

LET'S TALK ABOUT PERIODS

A Case Study of Green Lady Cambodia,
UNICEF Cambodia, and MoEYS

November, 2025

TOILET
BOARD COALITION

©GREENLADY

Public-Private Partnership Case Study

Addressing Menstrual Health and Hygiene in Cambodia

Green Lady Cambodia (2025 Cohort) addresses the pressing issues of period poverty, menstrual stigma, and plastic pollution by producing and distributing reusable, biodegradable menstrual products such as washable sanitary pads and natural soaps.

The partnership between the Department of School Health of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and UNICEF Cambodia is implementing a one-year project across public schools in rural Siem Reap and Preah Vihear provinces. This initiative aims to promote menstrual health and hygiene awareness in schools and communities, while tackling the stigma and discrimination surrounding menstruation.

The project focuses on training primary school teachers, students, and community members with essential knowledge and practical skills to share within their networks. It also builds the capacity of focal teachers, students, and community representatives to produce, advocate for, and distribute sanitary pads for personal use. Additionally, the initiative supports the improvement of water and sanitation facilities in schools to strengthen menstrual hygiene management and to reduce absenteeism and dropout rates among female students.



At A Glance

Project	Let's Talk About Periods
Public Sector Partner	UNICEF Cambodia & Department of School Health of Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
Private Sector Partner	Green Lady Cambodia
Partnership Period	January 2025 – December 2025
Region	Siem Reap & Preah Vihear Province, Cambodia

The Problem

Challenges in Menstrual Hygiene and Health in Cambodia

Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) remains one of Cambodia's most under-addressed public health and gender equality challenges. Millions of adolescent girls and women face barriers to managing their periods safely and with dignity due to limited access to menstrual products, adequate sanitation facilities, and comprehensive education. According to the World Population Prospects 2024, Cambodia has over 5.5 million adolescent girls and women of reproductive age, including around two million who are currently enrolled in school.

Cambodia has achieved tremendous progress over the past 20 years in providing access to essential water and sanitation services. Despite these achievements, notable inequalities remain, particularly in rural and underserved communities. The 2024 WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) reports that around 92% of Cambodians have access to at least basic sanitation. However, only 51% use safely managed sanitation systems that ensure the hygienic containment, treatment, and disposal of waste. Access to safely managed drinking water also remains limited, reaching approximately 30% of the population nationwide and only about 20% in rural areas.

Addressing MHH is therefore essential to advancing girls' rights, education, and equality. Continued collaboration among government institutions, development partners, and communities is critical to ending stigma, improving access to menstrual products and facilities, and expanding menstrual education across Cambodia.

The Solution



Promote MHH
Awareness & Reduce
Stigma



Build
Knowledge &
Capacity to Locals



Facilitate
Local Production of
Reusable Pads



Improve
WASH Facilities in
Schools

The project, implemented in close partnership with the **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS)**, **UNICEF Cambodia**, and **Green Lady Cambodia**, introduces practical and inclusive interventions to improve MHH in schools and communities. These efforts aim to enhance awareness, reduce stigma, strengthen local capacity, and ensure that girls can manage menstruation safely and confidently.

Through this collaboration, the project promotes menstrual health awareness and challenges stigma by delivering school- and community-based education and dialogue sessions that encourage positive attitudes and normalise menstruation as a natural part of life. It builds knowledge and capacity by training teachers, students, and community members to advocate for and share accurate menstrual health information.

The partnership further improves access to sanitary pads by facilitating the local production and distribution of reusable products through hands-on training and advocacy initiatives. In addition, it enhances WASH facilities in schools, providing safe, private, and hygienic spaces that enable girls to manage their periods with dignity and without disruption to their education.

Project Implementation

To strengthen menstrual health and hygiene initiatives in schools and communities, a structured approach has been developed to enhance knowledge, build practical skills, and establish sustainable support mechanisms. The following steps outline the key activities to ensure effective implementation and long-term impact:

- 1. Collaboration and Planning:** Partner with schools and communities to organise classroom and training sessions on menstrual health and hygiene. Develop learning materials such as flip charts, advocacy plans, and inspection schedules to support effective implementation.
- 2. Selection of Participants:** Work with schools to identify and select focal teachers, students, and community members who will serve as key advocates and trainers on MHH and sanitary pad production.
- 3. Training and Capacity Building:** Deliver hands-on training sessions covering menstrual health education, hand-sewing of reusable sanitary pads, and the development of school-level MHH action plans to promote awareness and practical solutions.
- 4. Implementation and Support:** Assist schools in executing their MHH action plans and monitor progress through regular follow-ups. Provide technical consultation and mentorship as needed to ensure successful and sustainable implementation.

Timeline

Phase 1: Capacity Building and School Implementation (January – June 2025)

Each selected public school nominated 15 participants (5 focal teachers, 10 focal students, and 2 community members) to join a two-day MHH workshop in their commune. The training focused on menstrual health education, advocacy, and hand-sewing reusable sanitary pads.

After the workshop, focal participants trained additional students to promote MHH awareness within their schools. One month later, a follow-up session with trainers assessed participants' progress and capacity. Schools integrated MHH sessions into the Health Education curriculum, with focal teachers providing ongoing guidance and support.

Phase 2: Advanced Training and Advocacy Expansion (August – November 2025)

A total of 54 participants from 25 public schools will receive advanced training to continue MHH advocacy and peer education. Workshops will include practical sessions on making period bracelets and sewing washable sanitary pads to enhance local skills, sustainability, and community-led initiatives.

Phase 3: Reporting Period (December 2025)

During the reporting period, schools will consolidate data and feedback from all phases to evaluate the impact of MHH activities on students and communities. Key lessons, challenges, and best practices will be documented.

TIMELINE AND SCOPE OF PROJECT

12 Months

PROJECT DURATION



25 Schools

ENGAGED IN MHH TRAINING

Success Factors



Community Engagement: The active involvement of parents, community leaders, and local members fosters ownership and sustainability. Through open dialogue and awareness-raising activities, the project helps to dispel menstrual taboos, promote accurate information, and create a supportive environment in which girls can manage their periods with confidence and dignity.



Stakeholder Support: Strong collaboration with Green Lady Cambodia, UNICEF, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), school management ensures effective coordination, technical guidance, and resource mobilisation. This partnership strengthens school-based menstrual health programmes and promotes long-term sustainability within the education system.



Innovation & Inclusivity: The project promotes interactive and inclusive learning through activities such as making period bracelets, producing reusable pads, and engaging in peer education. By involving both boys and girls, it ensures equal participation, challenges stigma, and fosters accessible, practical menstrual health solutions for all students.

Impact



25

Public Schools



2,500

People Impacted



54

Focal Participants as a Change Agent

Supported by:



UNICEF Cambodia



Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sport (MoEYS)

Organised by:



Green Lady Cambodia



@UNICEF Cambodia/2025/Cristyn Lloyd

"Periods should not be hidden. We need to raise awareness and educate both girls and boys that periods are normal, and that we shouldn't feel embarrassed talking about them," said a male student in Grade 10. "I can help spread awareness among other girls and my family members, especially my sister. When she has her period, I'll understand that she might feel frustrated or unwell, and I can remind her to drink warm water and eat nutritious food."

Source: [UNICEF Cambodia Story - Let's talk about periods](#)

Learnings



Multi-stakeholder collaboration is critical for sustainability

The strong partnership between Green Lady Cambodia, UNICEF, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), school management was instrumental in aligning policies, mobilising resources, and ensuring project ownership at both national and local levels. This collaboration demonstrated that integrating MHH into the education system requires concerted efforts from government, NGOs, and communities to achieve lasting impact.



Capacity building at the school level drives long-term change

Training focal teachers, students, and community members not only improved understanding of menstrual health but also established a network of peer educators and advocates within schools. This approach strengthens knowledge transfer, fosters local ownership, and ensures the sustained promotion of menstrual health and hygiene.



Practical, hands-on learning strengthens engagement and confidence

Interactive sessions such as reusable pad-making and the creation of period bracelets encouraged active participation, skill development, and greater comfort in discussing menstruation. These activities helped to normalise conversations about periods while offering practical, sustainable solutions for menstrual management, particularly in resource-limited settings.



Empowering youth as change agents strengthens menstrual health impact

Engaging students as peer educators and advocates proved highly effective in promoting menstrual health awareness across schools and communities. By empowering young people to lead discussions, share accurate information, and model positive attitudes, the project nurtured confidence, strengthened leadership skills, and encouraged lasting behavioural change among their peers.

Conclusion

The **"Let's Talk about Periods"** project effectively addresses the multifaceted barriers to menstrual health in Cambodia through a collaborative and empowering approach. By combining advocacy to challenge cultural taboos, practical training to promote sustainable sanitary pad production, and support to strengthen WASH infrastructure, the initiative fosters a supportive environment for girls and women. This integrated model—anchored in strong partnerships and community ownership—is vital for achieving lasting progress in gender equality, educational outcomes, and public health, ensuring that menstruation is no longer a barrier to the potential of Cambodia's future generations.

CONTACT: Rasmey Heang | Accelerator Associate Asia at Toilet Board Coalition | heang@toiletboard.org

Cambodia programme in cooperation with:



With thanks to our leaders:

The Toilet Board Coalition and its work is made possible by the generous support of its Membership.
The Cambodia programme of the Toilet Board Coalition's work is in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank.
The contents are the responsibility of the Toilet Board Coalition and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Members and partners.



info@toiletboard.org



toiletboard.org



[Toilet Board Coalition](https://www.toiletboard.org/)



[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/toiletboardcoalition/)



[Geneva, Switzerland](#)