



# Menstruation Matters

**Menstruation matters for women and girls' basic hygiene, reproductive health, dignity and education.**



## Girls aren't being taught about menstruation

Over half of girls in Ethiopia have never received any information about menstrual hygiene. Most girls (in pilot baseline regions of Afar, Gambella, Oromia and SNNP) were not aware of menstruation when it first happened to them. Less than half of girls in the country are taught about menstrual hygiene in school.



## School facilities need urgent upgrade

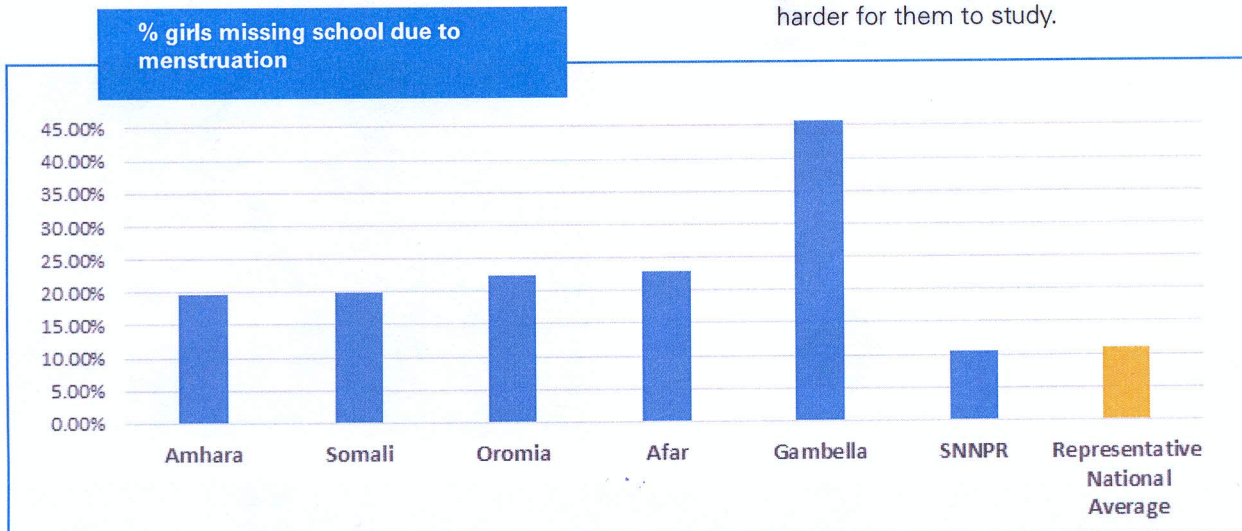
Lack of clean water and soap in school make it hard for girls to manage their period. The National Baseline Report (from six regions of Ethiopia) shows that:

- Over half of girls (56.3%) said there is never water availability at school toilets.
- Four out of five (80.4%) said there is never soap in school.
- Over 1/3 of girls say they don't change their materials at school - they wait until they get home.



## Menstruation is stopping girls from learning

11% of girls in Ethiopia miss school because of menstruation. Pain and discomfort stop girls from coming to school and make it harder for them to study.

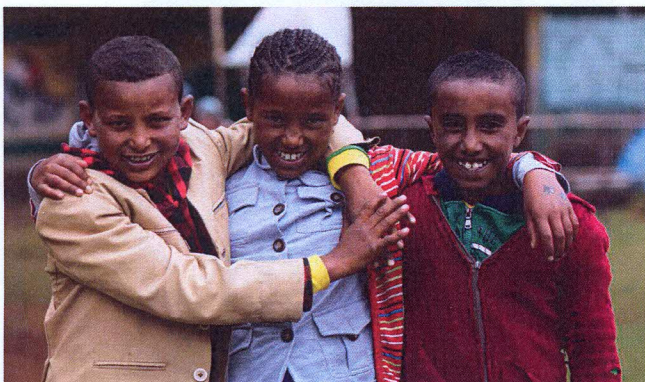




### Shame and Stigma about menstruation

Very often, adolescent girls do not talk about menstruation for fear of shame and stigma. In addition, teasing and harassment from boys is one of the top reasons that girls miss school while menstruating. But boys can also be supportive if they are taught about menstruation. The National Baseline Report (from six regions of Ethiopia) finds that:

- Majority of adolescent girls never talk or discuss menstruation with another person (63%).
- Only 22% of women said they talked with their daughter before she started menstruating.
- 69.1% of girls say they don't discuss menstruation because of shame.



**Affordability of pads is the biggest challenge faced by adolescent girls in managing their menstruation.**



### What is UNICEF doing?

UNICEF support the government of Ethiopia in training of teachers, and provides learning materials to teach girls and boys about menstruation. UNICEF is also working with health workers to raise community awareness about menstruation and reduce stigma. In addition, UNICEF is supporting the construction of menstrual hygiene rooms in schools for girls to rest, wash their sanitary products and receive advice. Local cooperatives are also getting support from UNICEF to make affordable sanitary products available in the market.

All data mentioned here is according to:  
Menstrual Hygiene Management in Ethiopia: National Baseline Report from Six Regions of Ethiopia, 2017.



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#### For more information contact

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