

# Integrated Menstrual Health Programming in Asia and the Pacific

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## Opportunities and barriers for joint action to holistically address menstrual health in Asia and the Pacific region

In exploring the intersection between menstrual health, water, sanitation and hygiene, and sexual and reproductive health, actors and a desk review identified the following:

### Shared Challenges

Difficulties in shifting gender and social norms and attitudes

Challenges in engaging men and boys on taboo topics

A need to reach girls out of school



### Shared Goals

Educating young people on taboo topics

Keeping girls in school

Improving health outcomes and delivering essential services

## Recommendations for joint action

1

WASH and SRH actors to leverage one another's efforts for a greater impact on improving menstrual health

Develop shared terminology on 'menstrual health'  
Establish shared goals, indicators and targets for activities

Strengthen cross-sectoral learning and documentation between WASH and SRH actors

Conduct joint operational research to guide collaborative WASH and SRHR approaches

Design and deliver joint, rights-based menstrual health programming solutions

2

Strengthen education and community awareness of menstrual health

Strengthen age-appropriate puberty education canvassing both menstrual health and hygiene and SRH

Develop and deliver education on menstrual health to those identified as sources of information by adolescent girls (such as mothers, older sisters, aunts)

Engage men and boys

Utilize existing SRHR platforms and services to broaden menstrual health knowledge and services

3

Extend the reach of integrated menstrual health MHH solutions and SRH services

Accessible and inclusive integrated menstrual health, WASH and SRH services that go beyond school settings to reach women and girls with disabilities and other marginalized groups

## Background:

- Poor menstrual health and hygiene can impact girls':
  - Educational attainment
  - Social participation
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Future livelihoods
- There have been few holistic approaches to improving MHH outcomes implemented to date
- The GAP project aims to:
  - Increase uptake and awareness of SRH services and MH practices
  - Improve accessibility of menstrual products
  - Strengthen knowledge and attention to MHH regionally

## Results:

**37,883** girls, boys, and adults with improved awareness and knowledge of SRHR, and good MH practices

**8,239** women and girls using their choice of contraception.

**1,710** students accessing MH-friendly, safe and private WASH facilities at school.

Locally produced and appropriate **reusable MH materials** sold through **piloted supply chain development** activities with local women entrepreneurs

**Community of practice** on integrated approaches to MH in Asia Pacific established



## Conclusions:

Cross-sectoral collaboration and evidence-based experimentation can lead to practical, effective approaches to improving a country's menstrual health ecosystem and increasing the reach and quality of education and services available to young people.

