The Girl - Child and Menstrual Management in Zimbabwe – part three

By

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This third report reports on a continuation of the work already carried out and reported in parts 1 and 2. The Menstrual Management booklet has been further tested by school girls and edited where improvements or clarification was required. The booklet has now been translated into Shona. In addition, a report has been written on the relationship between toilet design and the menstruating school girl as it applies to Zimbabwe. A new hand washing tank for schools has been designed and built and is currently on trial. These reports are attached together with this overview of work achieved.

The testing of this booklet was conducted with the help of Malaika Mushandu, a personal friend who is who is currently Miss Zimbabwe.

Schoolgirls being interviewed by Annie Kanyemba and Malaika Mushandu at the Domboramwari Secondary School in Epworth

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Additional comments that were raised by the booklet

Several questions arose from the presentation of the booklet to the school girls. Some of these could be incorporated into the booklet and some of them raise questions which are not easily placed in the booklet.

Many are questions related to customary beliefs. These include:

1. If people with who I stay know that I am on my monthly period, will they eat the food that I prepare?
2. Is it true that girls are not encouraged to eat too many eggs, too much salt and dried nuts with too much salt?
3. Is it encouraged for girls to wear cotton?
4. Is it true that if U greet a boy whilst on my MPs, he feels it
5. Is it true that too much sweet food or liquid increases the period pain
6. Is it true that if you take a bath twice a day the blood flow increases

These questions reveal that many girls, even in quite sophisticated schools near to capital city, still hold very traditional views and anxieties about their periods and what effects these have on family and friends. These important issues and others will be discussed in the next report.