

## A TRAINING REPORT ON MENSTRUATION MANAGEMENT

HELD AT KAFUMU VILLAGE

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015



Sponsored by:

**MOUNTAINS OF HOPE CHILDRENS' MINISTRY**

Training conducted and report compiled by:

Community Skills Trainers association (COSTA)

## **Introduction:**

Menstruation has been a silent issue and the whole burden of it has been left to women and girls.

The cultures and society had put taboos and norms on menstruation, which have no values in today's world.

Poverty is also a major contributor of poor menstruation management, and all the attached taboos and norms on menstruation has been a result of poverty. Women have been struggling to improvise ways of enabling them to manage menstruation and that is how they came up with all those taboos and norms.

The poor management of menstruation has caused a lot of problems to the girl child, and below are some of the major effects

- **Irregular attendance:** The girl child from the poorest households is likely to be absent at school for not less than 45 days a year. This makes her to perform poorly in her academics hence making the boys to perform better than the girls
- **Less participation in games and sports:** Still the girl child from the poorest households shall not fully participate in games and sports, especially when she is in her menstruation periods. This is because her attendance is irregular and for those who may attend would be using rags, which makes them unsafe and uncomfortable to participate in such activities.
- **Early sex/pregnant/marriage:** Due to lack of money to buy the modern sanitary pads, girls are likely to enter into sexual relationship at an early stage in order to get money from her lover to buy sanitary pads. At the end the girl is likely to start early sex, can get pregnant, or get married
- **School dropout:** Once a girl have started her sexual life the end result will be dropping out of school

Basing on all that civil society organizations, government ministries, and members of parliament of the republic of Uganda, have collectively come up to join hands together in putting up measures that will enable the girl child manage menstruation very well

Community Skills Trainers (COST) has also experienced the burden the girl child from the poorest household go through in managing her menstruation. And that is why COST have initiated the training on menstruation management

The training targeted men and women, boys and girls to create awareness, and to form a collective coalition in communities that will make sure that the girl child shall access sanitary pads sustainably, attend school regularly, and protect her from defilers.

It is upon this that COST and Mountains of hope got together and initiated this training, which was successfully done

## Objectives of the training

1. By the end of the training participants should be able to understanding the definition of menstruation
2. By the end of the training participants should be able to differentiate the myth from facts of menstruation
3. By the end of the training the participants should be able to collectively manage menstruation very well at all levels i.e. home, school, church, during sports activities health centers etc
4. By the end of the training the participants should be able to make their own home-made re-usable sanitary pads

**Activity theme:** Comprehensive and Sustainable menstruation-management

### Activity over view:

The training was officially opened by the Managing Director of Mountains of Hope James Malinga. In his address he thanked the participants for having turned up in a good number, and requested them to participate fully in the training in order to grasp the skills and knowledge, the training shall give.

The facilitators came from Luwero in a community based organization called Community Skills- Trainers association (COSTA), much emphasis were put on men/boys involvement, breaking the silence on menstruation, and a collective effort by all stakeholders to support the girl child to access sanitary pads sustainably and complete school.

**Target group:** - The training targeted 48 direct beneficiaries (12girls, 12 mothers, 12 fathers and 12 boys) all from six villages, each village brought 8 people. The indirect beneficiaries were 3 mountains of hope staffs. This mad the total of the targeted people to be 51 people

**Venue:** - The training was conducted in the chairperson's home of Kafumu village

**No. of participants attended:** - The total number of participants that attended were 39 people and are segregated as shown in the table below

Sex		Teachers	Mothers	Church leaders	Fathers	Students	Mountains of Hope staffs
Female	27	3	15	0	-	7	2
Male	12	1	-	1	5	4	1
Totals	39	4	15	1	5	11	3

Sub topics covered: -

- **Pre-test exercise:** To know the level of understanding on issues concerning menstruation
- **Body parts differences at birth and changes at puberty:** To let participants know where menstruation starts, and why is it in girls/women and not boys/men

- **Menstruation meaning:** To give participants a clear picture of why, how, where and when menstruation occurs
- **Menstruation myth:** To de-brief the participants on the untrue messages that were attached to menstruation
- **Menstruation old management concerns:** To show the participants how menstruation have affected the women/girls in using the traditional knowledge
- **Involvement of men and boys in menstruation management:** To bring men/boys in the struggle of menstruation management in order to support the girl child to complete school
- **Factors that influence the good menstruation management:** To lobby the stakeholders to put in place facilities that are needed for menstruation management for body hygiene, and to prevent the bacterial infections which may occur in poor menstruation management
- **Managing menstruation healthy related body complications:** To equip participants with knowledge and skills to handle body complications that occur during menstruation
- **Menstruation calendar:** To enable the participants understand how to count the menstruation cycle days
- **Making re-usable sanitary pads:** To train participants on how to make re-usable homemade sanitary pads

#### **General observation:**

The men and boys who attended the training liked and promised to be allies in the struggle of enabling the girl child access menstruation facilities at all levels

Some participants including girls had never seen a modern disposable sanitary pad, and all of them had never heard of a re-usable sanitary pads both homemade and factory made

We learnt that some girls were using old news papers, leaves (ebikokoma), and sponge (destroying the mattresses by cutting off some parts to use)

All this showed that such girls didn't have good facilities to use, that is why they opted for such.

#### **Lesson learnt:**

- Men are willing to know and to get involved in menstruation management but it was only the culture that had denied them the right to participate in it

#### **Best practice:**

- Men/boys picked interest in making re-usable homemade sanitary pads

#### **Challenges:**

- Fewer men turned up for the training
- Some children had to do their examinations on the training day (Saturday), that is why they didn't turn up

**Recommendation:**

1. The trained people need to be monitored and supported to practice the acquired skills
2. The trained people should also form a parish child protection committee, to monitor the children welfare and respond to child abuse
3. Mountains of hope to continue with such trainings that empowers communities to handle their immediate problems, and liaise with other service providers, and government authorities for a collective effort to manage menstruation comprehensively and sustainably
4. There is a need to put up wash rooms, emergency sanitary pads, drugs, and a contact persons at school, health centers, and churches

**Conclusion:**

COST wishes to thank Mountains of Hope and all the trained beneficiaries for having trusted us to share the little we have with you.

COST therefore calls upon all men and boys to become allies in menstruation management. Let us stand together to break the silence on menstruation management and keep the girl child in school till completion.

Report compiled:

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