



PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

SCALING UP ADOLESCENT GIRLS EMPOWERMENT & WELL BEING THROUGH MENSTRUAL MANAGEMENT AND COVID-19 PREVENTION EDUCATION



Duration of Project

24 months

from date of Project Initiation



Target Beneficiaries

75,000 girls

75,000 boys

from 10 to 16 years old



Total Cost

2,542,890 US\$

over 2 years

Geographic Coverage



● Current Reach ● Target Reach

Proponent

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Implementing Partners

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Social Action and Women Promotion, NGO's and Civil Society organizations with UNFPA support



INTRODUCTION

Good Menstrual Health Management (MHM) enables women and girls to exercise and enjoy human rights on the basis of equality. Poor MHM, including lack of WASH, healthcare, women and girls' bodily autonomy, stigmatization, and limiting social, cultural or religious practices "can negatively impact the extent to which they enjoy certain rights including those to education, work, and health". MHM is intricately connected to people's ability to exercise their rights.

Angola has a youthful population, with 46% of Angolans under the age of 15 and 66.4% under the age of 25. The women represent 51% of the total population. The population growth rate in Angola is high (3,2%). Estimated today at 33 million people, the total population is expected to reach 45 million in 2030, more than double by 2050 and more than triple by 2063.

ADOLESCENT FERTILITY RATE



The adolescent fertility rate in Angola, **163 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19** years, is among the highest in the region and unmet need for family planning among **these adolescent girls stands at 43%.**

There are 10 million girls and women of reproductive age in the country and in terms of education, while 75% of girls attend primary school, this proportion drops to a meager 15,5% by secondary school which coincides with the age of first menstruation or menarche. In addition, 58% percent of women who have not completed any level of education have already started reproductive life, which is more than

twice as many as those with secondary or higher education (25%). Relevant geographical and gender disparities in schooling and school enrollment are also observed: only 28% of girls who live in rural areas is enrolled at secondary education against 55% of girls living in urban settings. In average 22% of girls and 8% of boys, never attended in a school. As noted by various World Health Organization, UNFPA, PSI, Wash United and Global Menstrual Collective studies in the Sub-saarian region, one of the main contributing factors to the high drop-out rates for girls in secondary school is lack of proper access to menstrual hygiene products, which can be costly and hard to access, and adequate bathroom facilities (privacy, safety, soap and water).

Similarly, to what happens in many parts of the world, adolescents who become pregnant in Angola are those with low levels of education, who live in contexts of poverty and live in rural and peri-urban areas. When a girl discovers she is pregnant, she faces conflicts that arise in the family, and frequently the father of the child is absent. The pregnant girl will have no choice but to leave school, often unsupported, and without the facilities needed at school; she will be isolated and at a loss of how to find ways to support herself and her baby.

Unfortunately, there are no precise indicators available in Angola to measure any topic related to Menstrual Health, and thus support the problem and integrate women and girls' into decision making roles. This adds significance to the power of this kind of program to generate evidence to influence the creation of national policies that will promote menstrual health to maintain girls in school and postpone their first pregnancy.





BACKGROUND

UNFPA Angola implemented the Pilot Menstrual Health Management (MHM) Project in partnership with BeGirl Inc, Government and Civil Society key partners in 4 out of 18 Provinces of the country (Luanda, Lunda Sul, Huambo and Huíla) to address and identify barriers related to menstruation and whose impact reinforces inequalities in gender.¹ The project was a first of its kind in Angola, where MHM was not previously a priority topic on the national agenda. However, due to UNFPA's advocacy efforts and the innovative nature of the activities presented, the pilot gathered full support of municipal authorities and civil society organizations. This participation meant that schools, churches, and civil society organizations opened their meeting areas and staff time to participate in these trainings that focus on an innovative teaching method that is emotionally engaging, and empowers girls and boys whilst teaching them about menstrual health.

Given the success of this initiative, and the potential it had to gather the necessary evidence to later influence national policy, the present proposal intends to scale up the MHM Project to 14 additional provinces of Angola. This expansion proposal draws from the pilot phase achievements and lessons of the project, and builds on the on-going projects of the 8th programme cycle aligned to national priorities and envisioned to be implemented from 2021 to 2022.

RESULT



As a result, 1,000 girls from 10 to 16 years old were equipped with two PeriodPanties™ (menstruation pants) each, to manage their period safely and comfortably. Furthermore 1,000 girls and 1,000 boys were educated using the SmartCycle® education methodology, through Building Empathy Cycles, to improve their knowledge and attitudes about menstruation and reproduction. A final Impact Study was carried out to assess the effectiveness of the pilot intervention.



1 Menstrual Health Management - Lessons Learnt from COVID-19 (Impact Study)





PROJECT RATIONALE

The beginning of adolescence is a period of rapid changes in a girl's life. Girls often enter this complex stage of their life unsupported, with very little information about what is happening to them and amid widespread stigma and myths about menstruation. It is unsurprising that when girls experience their first menstrual cycle, often marks the starting point for gender disparities including strict gender roles in the household, with social norms becoming more noticeable and constraining. This is why the Pilot Program made use of a methodology that engages boys and girls with methods that promote behavior change, in order to gain the support of boys for the success of the intervention short and long term.

In addition, studies of adolescents in the region have reported that Covid 19 has worsened and aggravated situations of exclusion, with adolescents reporting they feel more vulnerable, isolated, and with worse mental health.

A recent regional UNFPA study shows that COVID-19 has given unprecedented attention to the needs of menstruation globally, and recommends the integration of MHM in sexual and reproductive health, gender, education, WASH and other sectoral policies and programmes. This study also outlined the need of removal taxes from menstrual products and related raw materials and the provision of free and subsidized products for vulnerable girls and women as well as supporting sustainable, local production of quality products and the community involvement and leadership to overcome the negative cultural and gender norms and stigma around menstruation that have a deep influence and impact on improving MHM.

This shows there is a need of using innovative communication strategies to bring information to girls; the establishment of collaborative partnerships to deliver Menstrual Health information and products to girls and boys; advocacy with Government authorities including menstrual products in the sanitary kits delivered to women and girls in fragile contexts; and promoting sustainability. The pandemic has also shown that when supply chains are disrupted, sustainable products and systems are needed more than ever. The use of washable and reusable products such as reusable cloth pad and period panties is even more relevant, as they are less dependent on the supply chain.



PROJECT BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Ser Menina em Angola Program, a MHM Project led by UNFPA Angola targets this void in menstrual health and Covid 19 prevention knowledge with a careful, sensitive and holistic approach. It addresses

the gap in menstrual health care and gives us the opportunity to improve various aspects of girls' lives, with cascading effects for their communities.

EXPECTED RESULTS



75,000 adolescent girls equipped with two PeriodPanties™ each, to manage menstruation safely and comfortably. Obs.: The 2 period panties are durable and will support MHM for 2 years, if used correctly.



75,000 girls and 75,000 boys are educated using the SmartCycle® education methodology to improve their knowledge and attitudes about menstruation and reproduction.

EXPECTED RESULTS



Adolescents are knowledgeable about prevention and awareness on COVID19. Vulnerable adolescents are supported through an advocacy campaign with key government figures for the removal of taxes from menstrual products and related raw materials.



Final report submitted outlining the effectiveness and success of the project interventions to be shared with government authorities for policy advocacy.



ACTIVITIES

- Coordination, advocacy & awareness
- Knowledge sharing
- Integration of MHM into strategies & programmes
- Social mobilization and community dialogue
- Training on MHM/ formal & non-formal education
- Access to menstrual materials



SHORT-TERM CHANGES

- Education and health systems have the capacity to deliver MHM programmes
- Girls & boys improve individual knowledge and attitudes about MHM, related life and COVID prevention
- Girls have access to MHM friendly facilities, services, materials and supplies



MID-TERM CHANGES

- An improved enabling environment, with strengthened political commitment, resources and knowledge to support MHM
- Boys in their various roles, positively support girls & women in MHM
- Girls manage their menstruation with safety and with dignity using appropriate materials and facilities at home & school



GOALS

- **Improved adolescent health and wellbeing**
- **Decreased rates of adolescent pregnancy**
- **Gender equality for girls and boys**
- **Girls' education skills developed promoting full potential achievement**

KEY ACTIVITIES



Reach 150,000 adolescent girls and boys to teach them about menstrual health, support them with menstrual hygiene products and empower them with Covid-19 prevention knowledge.



Liaison with the Ministries of Education, Youth and Sports, Health, Social Action, Family and Women's Promotion, NGOs and CSOs for planning, execution and monitoring of project interventions.



A one week virtual/physical training of trainers (ToT) for national technicians/activists on Menstrual Health and Hygiene using Be Girl's SmartCycle® menstrual education workshop curriculum.



45 SmartCycle® workshops conducted by the trainers in schools and community shelters located in the target provinces.



Distribution of 150,000 period panties for girls and 150,000 SmartCycles for girls and boys.



An Impact Study among girls and boys to measure the increasing knowledge and changing attitudes on Menstrual Health issues.



Documentation and visibility interventions to **promote the policy dialogue** on MHM policies and programmes.



PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THIS INTERVENTION

Activities Description	Qty	Unit Cost USD	Days/Month	Total Costs (HM + Training + SC) USD
Period Panties	150,000	4.50		\$675,000.00
Smart Cycles Tool	150,000	2.50		\$375,000.00
Educational Material (Manuals + Infographics + Flyers + Banners)	250	75.00		\$18,750.00
Shipment & Customs	1			\$128,250.00
Subtotal				\$1,197,000.00
Refreshing Training of Trainers by BeGirl (Hybrid, in presence and virtual)				
Be Girl Training (Fees)	1	8,000.00	7 days	\$8,000.00
Travel + DSA	2	3,500.00	7 days	\$7,000.00
Subtotal				\$15,000.00
Training of Trainers at Provincial Level (Hybrid, in presence and virtual)				
2 Trainings per Province (Fees)	6	500.00	7 days	\$6,000.00
Travel + DSA	6	1,000.00	7 days	\$34,000.00
Subtotal				\$40,000.00
Communication				
Communication & Visibility	1	218,800.00		\$218,800.00
Subtotal				\$218,800.00
1 Hour Workshops with Adolescent Girls and Boys				
Trainers Subsidy	500	50.00	15 days (1 Wks/day)	\$375,000.00
Snacks for Boys and Girls	1,500.00	3.00	1 day	\$450,000.00
2 Reusable Masks per Adolescent	3,000.00	0.05		\$15,000.00
Subtotal				\$840,000.00
Human Resources				
Project Coordinator	1	5,500	12	\$66,000.00
Project Assistant/Logistic	1	2,500	12	\$30,000.00
Subtotal				\$96,000.00
Monitoring & Evaluation				
Final Evaluation Report	1	15,000.00		\$15,000.00
Subtotal				\$15,000.00
Total Investment for the implementation of the Project				\$2,421,800.00
Administrative Costs	1			\$121,090.00
Total Cost of the Project				\$2,542,890.00



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