

Update on MHM Research Study in Sindh, Pakistan

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Completion of MHM Research Study in Sindh, Pakistan

Our Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) research study launched in the Province of Sindh in December 2016 came to a successful close by February 2017. This UNICEF-funded study was part of the continuation of nationwide MHM research conducted by RMF in close collaboration with (and based in the methodology of) Professor Marni of Columbia University, New York. The key outcome of the study findings is to develop the Pakistan Girls' Puberty Book, which is a natural next step to UNICEF's research and interventions in Menstrual Health Management in Pakistan since 2012. This research also forms part of UNICEF's global WinS/MHM project that aims to strengthen evidence-based advocacy of MHM in 10 different countries.

Research Methodology

As is the normal procedure, we first had to obtain a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the Sindh Ministry of Education, whose members proved to be very cooperative in issuing the document. They also identified the two districts that were safe for us in terms of the security protocols for our team of researchers. The data collection methodology included three strategic approaches:

- Ethnographic observations
- Key informant interviews with adults
- Participatory group activities with adolescent young women aged 10–19

The next step was identification of one rural and one urban girls' school. The rural district identified was Khairpur, and a government girls' high school was randomly selected. After an observation checklist for the school was carried out, four groups of schoolgirls and one group of out-of-school girls were subjects for participatory group activities. Four interviews with key stakeholders of the community were also conducted, bringing the total number of participants to 62.

The urban component was a government girls' high school in District Hyderabad. The same methodology was applied, and led to 65 participants, including 4 groups of schoolgirls, 1 group of out-of-school girls, and 4 interviews with community leaders and key stakeholders.

Progress on the Pakistan Girls' Puberty Book

The data collected is undergoing transcription and analysis. The Pakistan Girls' Puberty Book is currently in the illustration phase. It is expected that the study's final results will be ready to be presented in a knowledge dissemination seminar by the end of May.