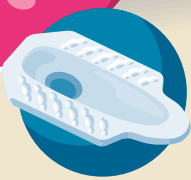


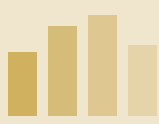


Ministry of Education,  
Youth and Sport



# MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE REPORT

Findings from the  
Minimum Requirement surveys for  
WASH in Schools in Cambodia  
School Year 2018/19 to 2022/23



# BACKGROUND

Menstruation is natural and a signal of normal growth and development for girls. The WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme defines menstrual health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in relation to the menstrual cycle”<sup>1</sup>. Since 2018, menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) has become more prominent in the global community due to its broader and more inclusive nature. MHH focuses on health-related issues and infrastructural factors that keep women and girls from managing their menstruation, such as access to water and adequate sanitation facilities as well as access to hygienic menstrual materials, which is particularly challenging for women and girls in developing countries<sup>2</sup>.

Appropriate MHH is essential for all women and girls to ensure health and wellbeing. Improving MHH also helps in addressing myths, stigma and harmful gender norms. The ability to manage menstruation appropriately while in schools has a positive impact on women and girls’ health, well-being, dignity, and education<sup>3</sup>. Ultimately, interventions to improve MHH in schools are crucial to meeting basic rights.

In Cambodia, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) released Minimum Requirement Guidelines on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools (MR Guidelines on WinS) in November 2016. The MoEYS developed the MR Guidelines on WinS to push all schools in Cambodia to improve their WinS activities. Each school must promote WinS and conduct annual self-assessment based on 4 key categories of MR Guidelines on WinS:

- Drinking Water
- Latrines & Urinals
- Handwashing Facilities
- Environment & Safety

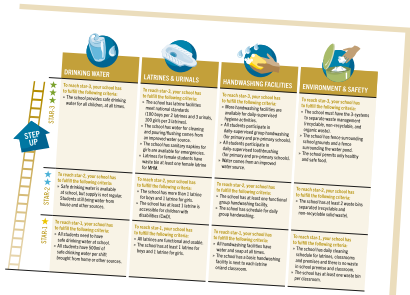
The 4 categories consist of 26 detailed criteria/variables in which 5 of them are related to MHH indicators. The 5 indicators impacting MHH are shown in table 1.

Following the release of the MR Guidelines on WinS, annual monitoring and evaluation has been conducted as part of the annual school census data collection. Baseline data of MR Guidelines on WinS was first collected in 2018/19 and follow-up data has been available since a year after.

This report is produced with the purpose of sharing the progress of schools’ interventions to improve Menstrual Health and Hygiene, reflecting the global MHH indicators compared to the indicators included in MR Guidelines on WinS, and to recommend the areas of improvement or integration within the MR Guidelines on WinS and Education Strategic Plan in the future. The report aims to support relevant institutions/units/policymakers of MoEYS and WinS Development Partners.

 <b>LATRINES &amp; URINALS</b>	 <b>HANDWASHING FACILITIES</b>
<b>2.5</b> Water for cleaning and pouring/flushing comes from an improved water source.	<b>3.1</b> Basic handwashing facility with water and soap at all the times is next to latrine or classroom.
<b>2.6</b> Sanitary pads for girls are available in emergency.	
<b>2.7</b> At least one waste bin in female latrines for MHH.	
<b>2.1</b> The school has at least 1 latrine for boys and 1 latrine for girls.	

TABLE 1: The 5 indicators of the MR Guidelines on WinS related to MHH



Complete table of MR Guidelines on WinS on the basis of the Three Star Approach

1 Source: <https://washdata.org/monitoring/menstrual-health>  
 2 Source: [https://www.susana.org/\\_resources/documents/default/3-3862-7-1590664100.pdf](https://www.susana.org/_resources/documents/default/3-3862-7-1590664100.pdf)  
 3 Source: <https://plan-international.org/srhr/menstruation>

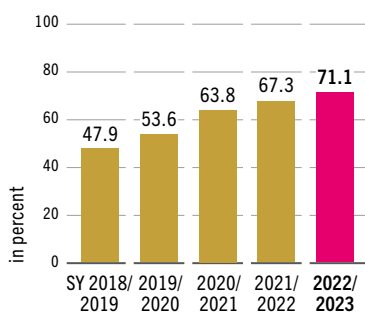
# MHH PROGRESS

## MHH INDICATORS OVER THE YEARS SY 2018/19 TO 2022/23

### IMPROVED WATER

The availability of improved water for cleaning, pouring or flushing is necessary to keep schools' latrines and urinals clean, help eliminate the open defecation, and indirectly keep students in schools. It is under Criteria 2.5 of MR Guidelines on WinS. Baseline monitoring in SY 2018/19 showed that less than half of the participating schools have available water for cleaning, pouring, or flushing. Continuous improvements, however, were seen in the succeeding years with 71.1% coverage by SY 2022/23.

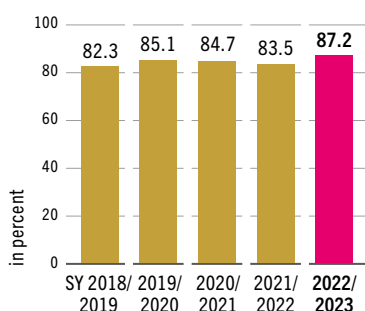
**FIGURE 1:** Schools with availability of water for cleaning, pouring or flushing



### GENDER-SEGREGATED TOILETS

The MR Guidelines on WinS requires all schools to have gender-segregated toilets to avoid harassment of girls. The guidelines additionally emphasize that latrines must be cleaned daily and should provide privacy for students. Monitoring results show that availability of gender-segregated toilets is relatively high, with more than 80% coverage. It must be noted, however, that in the 5-year monitoring, there was only approximately 3% increase in average per year over the time period.

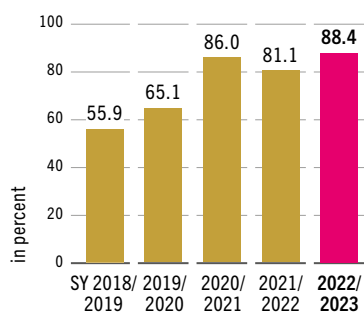
**FIGURE 2:** Schools with availability of gender-segregated toilets



### BASIC HANDWASHING FACILITY

Handwashing facilities with improved water and soap play a very important role in hygiene practice. It has been included as one of the key categories of MR Guidelines on WinS and requires schools to provide basic handwashing facilities with improved water and soap at all the time next to latrine or classroom. Monitoring data shows that the availability of handwashing facilities has remarkably increased from baseline in SY 2018/19 to SY 2022/23. The increase over the years may be thanks to the investments made by the government and development partners in promoting handwashing in schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

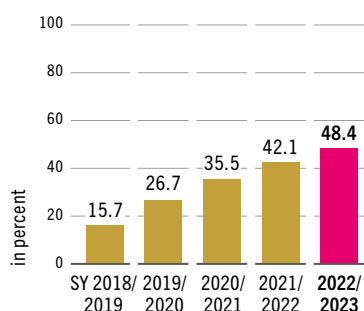
**FIGURE 3:** Schools with availability of basic handwashing facility next to latrine or classroom



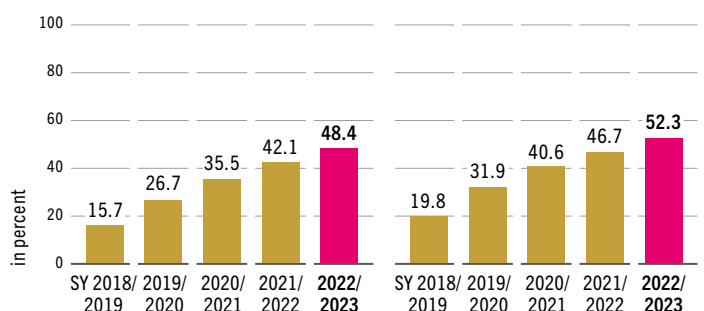
### RESERVE SANITARY PADS AND WASTE BIN

To further promote MHH in schools, the MR Guidelines on WinS requires schools to have reserve sanitary pads for girls to use in emergencies and to have at least one waste bin in female latrines for MHH. At baseline, only approximately 16% and 20% of all schools fulfilled the criteria on the availability of sanitary pads and waste bin, respectively. Both criteria, however, increased to nearly 50% by SY 2022/23. This highlights the efforts of MoEYS, supported by students, parents, local community, development partners, and other stakeholders to promote gender equity through MHH.

**FIGURE 4:** Schools with availability of reserve sanitary pads



**FIGURE 5:** Schools with availability of at least one waste bin in female latrine



## MHH INDICATORS BY PROVINCE SY 2022/23

### IMPROVED WATER

Monitoring data by province shows that 14 out of the 25 provinces have higher coverage than the national average (71%). Many provinces (11 out of 25) were still below the average. Preah Vihear Province has the lowest rate among the 25 provinces, with only about 50% coverage for water availability.

### GENDER-SEGREGATED TOILETS

The national average of schools with gender-segregated toilets by province was quite high at approximately 87%. The majority of provinces (14 out of 25) were below the national average but have nonetheless high coverage.

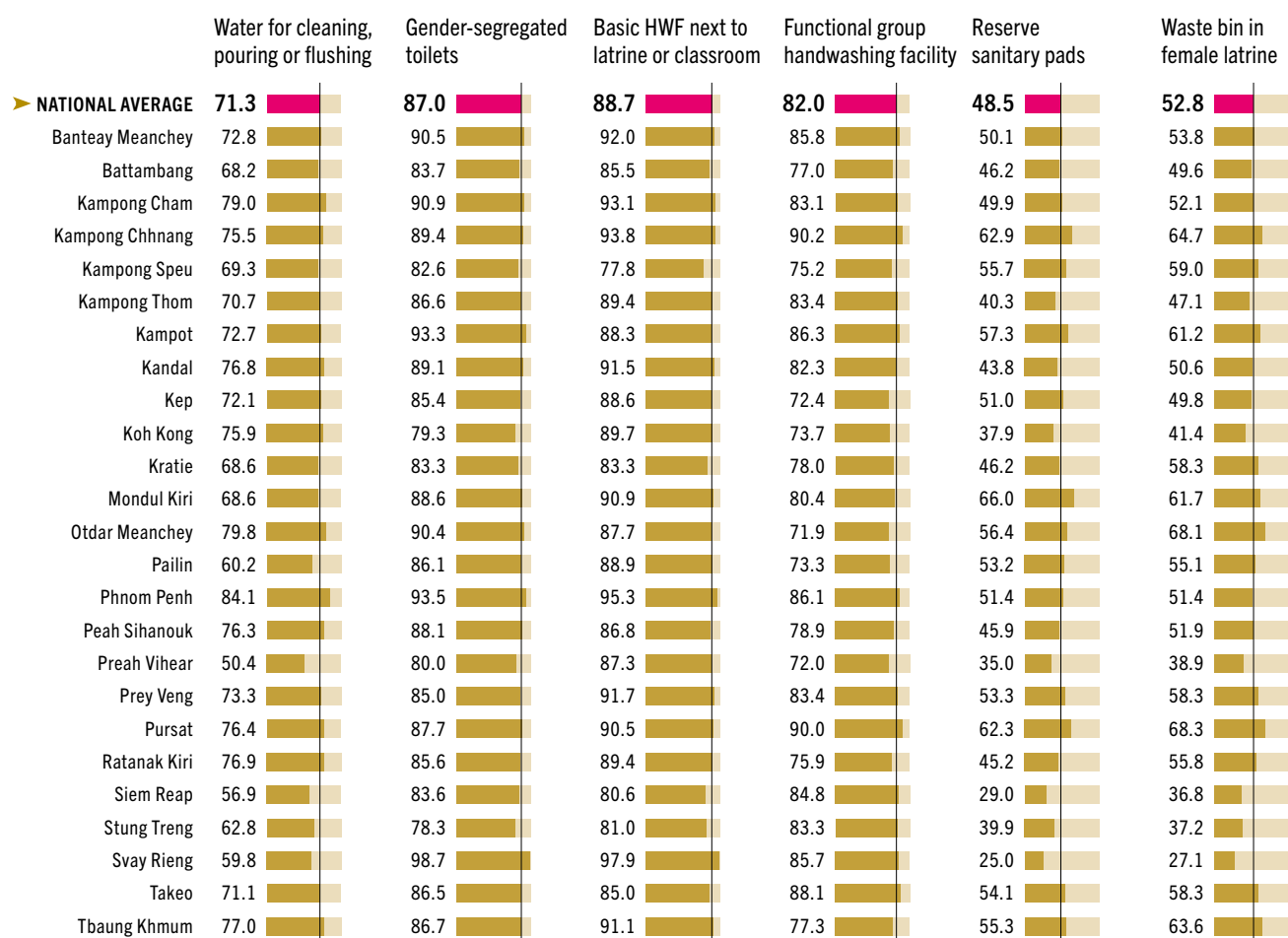
### BASIC HANDWASHING FACILITY

The national average of schools with basic handwashing facilities (HWF) was also quite high at about 88%. Most of the provinces (15 out of 25) were higher than the national average. While the data looks promising, schools should put more focus in constructing group handwashing facilities to meet MR Guidelines on WinS.

### RESERVE SANITARY PADS AND WASTE BIN

The availability of sanitary pads in schools in SY 2022/23 remains low, with less than 50% providing emergency pads nationwide. At the same time, the coverage of schools equipped with waste bins in female latrines is only a little over 50%. Despite the low national average for both indicators, many of the provinces (11 out of 25) still have lower coverage than average. Svay Rieng and Siem Reap Provinces have noticeably lower rates than the rest of the provinces for both indicators. These represent thematic and geographic areas that would substantially benefit from the support of government and/or development partners in promoting MHH, e.g. disseminating or training on MHH for provincial and school level staff.

**FIGURE 6:** SY 2022/23 / provincial data / percentage of schools with availability of:



## MHH INDICATORS BY SCHOOL TYPE SY 2022/23

### IMPROVED WATER

The supply of improved water for cleaning, pouring or flushing was not so varied among the different school types. However, schools at the college level have the lowest coverage at 64%.

### GENDER-SEGREGATED TOILET

The coverage of gender-segregated toilets is likewise not so varied, ranging from 78% to 88%. Pre-schools and Lycee were found to have lower coverages relative to the other school types.

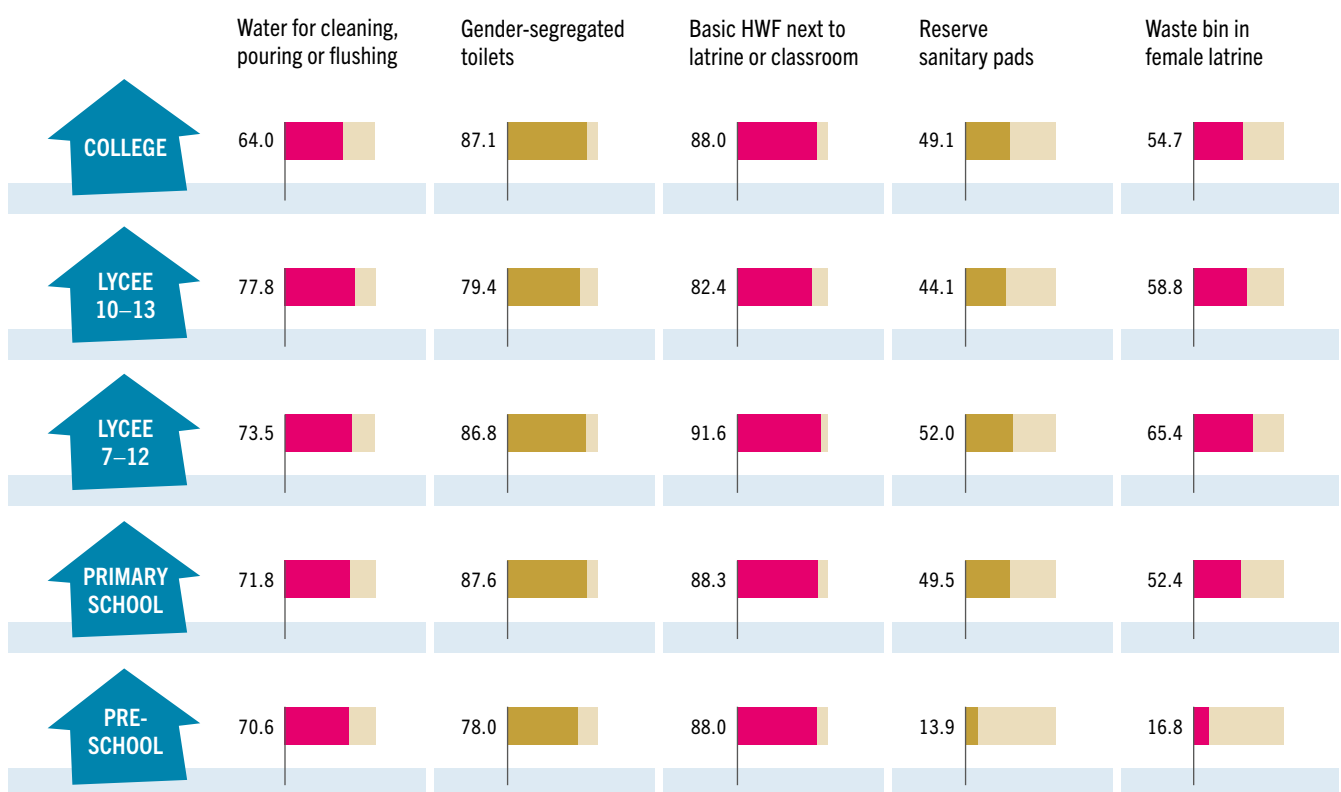
### BASIC HANDWASHING FACILITY

The coverage of basic handwashing facility by school type ranges from 82% to 92%, with Lycees having the lowest coverage.

### RESERVE SANITARY PADS AND WASTE BIN

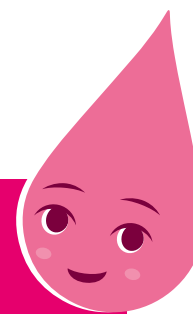
The availability of sanitary pads and waste bins are lowest in pre-schools. This might be because pre-schoolers are not yet expected to have their periods at this time. While menarche is not expected in this age group, menstrual needs of pre-school teachers should likewise not be overlooked.

**FIGURE 7:** SY 2022/23 / school types / percentage of schools with the availability of:



# GLOBAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

## COMPARISON OF MHH INDICATORS BETWEEN GLOBAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS



	PRIORITY LIST OF INDICATORS FOR GIRLS' MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE: GLOBAL RECOMMENDATIONS / SCHOOL LEVEL <sup>4</sup>	MOEYS MHH INDICATORS: CAMBODIA / SCHOOL LEVEL
<b>MATERIALS</b>	% of schools with menstrual materials available to girls in case of an emergency.	% of schools with sanitary pads for girls are available in emergency.
<b>WASH</b>	% of schools (primary/secondary) with improved sanitation facilities that are single-sex and usable (available, functional, and private) at the time of the survey.	—
	% of schools (primary/secondary) with improved sanitation facilities that are single-sex, usable (available, functional, and private), lockable from the inside, have covered disposal bins, and have discreet disposal mechanisms at the time of the survey.	% of schools with latrines to be functional and usable. % of schools with gender-segregated toilets. % of schools with waste bins for female latrines for MHH.
	% of schools (primary/secondary) that have water and soap available in a private space for girls to manage menstruation.	% of schools with water for cleaning, pouring or flushing comes from an improved water source.
<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	% of schools where education about menstruation is provided for students from age 9.	—
	Existence of pre-service or in-service teacher training about menstruation at the primary or secondary level.	—
	% of schools that have at least one teacher trained to educate primary/secondary students about menstruation.	—

The MR guidelines on WinS include a comprehensive list of indicators for which addresses the global indicators' domains on materials and WASH. The MR guidelines on WinS, however, lack indicators on the knowledge domain. While there are no knowledge-specific indicators in the MR guidelines on WinS, lessons on MHH have already been integrated into the National Curriculum on School Health and are

gradually being taught in some schools. For instance, teaching flipcharts on MHH have likewise been developed and ready for teaching in primary and secondary schools. Moreover, School Health Department of MoEYS has been delivering MHH knowledge to education staff at provincial and school level through a training package on MR Guidelines on WinS.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Priority List of Indicators for Girls' Menstrual Health and Hygiene: Technical Guidance for National Monitoring / Share-Net International Digital Platform. <https://bit.ly/3QTYPDt>

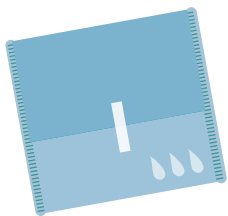
# KEY INSIGHTS



The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport released the Minimum Requirement Guidelines on Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools (MR Guidelines on WinS) in November 2016 which includes five menstrual health indicators: improved water for cleaning and pouring, gender segregated latrines, handwashing facilities with water and soap, reserved sanitary pads, and waste bins in female toilets.



Monitoring data shows continuous improvements in all indicators from baseline monitoring in SY 2018/19 up to SY 2022/23. Variations in compliance and coverage, however, can be seen across the different provinces highlighting the need for a more targeted approach in ensuring compliance to the MR guidelines on WinS. Building capacities of school staff and strengthening partnerships with other stakeholders should be considered to improve the status of WinS, particularly in provinces with low coverage.



While the MR guidelines on WinS include indicators addressing MHH, additional indicators focusing on the knowledge domain are needed to align with the priority list of indicators recommended at the global level. It is recommended that the MR Guidelines on WinS and EMIS system be expanded to consider privacy of girls (i.e. lockable toilets), discreet disposal mechanism, and education on MHH. Moreover, it is strongly recommended that the comprehensive MHH indicators aligned with global context be included in the MoEYS Education Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028.



## IMPRINT

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