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PASS for Menstrual Health. Period.

Partnering to Support Schools in Promoting Menstrual Health.

A girl's education impacts her health, the health of her future family, and her future economic potential. The growing evidence of this positive association has strengthened international resolve to improve educational opportunities for adolescent girls. Evidence from East and Southern Africa has shown that girls' participation in schools is severely hampered by menstrual, sexual, and reproductive health (MSRH) issues. In particular, young girls lack the knowledge, menstrual management products, water and sanitation facilities in schools, and social support to manage their menses. Pervasive bullying by male students and staff adds to the high levels of shame and anxiety surrounding menstruation, and encourages girls to exclude themselves from school activities. Furthermore a 2017 Human Rights watch report stated that more than 8,000 girls in Tanzania are expelled from school each year due to pregnancy.

The long-term aim of this research project is to improve health and development outcomes among girls in Tanzania and beyond by developing a sustainable and scaleable intervention to improve girls' health and wellbeing. The aims of this project directly relate to the majority of Sustainable Development Goals including:

- 1 (end poverty),
- 3 (good health and wellbeing),
- 4 (quality education),
- 5 (gender equality),
- 6 (clean water and sanitation),
- 10 (reduced inequalities),
- 11 (sustainable cities and communities),
- 13 (climate action),
- 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) and
- 17 (partnerships for the goals).

The project is a partnership between two leading research institutes (one in the UK and one in Tanzania), a Tanzanian based international NGO, and the local government authorities within two northern regions of Tanzania. The overall aim is to develop a scaleable comprehensive MSRH intervention within Tanzanian government structures to improve MSRH practices and perceptions and the overall school climate to ensure the psychosocial wellbeing and optimal school participation and performance of secondary school girls.

This will be achieved through 3 specific objectives:

- 1) To refine an existing NGO-led MSRH programme to better engage local governments, and enhance the school component through the engagement of boys, refinement of the pain management activities, and inclusion of water and sanitation facility improvement activities.
- 2) To work with government and schools to develop mechanisms to integrate the MSRH intervention within government schools.
- 3) To pilot the refined MSRH intervention to assess
 - a) feasibility (including cost per student, school and district), sustainability and acceptability and
 - b) effect on MSRH practice and perceptions and the overall school climate. Our research project will directly benefit:
 - i) Tanzanian adolescent girls and boys and their communities;
 - ii) teachers and school officials and
 - iii) local and national government. Our project will advance empirical knowledge and further develop theoretical dispositions on how holistic and embedded menstrual, sexual and reproductive health projects can impact on a girl's development. These findings will be beneficial to
 - iv) policy makers,
 - v) researchers and
 - vi) international/implementing organisations.

Project Timeline

Year	Phase	Activity	Who	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	Phase I	Workshop 1	All												
		Material preparation (SOPs etc)													
2021	Phase II	Step 1 Formative - Four Schools - Mwanza region (FGDs and KIs)	MITU/LSHTM												
		Step 2 District engagement Mwanza	Femme												
		Workshop 2	All												
2021	Phase III	Material preparation (All teams)	All												
		Stage 1 - LGA meeting	Femme												
		Step 3 Stage 2: Sensitisation Schools#1&2 teachers, parents, communities	Femme/LGA												
		Stage 3 School #1 school improvements and class sessions & 6 week check in	Femme/LGA/Schools												
		Baseline survey School #1 (quant & qual)	MITU/LSHTM												
		Review Step 3 experiences - collaborative programme refinements	All												
2022	Phase III	Menstrual Health day	All												
		Stage 1 - LGA meeting	Femme												
		Step 3 Stage 2: Sensitisation Schools#3&4 teachers, parents, communities	Femme/LGA												
		Stage 3 School #3 school improvements and class sessions & 6 week check in	Femme/LGA/Schools												
		Baseline survey School #3 (quant & qual)	MITU/LSHTM												
		Endline Survey School #1 (quant & Qual)	MITU/LSHTM												
		Analysis of step 2 (part 2) process	All												
2023	Phase III	Menstrual Health day	All												
		Endline Survey School #3 (quant & Qual)	MITU/LSHTM												
		Analysis of all data	All												
2023	Phase IV	Workshop	All												
		Menstrual Health Day	All												