



WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES
AND GIRL SCOUTS

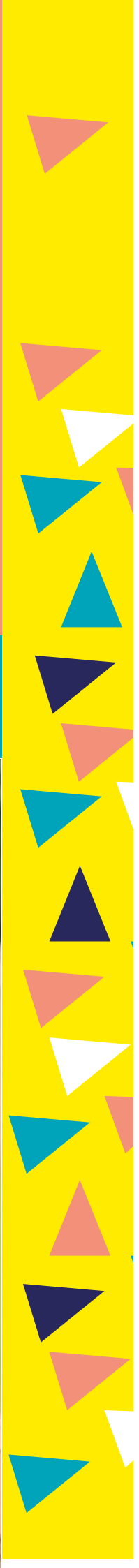
ROSIE'S WORLD

MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE (MHH) EDUCATION

Menstruation is a normal biological part of a young woman's life – PERIOD.

But for millions of young women around the world, managing their monthly menstrual cycle and society's rules around it, present major barriers to them making the most out of their life.

At the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) we ensure girls know how to manage their periods safely and help them advocate for communities free from discrimination and stigma.



THE ISSUE:

For many millions of girls around the world, having a period every month is not just an inconvenience. It can have a long-term detrimental impact on their life chances, and cause serious health conditions and social exclusion.

Schools in many countries don't have private toilets and running water, and sanitary pads are too expensive for some girls to buy them. As a result some don't go to classes when they are menstruating, or even drop out completely.

A lack of adequate information about this normal biological process allows fear and shame to persist among girls and their communities. Many girls don't even know what a period is until they get their first one.

In some cultures, women are even forced to leave home during their period as it is considered unclean and shameful.

A poll in Tanzania found that one in three girls do not always go to school when they are on their period. (U-Report 2017)

UNESCO estimates that 1 in 10 adolescent girls in Africa miss school during their period and eventually drop out.

According to a study in South Africa, 57% of school girls were not aware what their period was before it started. (Johnson & Johnson 2019)

WHY WAGGGS?



Periods must never be a reason that a person misses out on education, employment or a social occasion. Everyone should have access to good quality period products that they can use in a private space that is affordable, safe and dignified. Everyone should be able to have a healthy and eco-friendly period!" - Said Ndamukunda Zamda, Rwanda Girl Guide Association

At WAGGGS, we believe in working with girls and young women to help them identify and overcome barriers - like managing their monthly menstrual cycle - that prevent them from taking part in everyday activities and all the opportunities that life has to offer. As the largest voluntary movement serving girls across the world, we are in a unique position to be able to do this.

We also believe in the vision of a fairer, more equal world as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 - achieve gender equality and empower all girls. The only way we can achieve this vision is to work with girls to remove the barriers that are holding them back. In November 2018 we asked a group of eight Girl Guiding / Girl Scouting organisations in Africa

about girls' experiences of their periods. They all confirmed good menstrual hygiene management was a challenge for girls in their country. Many told us it was the main reason girls were dropping out of school.

All these organisations were already part of The [WAGGGS] Youth Exchange South to South (YESS) Girls' Movement programme - an international exchange scheme where young women (18-35 years) from Africa and Asia Pacific volunteer with a host Guiding association for six months. As part of this programme, YESS participants had already identified good menstrual hygiene management as a key issue for girls. They were educating girls about it and organising Red Pride advocacy events to help address the root cause of the issue.

WAGGGS AND WASH UNITED PARTNERSHIP



With our partner WASH United funding, we have been rolling out 'Rosie's World' educational curriculum through The YESS Girls' Movement programme in Africa.

By combining our expertise in developing relevant, engaging, accessible and learner-led non-formal education curriculums, with WASH United's expertise in menstrual hygiene management, we launched 'Rosie's World' education curriculum as a core part of The YESS Girls' Movement programme in February 2019.

ROSIE'S WORLD

90 young women YESS participants delivered Rosie's World to thousands of girls with each girl receiving their Rosie's World badge having completed the curriculum, and their 'Take Action' project to reach others in their community.

Girl Guiding/Scouting organisations who are welcoming back YESS participants are also invited to apply for a fund to support further roll-out of the Rosie's World curriculum; training leaders and reaching more girls.

The Rosie's World curriculum was adapted from an innovative game and education tool that WASH United initially developed with girls in India. During the first half of 2019 it was then adapted to work for a Girl Guide and Girl Scout audience in Sub Saharan Africa. The resource is girl-led, with the voices and experience of girls in these countries helping us shape every aspect of its content.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:

Over **20,000 GIRLS** and over **2,000 YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS** know how to manage their periods safely, hygienically and with pride!

KENYA CASE STUDY:

The YESS Girls' Movement - Red Pride Week

The Kenya Girl Guides Association (KGGA) held the YESS Girls' Movement - Red Pride Week celebrations across 11 counties all across Kenya. They campaigned against period poverty, distributed sanitary pads, and trained over 3,500 young women in the Rosie's World curriculum and on how to make reusable sanitary pads.

One of the places where trainings were held was rural Narok (South West Kenya) where girls are often subjected to early marriages, and regularly miss school because of their period. By creating a brave space, the girls felt comfortable to share their experiences, and learnt how to manage their period safely and with pride.

A whole series of events throughout the week saw also support from the Red Cross, The Gender Office, The First Lady's Office, and many local leaders. And as a result of their fundraising efforts, more than 2,000 pads and 1,700 pairs of underwear were donated, and distributed to girls throughout the week of events and trainings.

GHANA CASE STUDY:

Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH)

As a way of commemorating 2020 MH Day, Ghana Girl Guides Association launched the MHH Office at their Headquarters in Accra. This office serves as a safe space for girls to share issues they face concerning their menstruation and to get guidance on how to manage their period safely, hygienically and with confidence. Their "Project 1000" campaign also raised funds to provide 1000 sanitary pads to girls across the country. And during the YESS Girls' Movement - Red Pride week 2021, they launched their #DontTaxMyPeriod social media and letter writing campaign, appealing to the government to make sanitary pads tax-free for young women and girls in Ghana. A petition was also submitted to the relevant government legislators

in parliament and the team visited various media outlets to raise awareness, and add pressure on the relevant officials. The Minister of Finance, heard the call, and has asked for the removal of taxes on menstrual products, and the First Lady of Ghana has pledged to support their activities.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY AND RED PRIDE WEEK

PRECEDING 28 MAY EACH YEAR,



Girl Guides and Girl Scouts come together for a week of action and activities to celebrate their period pride; under the banner of Red Pride Week. Taking place in the 5 days leading up to the 28 May, Menstrual Hygiene Day, there is an increased focus on educational training, social media awareness raising and advocacy.

In 2021, a Red Pride Week Activity Pack was developed by the YESS Girls' Movement and shared with members across our 152 Member Organisations. The Activity Pack contained an activity for each day of Red Pride Week and was designed to encourage members to learn more about menstrual hygiene and create awareness e.g., through the creation of the Menstrual Hygiene Day Bracelet. The Activity Packs were translated into the four WAGGGS official languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic) to allow maximum engagement in the activities.

THE MENSTRUAL HYGIENE ADVOCATE: NIGERIAN GIRL GUIDE, SONDE IYANUOLUWA

Iyanuoluwa Sonde is a Girl Guide from Nigeria and a YESS Girls' alumni with Fanilon'i Madagasikara. Iyanu met Joviale in Madagascar during her exchange programme in 2020; and she told her how girls in her village use cow dungs as menstrual material during menstruation.

At first, it was unbelievable to Iyanu until she read that it happens in other countries in Africa too. Upon her return to her home country Nigeria, she was determined to make a difference on this issue.

In rural parts of the country, many girls and women can't afford a sanitary pad if it's not provided.

This has led to the use of unhygienic materials, with some using tissue paper, handkerchiefs, and even rags instead. To deal with this, she started

an initiative named IRPEP (Iyanu Reusable Pad Empowerment Project) that focuses on distributing reusable pads to girls and young women for free, with the long-term goal of eradicating negative attitudes towards menstruation and period poverty across Nigeria.

