



EWEI Menstrual Hygiene Management Survey Report

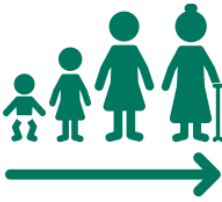
Menstruation is a naturally occurring physiological phenomenon in adolescent girls and pre-menopausal women [1]. Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is defined as *'Women and adolescent girls using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect blood that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials.'*



Menstruation necessitates the availability of material resources to absorb or collect menstrual blood, facilitate personal hygiene and dispose of waste, ideally with adequate privacy [2]. Women and girls in low income settings have low awareness on hygienic practices and lack culturally appropriate materials for menstrual hygiene management (MHM) practices [3,4,5]. Menstruation and associated activities are surrounded by silence, shame and social taboos that are further manifested in social practices that restrict mobility, freedom and access to normal activities. For instance, drinking milk, preparing food, interacting with people or refraining from performing religious rituals are restrictions found in many cultures [5,6,7,8,9].

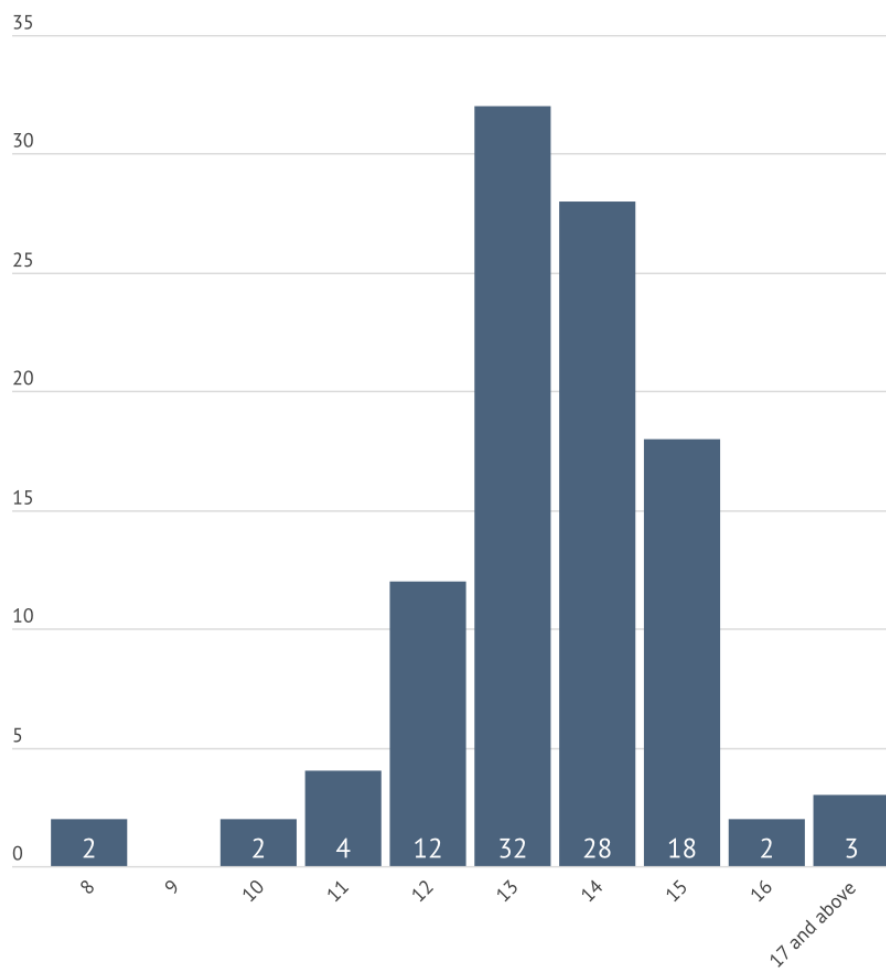
Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is an essential aspect of hygiene for women and adolescent girls between menarche and menopause. Despite being an important issue concerning women and girls in the menstruating age group, MHM is not always given priority in various interventions and therefore the needs of girls and women hardly catered to.

In order to gain a better understanding of the menstrual management needs of communities in northern Nigeria, EWEI carried out a survey in Dan Hono Community, in Chikun Local Government Area, Kaduna from 14 – 18 August 2020. Mobile data collection through one on one interviews with the consent of parents/guardians was used to collect data. The responses of 103 girls within the age range of 14 - 19 including eight girls with difficulties were captured in the survey. Below is a summary of the survey findings and recommendations.



The respondents were asked the age when their menstruation started. A large percentage of the respondents; **31.07%** started at the age of **13** and **27.18%** started at the age of **14**.

Age of start of menstruation

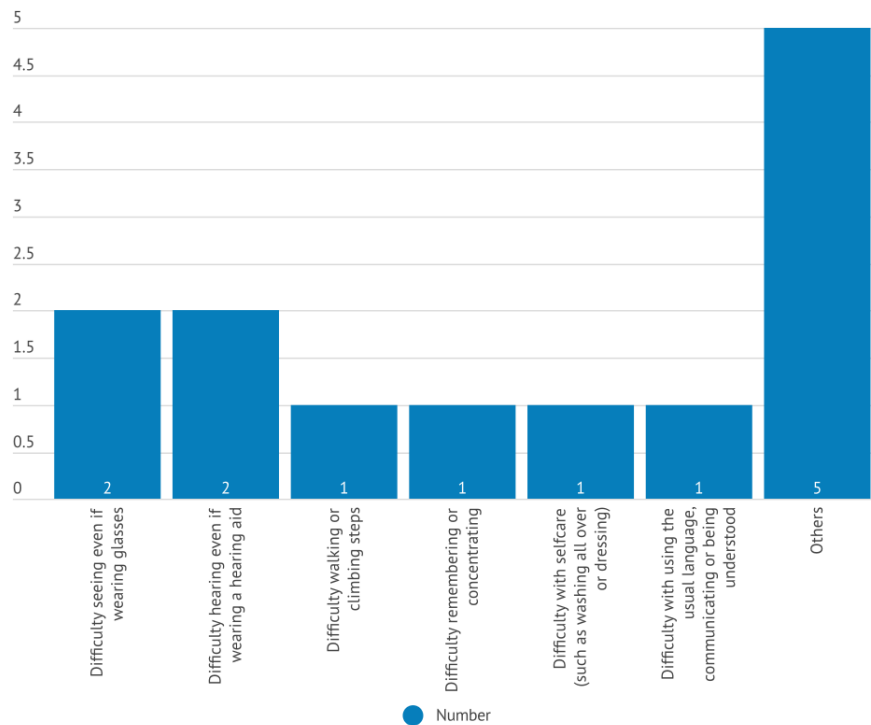


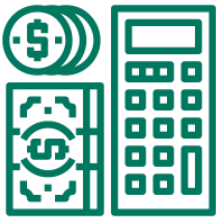


Of the 103 respondents, eight reported difficulties (WGQ). These included difficulties in the below categories:

- Difficulty seeing even if wearing glasses
- Difficulty hearing even if wearing a hearing aid
- Difficulty walking or climbing steps
- Difficulty remembering or concentrating
- Difficulty with selfcare (such as washing all over or dressing)
- Difficulty with using the usual language, communicating or being understood

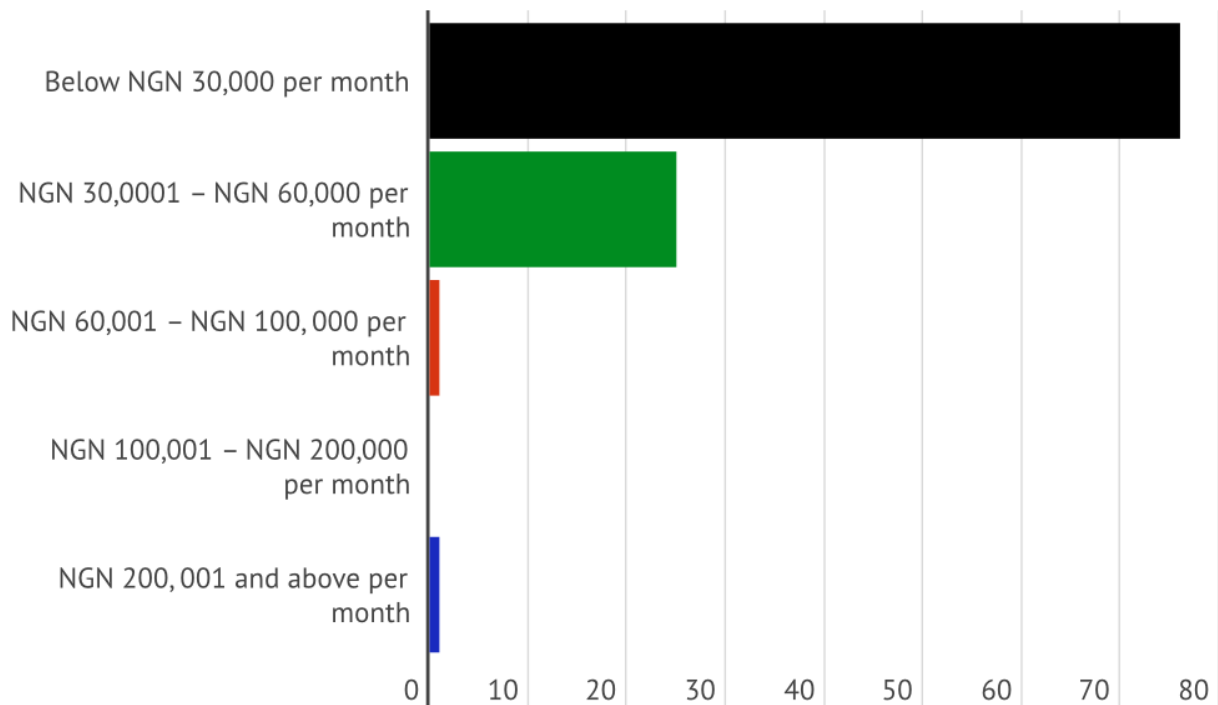
What kind of difficulties do you experience?





In terms of household monthly income range, **73.79%** said their household income was less than **30,000 Nigerian Naira** each month.

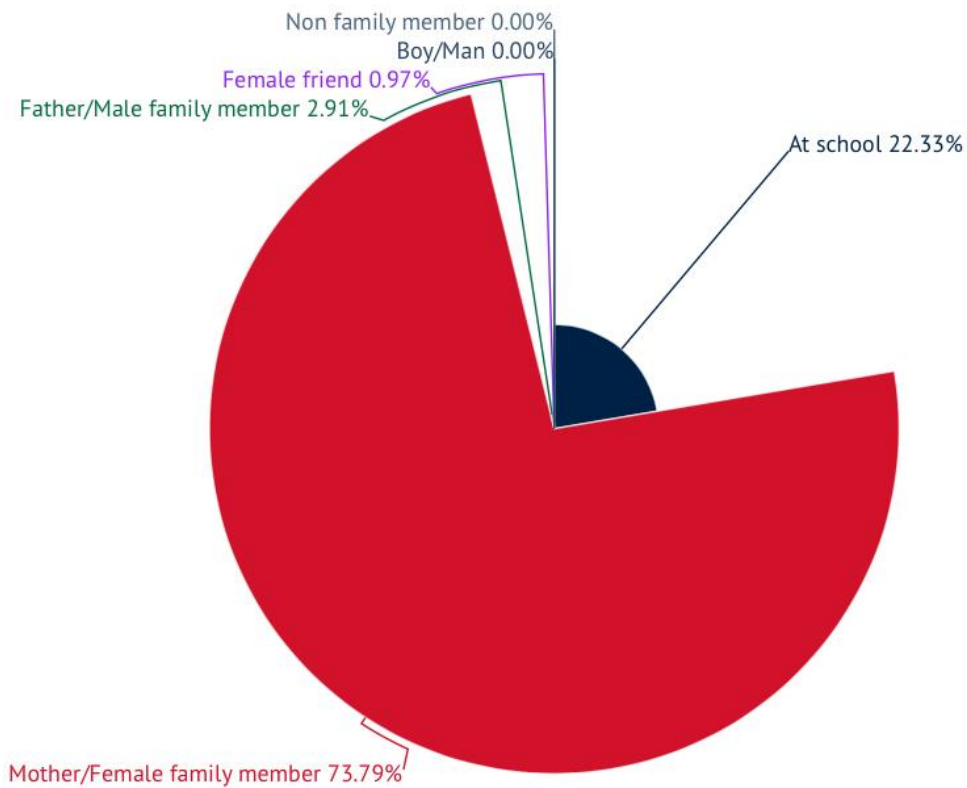
Monthly Household Income





The survey also showed that majority of the respondents (73.79%) learnt about menstruation from their mother/female family member.

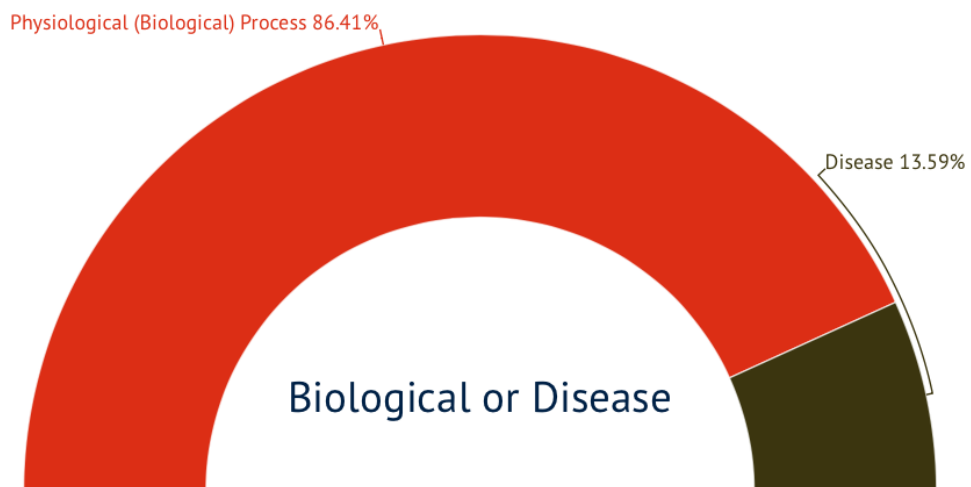
From whom did you learn about menstruation?





Majority of the respondents (86.41%) considered menstruation a biological process and only 13.59% considered menstruation a disease.

Is menstruation a physiological (biological) process or a disease?





When it came to how they felt about having a monthly period, 42.72% of respondents said they feel fine and understand that it is part of being a woman while 23.30% stated that they feel uncomfortable but understand that it is part of being a woman. However, 17.48% stated that they do not like it but understand that it is part of being a woman and 6.80% stated that “I hate it and wish I wasn’t a woman.”

How do you feel about having a period?

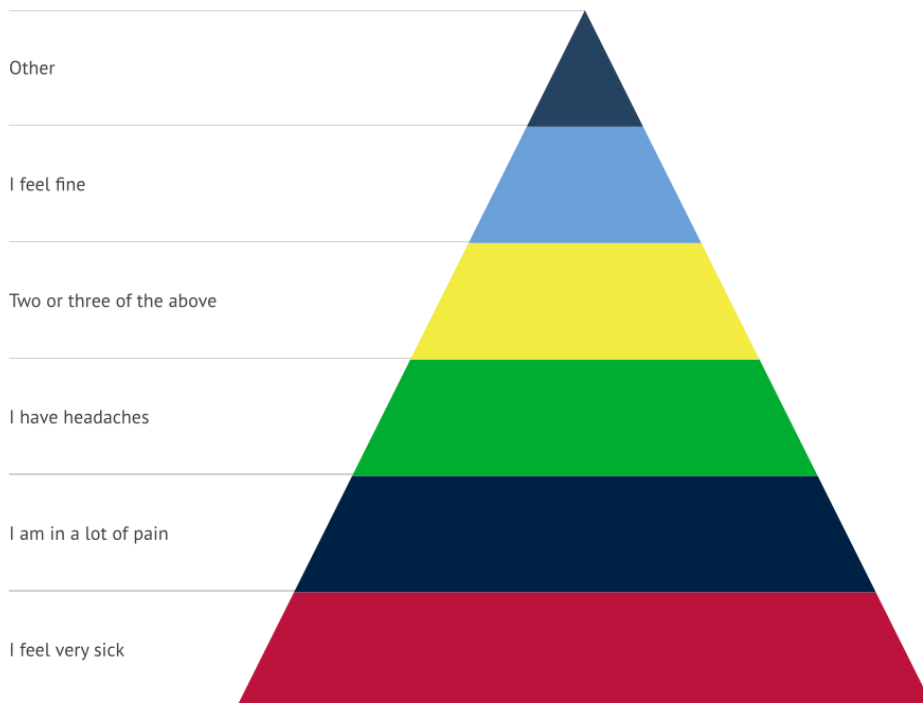


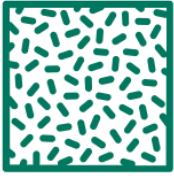
- I hate it and wish I that I wasn't a woman or that it will stop
- I do not like it but understand that this is part of being a woman
- I don't really care, it doesn't matter to me
- I am uncomfortable about it but understand that this is part of being a woman
- I feel fine and understand that this is part of being a woman



34.95% of the respondents stated that they feel a lot of pain during their period while 30% felt fine during their period.

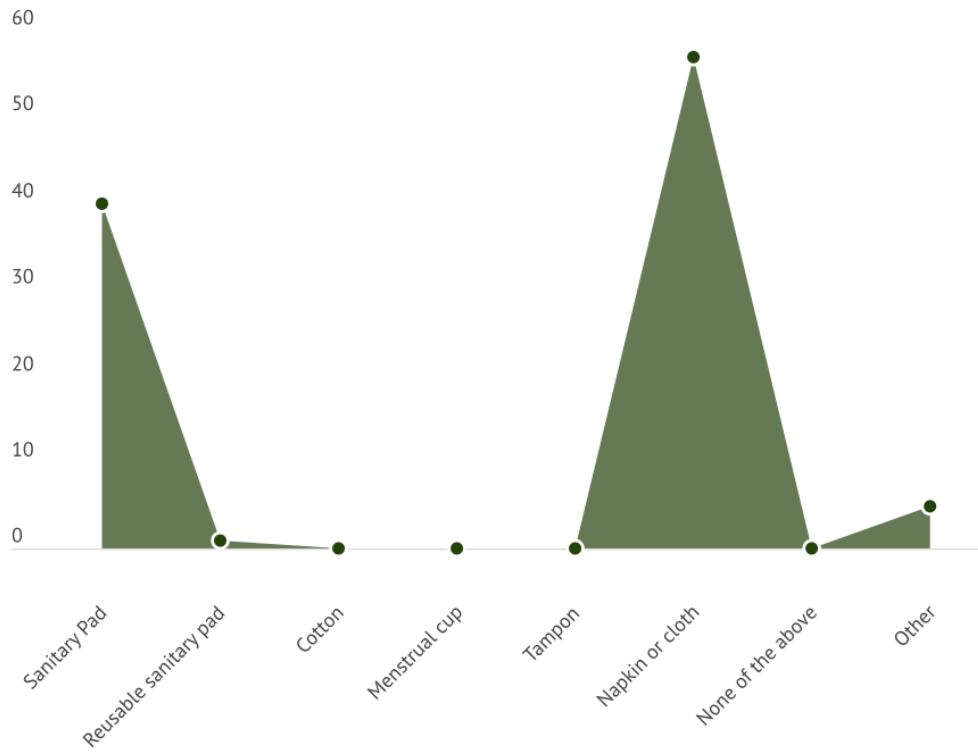
When you have your period what kinds of physical effects does it have on you?





55.34% of respondents prefer to use a napkin or cloth during their period while 38.83% prefer sanitary pads for their menstruation.

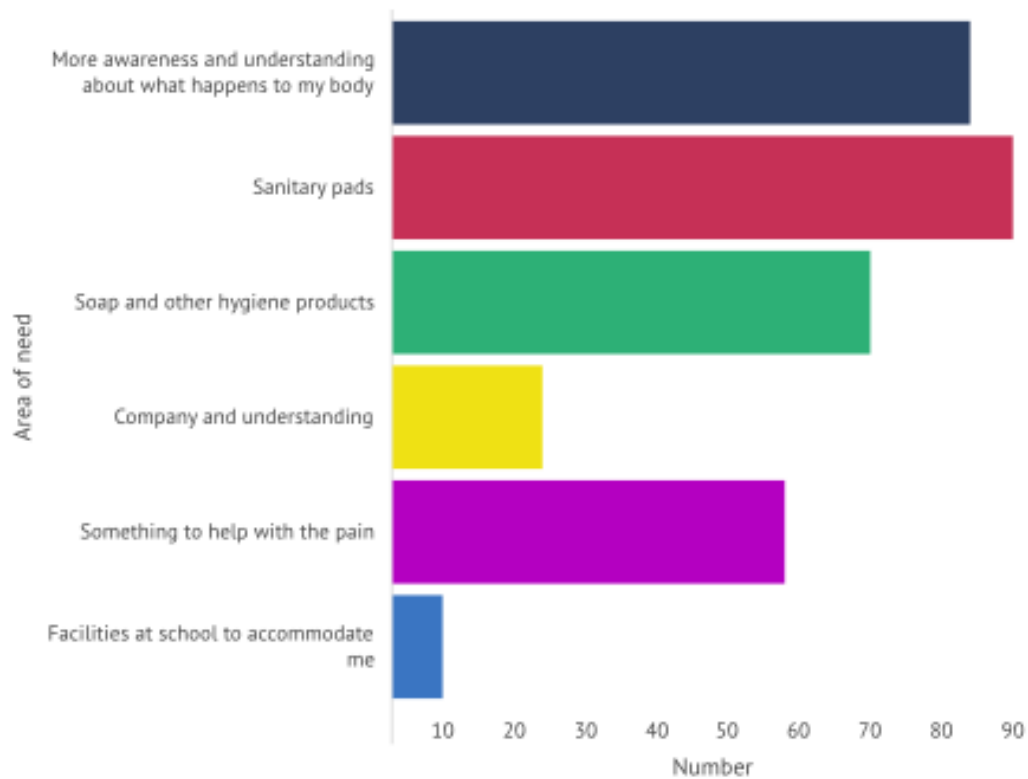
What is your preferred material to use during menstruation?

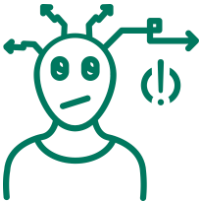




The respondents stated that their topmost needs when it comes to menstruation are sanitary pads (78.64%), more awareness and understanding about what happens in their body, (78.64%), soap and other hygiene products (65.05%). 53.4% also stated they needed something to help with the pain.

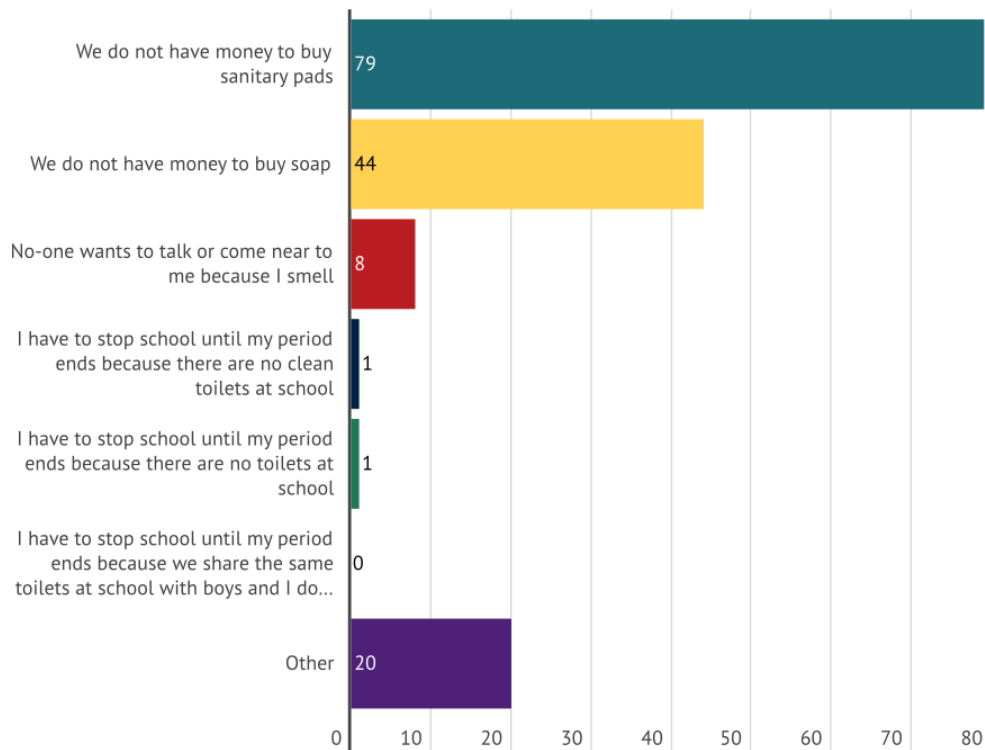
What would you describe as your topmost need when it comes to menstruation?





It also surfaced that the major problems faced by the respondents during menstruation was lack of money to buy sanitary pads and soap.

What kind of problems do you face when you are menstruating?





Recommendations

- More interventions on raising awareness on menstrual hygiene management, awareness and understanding of what menstruation is needed.
- Provision of free or subsidised sanitary pads.
- More research to understand and then intervene in terms of mindset related to menstruation.
- Increased health services to alleviate dysmenorrhea.
- Partnerships to provide increased and diverse menstrual hygiene management services.