



Splash

Menstrual Waste Management in Schools

Landscape Findings from India & Ethiopia

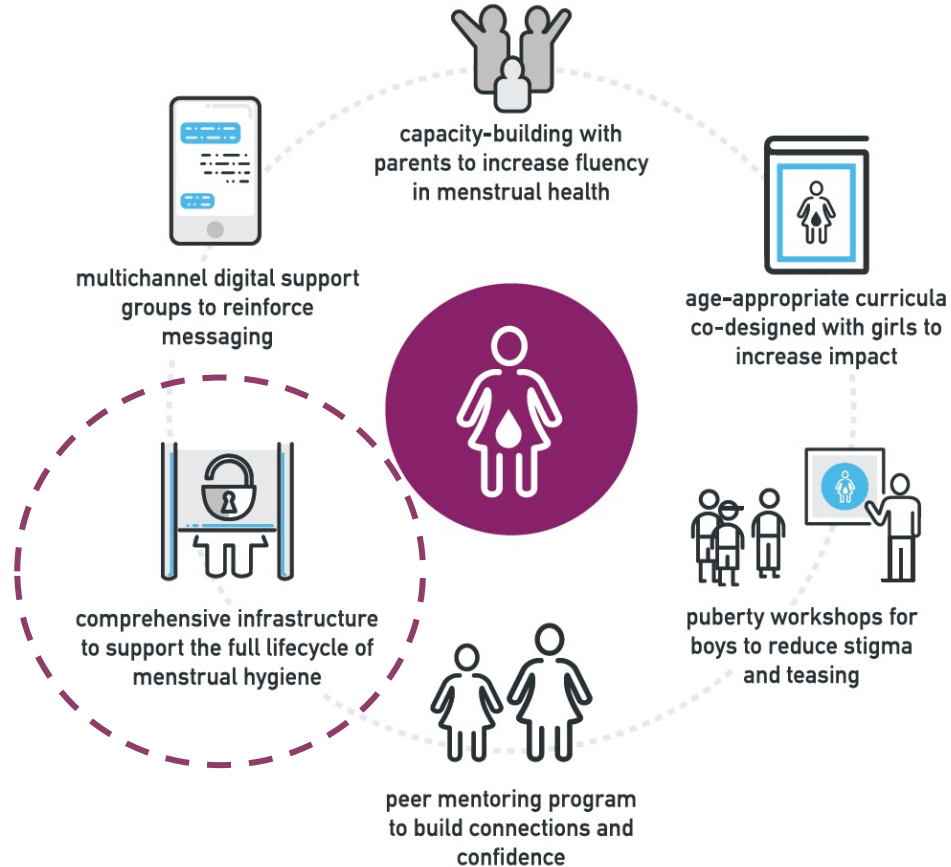
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“Splash’s vision is to create a sustainable Menstrual Health Program that transforms the physical and social environment to empower girls so that they can manage their menstruation with dignity.”



Building a Transformative Menstrual Health Ecosystem





1

Stalls designed with user's privacy and safety in mind

2

Dedicated space for mirrors to help girls feel at ease during their periods

3

Roof design maximizes air flow and natural light filtration

4

Wider corridors to improve traffic flow

5

In-stall features include secure locks, a tap, and hooks to hang personal items. Girls' stalls include a trash can and small shelf



Menstrual Waste Landscape

Kolkata, India



Policy Landscape

1. *Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation- National Guidelines Menstrual Hygiene Management, 2015*
Gap: Recommends provision of washable trash bins with lids in each stall and lists burial, composting, pit burning and incineration as final disposal measures but does not enforce any practice – this is left to the school’s discretion.
2. *Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules 2016*
Gap: States that is the duty of the sanitary product manufacturer to provide disposal bags along with the product to ensure safe handling and avoid cross-contamination of other waste- however, this is not currently enforced.
3. *Biomedical Waste Management & Handling (BMW) Rules, 2016*
Gap: Menstrual waste is currently categorized as “dry waste” rather than “bio-medical” waste creating confusion around its handling by sanitary workers
4. *CPCB Guidelines for Management of Sanitary Waste, 2018*
5. *Solid Waste Management in the Municipal Landscape of Kolkata*
Gap: Municipal bylaws of Kolkata Municipal Corporation do not mandate women and girls to wrap the waste into a pouch before its disposal or handover to municipal sanitary staff



School-level SWM Challenges

- Disposal of menstrual products is a challenge even when a waste bins are available- they are often overflowing resulting in pads being thrown on the ground or hidden haphazardly.
- School janitors demand extra payment to take away the menstrual waste.
- School administrators reported that even with improved sanitation provided by Splash, clearing of menstrual waste from toilets and maintenance of toilets was an area where they continued to face challenges.





Kolkata, India

“Clean toilets are an asset to my school. I believe a good toilet is the best defense against various diseases. I believe my school’s toilets reflect our values. If we, including students, are good citizens- that will be reflected in my school’s toilets. Waste bins for menstrual waste are critical.”

-School Administrator when asked about the importance of disposal solutions for menstruating students





Kolkata, India

Recommendations for School-level SWM

Child Cabinet Schools educate students through the “Child Cabinet” on proper disposal of menstrual waste. In some schools, child cabinet members have kept a separate stock of newspapers so that students can use them to properly wrap used pads.

Optimizing Menstrual Waste Storage in Schools Schools should provide a minimum 5-liter bin with a lid in every toilet cubicle. Bins should be yellow and bear the biohazard symbol to comply with color-coding requirements of the BMW Rules, 2016

Improving Incinerator Installation at Schools Location of incinerator to maximize ventilation and frequency of use by students and janitors


Minimization of Menstrual Waste Load Schools should spread awareness about reusable menstrual products among students.

Inter-School Information Exchange Programs Model school visits would give teachers opportunities to share their experiences and learnings with their peers in other schools.









Electrical Incinerator Trial Findings

Remember to put your used sanitary napkin into the incinerator and follow the posted instructions.



If you need help, ask a teacher!

OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

-  Open the main outer door by pulling on the door handle
-  Open the inner incinerator door by pulling down on the lever to your right
-  Drop the paper-wrapped napkin into the incinerator
**Don't incinerate napkins wrapped in plastic!
Don't put anything other than menstrual products in the incinerator!**
-  Close the inner incinerator door by pushing up on the lever to your right
-  Close the main outer door
-  Push the button to start incineration
Don't forget to push start!

Current standards there are no standards or overall certification for incinerators in India leading to the continued production of incinerators that do not meet the global standards for emissions de-incentivizing the innovation of more environmentally friendly products.

Vendor Operations and Management Vendors are often not engaged in a long-term operations & maintenance contracts- Inability to fix technical problems often result in incinerator being rendered defunct

User behaviour Incinerators break down due to improper use by the end user- not following instructions, not incinerating waste frequently enough, etc.

Barriers in usage Incinerators are not used by girls due a lack of electricity, incinerator maintenance issues, fear of getting electrocuted, and fear of breaking the incinerator

Installation Before installation smoke venting, voltage needs, earthing, distance of incinerator from toilets, and the community perception of incinerator emissions should be considered



Menstrual Waste Landscape

Addis, Ababa Ethiopia



Policy Landscape

1. *The Ethiopian Solid Waste Management Proclamation No. 513/2007*
Gap: the proclamation does not categorize MHW under the SW types listed and does not provide guidance on its disposal.
2. *The Menstrual Hygiene Management Policy and Implementation Guideline of Ethiopia*
Gap: directs that sanitary materials in schools be collected and disposed of using the waste management collection and disposal systems available locally or disposed of in pit latrines. The policy guideline has overlooked the disadvantages of disposing of MHW into the regular SW disposal systems and in school pit latrines.
3. *The National School WASH Implementation Policy Guideline of Ethiopia*
Gap: classifies MHW as one of the major types of SW generated in schools, characterized under the category of “garbage” and considered as hazardous, thus advising disposal via incineration. However, the guideline did not reflect clear policy direction on incineration type, performance criteria, quality standards, and emission control levels.



School-Level SWM Challenges

- Waste bins are often stolen, damaged, or overflowing.
- Used sanitary products are disposed either on the toilet pit, clogging the drains or on the latrine floor.
- Menstrual waste is usually disposed of mixed with other solid waste generated at schools.
- No city-wide guidelines on proper menstrual waste handling practices at schools.
- The menstrual waste is collected by janitors and temporarily stored in large containers mixed with multiple other types of solid waste.
- School waste is inconsistently collected by multiple microenterprise waste collection service providers
- Segregation of menstrual waste from other solid waste generated at schools is done neither at the source nor at the temporary collection site.



“They throw the used pad in the toilet pit. Some of them even leave it on the toilet floor because they do not have a place to dispose it properly.”

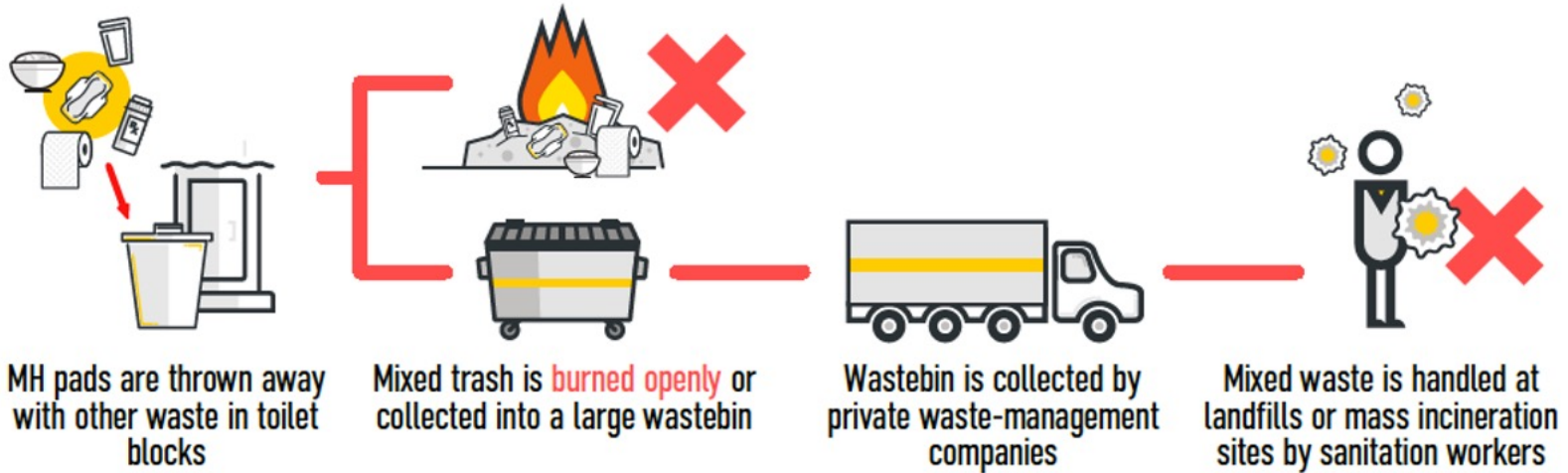
– grade 5 student when asked about menstrual waste at her school



Addis Ababa Menstrual Waste Lifecycle

Current Practice

Current Waste Management Stream for Menstrual Hygiene (MH) Waste



Addis Ababa Menstrual Waste Lifecycle

Recommended Practice

Ideal Waste Management Stream for Menstrual Hygiene (MH) Waste



MH pads are placed in dedicated MH bins in stalls



MH waste is collected into a biohazard container



Biohazard container is incinerated or collected separately

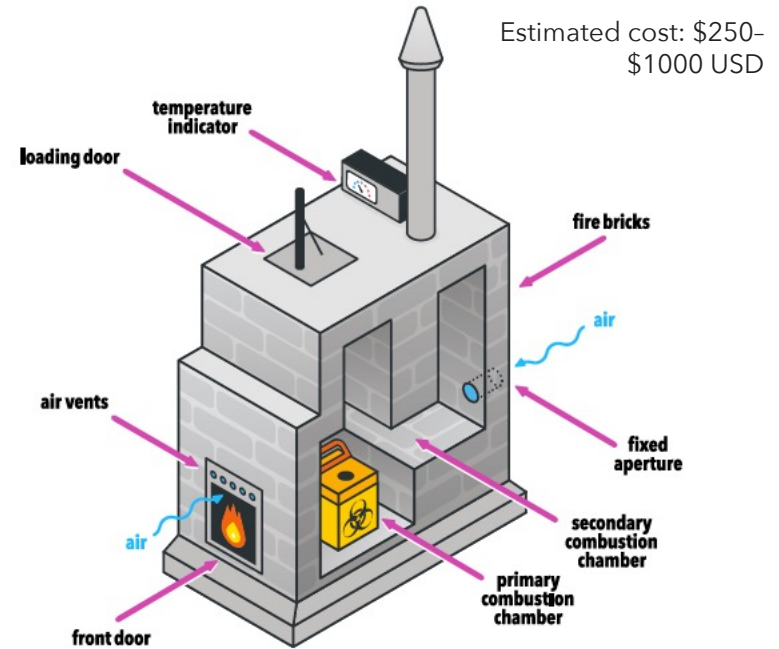


MH waste is handled as a biohazard at the waste management site



Recommendations for Manual Incinerator Feasibility Study

- Conduct a longitudinal assessment of feasibility and acceptability at a limited number of schools
- Leverage indicators around operation, maintenance, and frequency of use, and user type
- Collaborating with other organizations that have provided incinerators to evaluate existing incinerators
- Conduct an assessment of incinerators at sites similar but not limited to schools to learn more about the challenges associated with implementing incinerators at scale



Estimated cost: \$250-
\$1000 USD

Manually operated fire-based incinerator⁶



Questions?

