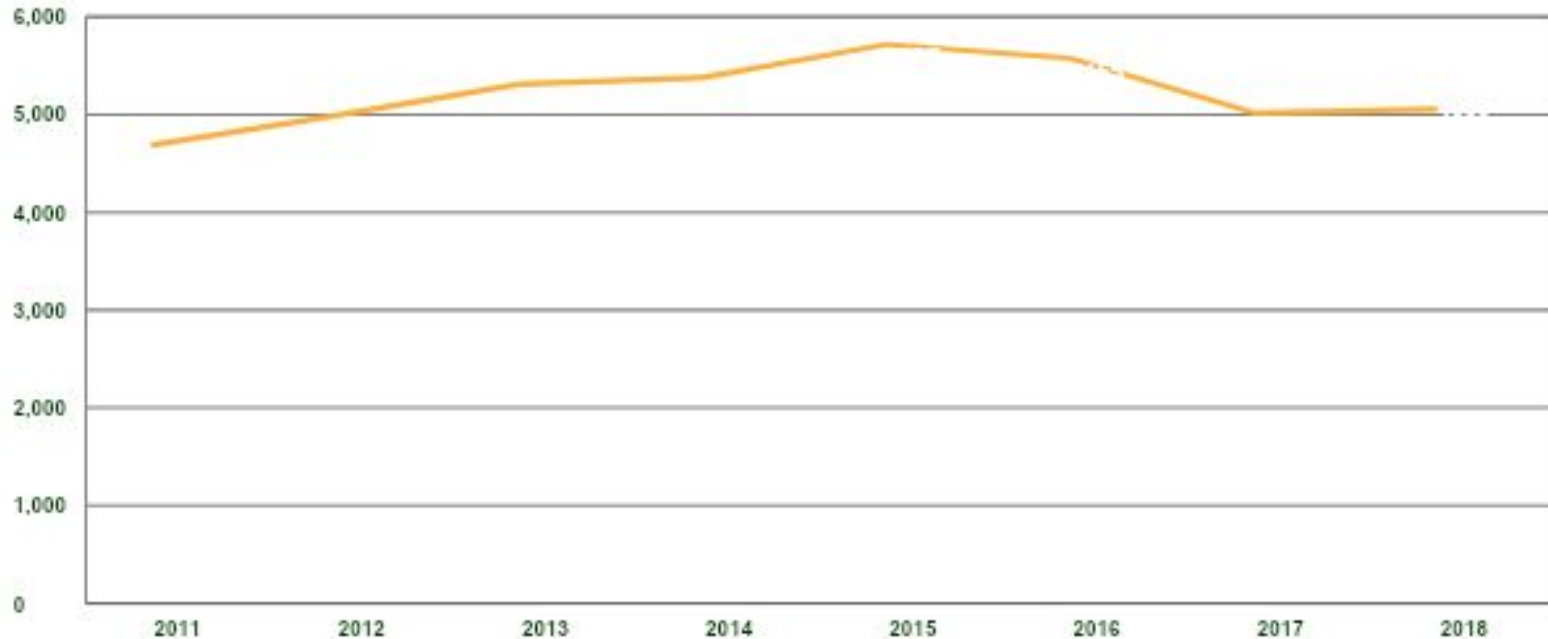


Source: Laos (2017 MICS); Timor-Leste (2016 DHS); Cambodia (2014 DHS); Thailand (2015-2016 MICS); Indonesia (2017 IDHS); Philippines (2017 NDHS); Vietnam (2014 MICS); Myanmar (2015-2016 DHS)

The Philippines has 47 births annually per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years, one of the highest adolescent birth rates among the ASEAN Member States.

More and more minors who have given birth had repeat pregnancies...

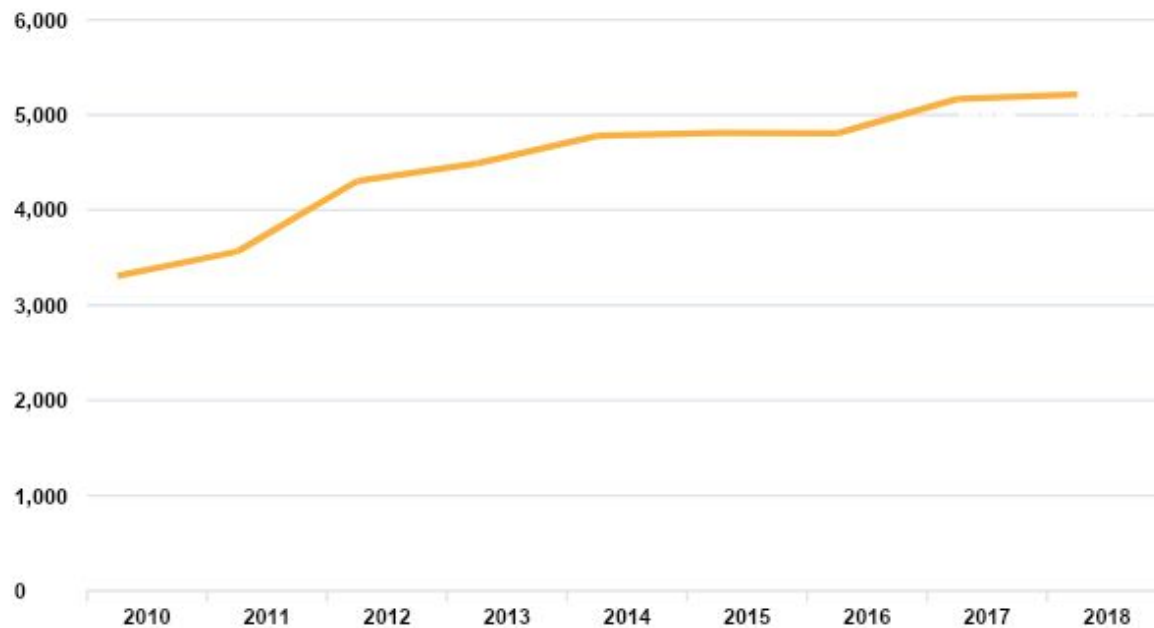
**Number of Repeat Pregnancies (Second Pregnancy)
Among 10-17 Girls: Philippines, 2011-2018**



Source: Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, Philippine Statistics Authority

The numbers of “batang ama” or young fathers have steadily increased over the eight-year period...

Number of Live Births by Fathers below 18: Philippines, 2010-2018



Source: Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, Philippine Statistics Authority



The lack of access to essential information and services during crisis...



Creates another crisis with an approximate 102,000 unintended pregnancies among adolescents by the end of 2020.

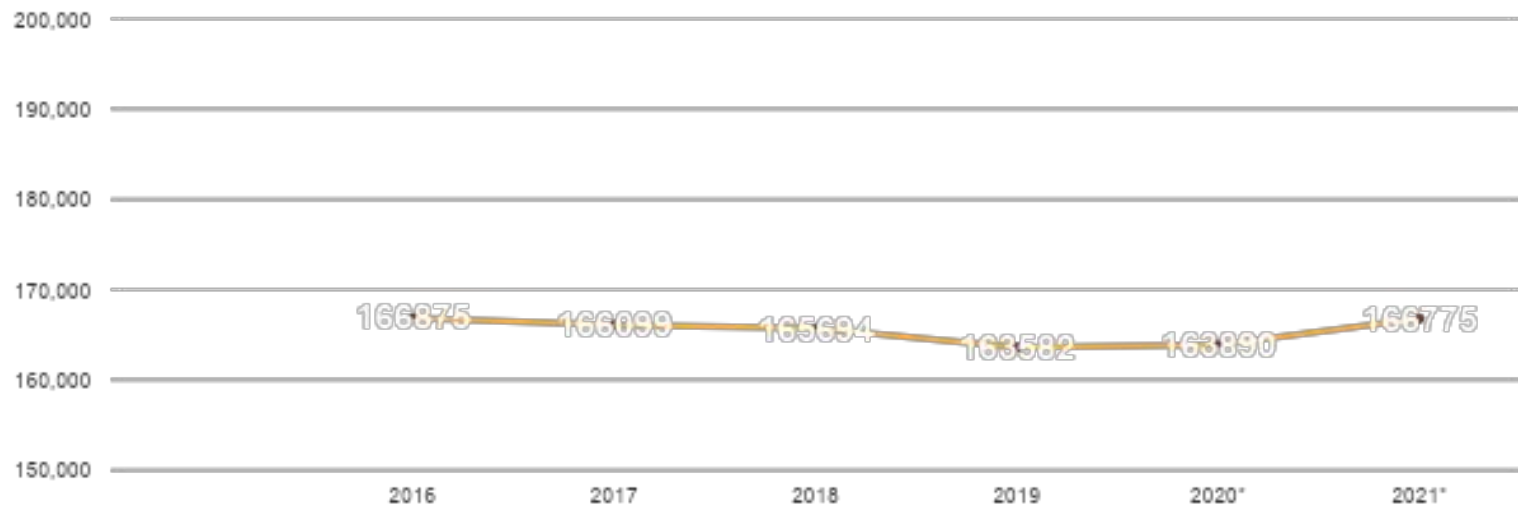
Source: UP Population Institute and UNFPA Philippines, 2020



Negative impacts of adolescent pregnancy

- **Pregnancy and childbirth complications among 15-24 years old women account for 24.8% of all maternal deaths in the country (PSA, 2018)**
- **Adolescents in the Philippines who have begun childbearing before the age of 18 are less likely to complete secondary education (UNFPA, 2018).**
- **PHP 33 billion of lost income, equivalent to 1.1% of the country's GDP in 2012 (CHSI/Herrin, 2016)**

Total Number of Teen Mothers, 2016-2021



Source: Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, Philippine Statistics Authority

The burden of adolescent parenthood...

By end of 2021, there would be **166,775** adolescent parents who would need social protection --- continued education, livelihood, protection from violence/exploitation, access to health/social services.

Note:

*Data for 2020 and 2021 are projected numbers, based on 2019 data

- Cohort data for 2016 and 2017 are incomplete.
 - 2016 — Data for age 11 (2009) and 12 (2010) are missing
 - 2017 — Data for age 11 (2010) is missing

Crises or emergencies do not stop adolescents from experiencing changes (physical, emotional) that affect their health and well-being. Thus, it is important for them to obtain reliable information during this period as they deal with new experiences and developments that involve their bodies, feelings, and environment among others.

Do Filipino Adolescents have comprehensive knowledge of Sex?

13.1 years old

The mean age at first menstruation among women ages 15-49. Filipino adolescent girls are sexually maturing at a young age.

27% of Filipino youth

expressed to have enough knowledge about sex.

Sources of information about Sex



The male respondents reported that they rely on puberty knowledge from nobody (28%), mother (22%), Father (18%) and friends (18%)



While the female respondents ask mother (71%), other relatives (8%), and nobody (8%) for puberty knowledge (YAFSS, 2013)

Source: YAFSS, 2013

Note: New round of YAFSS is being planned

Law/Policies related to CSE

- **Republic Act 10354: Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012**

(Section 14: Age- and development-appropriate reproductive health education to adolescents)

- **Executive Order 12 Series of 2017**

(The Department of Education shall implement a gender-sensitive and rights-based comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in the curriculum)

- **Executive Order 141 Series of 2021**

(Teen pregnancy a “national priority” and adopts a whole-of-government approach in addressing the problem. A Comprehensive Action Plan Towards the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancies will be developed to programmatically consolidate the different initiatives of all government agencies and institutions.)



MHM AND LEARNING CONTINUITY AMID COVID-19

How does COVID-19 affect MHM?

The pandemic further aggravates current challenges in menstrual health and hygiene.

Averting (another) Emergency within Emergency



- Periods do not stop for pandemics.
- Puberty does not stop for pandemics.
- Pandemic further aggravates challenges in MHM.
- School closure: Lost opportunity to reach and empower girls and boys
- Home schooling: opportunity to engage parents/adults in MHM/CSE
- Averting MHM learning loss – more girls and boys with optimal life chances

How does COVID-19 affect MHM?

MHM situation prior to COVID-19

Water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure at home and in schools remains to be a barrier for MHM

- Inconsistent access to clean water for washing and menstrual hygiene
- Lack of clean or functional toilets where girls can safely manage menstruation
- Pupil-to-toilet ratio in schools are not ideal
- Lack of privacy in toilets
- Lack of trashcans and disposal mechanisms

Conditions under COVID-19

Limited or disrupted access to WASH facilities due to quarantine

- Quarantined population with no access to piped water supply and sewerage
- Lack of maintenance of WASH infrastructure and disruption of service provision
- Stock out or increased price of commodities such as soap and cleaning materials

How does COVID-19 affect MHM?

MHM situation prior to COVID-19	Conditions under COVID-19
<p>Lack of access to preferred absorbent materials in some areas</p> <p>Schools have been able to make drastic improvements in availability of sanitary pads in schools</p>	<p>Disrupted access to products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Many subsidized supply schemes (such as free distribution of sanitary pads in schools) have been suspended▪ Economic impact of the pandemic forces households to prioritize other needs at the expense of female reproductive needs▪ Disrupted supply chains can push prices up and make menstrual products unaffordable

How does COVID-19 affect MHM?

MHM situation prior to COVID-19

Girls lack comprehensive information on managing menstruation at home and at school, and biological and hygiene information is often blurred with cultural beliefs and practices

Conditions under COVID-19

- Disrupted access to information about menstruation
- Schools and community centers where girls usually access information on MHM are closed
 - Limitations of distance learning modes can lead to de-prioritization of lessons on MHM/SRH



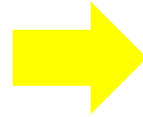
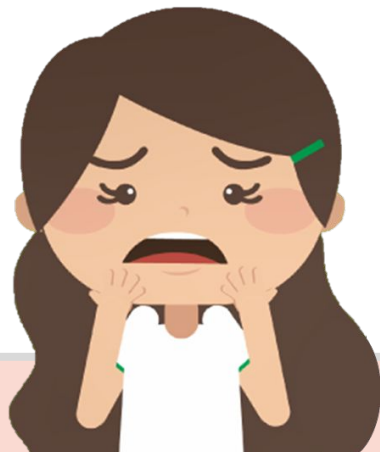
Challenges to MHM Learning Delivery

- Malice and shame about sex, sexuality and reproductive issues
- Lack of enabling mechanisms for teaching MHM
 - Limited learning management skills of teachers
 - Lack of teaching materials
 - Slow roll-out of sexuality education curriculum
- Limitation of MHM-related lessons to anatomy, physiology and health issues
- Curriculum design misses out on pre-menarche age



The #MeronaKO Approach

Meron ako...
di pwede...



Meron akong regla...
meron akong...
pangarap, kakayahan, maraming
magagawa, mga magulang,
guro at kaibigan
na sumusuporta



Gender-inclusive, interactive and
creative approach to learning delivery

The #MeronAKO Approach

- What does the approach enable?

- ✓ Open and healthy discussion in classroom
- ✓ Expanded areas and topics for integration
 - Gender identity and relations
 - Child protection
 - WASH practices and provisions
- ✓ Teaching and classroom management made easy and teachers confident.
- ✓ Outreach to younger pre-menarche (grade 4) girls through peer education, co-curricular activities
- ✓ School governance responsive to MHM needs



MHM Learning Delivery amid COVID

Challenges amid COVID

- Closure of schools meant no use for school-based MHM tools/activities
- Learning loss on MHM/ASRH - contracted curriculum has de-prioritized MHM/ASRH lessons
- Lack of distance-learning tools to reach pupils at home

#MeronAko distance learning package

- Online write-shop for development of lesson plans and learning materials
- Development of distance learning modules
- *Kwenturuan* module for engaging parents
- Use of pre-COVID videos and print materials

References

1. WASH United (2020), Periods Don't Stop for Pandemics, Menstrual Hygiene Day infographic
2. Department of Education, Mainstreaming Menstrual Hygiene Management in Public Basic Education in the Philippines
3. Department of Education, WASH in Schools Three-Star Approach Menstrual Hygiene Management: WinS Monitoring Results Philippines School Year 2017/2018 to 2018/2019
4. UNICEF (2020), Monitoring and mitigating the secondary impacts of WASH services availability and access
5. UNICEF (2017), WASH in Schools Empowers Girls' Education
6. Ellis et al (2016), WASH challenges to girls' menstrual hygiene management in Metro Manila, Masbate and South Central Philippines. Practical Action Publishing

Key Activities and Dates

- Target school implementation period – 2nd grading period: November 15, 2021 – January 28, 2022
- Capacity building: MHM-WinS-CSE webinar:
 - November 4-5 and 8-9 (4 days)
 - Participants:
 - Grade 5 teachers [MAPEH, Science, EPP] of selected schools
 - School heads
 - EPS, CID, SGOD
- Division preparations – September-October
 - Selection and mobilization of target districts and schools
 - Printing and distribution of modules and other materials

Criteria for Selection of Target Schools

- Elementary schools that are:
 - SBM Level 3 recognized by Region
 - Nominated for SBM Level 3
 - WinS 2-Star and 3-Star level
- SDOs to decide on number of schools, considering, among other factors:
 - Need
 - Budget
 - Manageability



Thank you