**In-depth Interview Protocol Guide for Female Students on MHM**

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| **Opening Questions – Personal background and questions about school**  Opening questions are intended to build rapport and gradually lead into the key questions | |
| **Questions** | **Probes/follow-ups** |
| 1. Tell me about your self 2. How old are you? 3. Which a) class and b) stream are you in? 4. How long does it take you to walk to school? 5. Have you always lived there? |  |
| 1. What do you learn about health at school? 2. What do you learn about puberty at school? | If learned about health/puberty at school?   * What topics covered? * Who teaches these topics? * How often have taught?   If **not** learned about health/puberty at school?   * How have you learned what you know? * From whom? |
| **Key Questions – 1. knowledge** | |
| **Questions** | **Probes/follow-ups** |
| **Transitional script (to be modified by each team as appropriate):**  Now we are going to move on to our discussion of more specific questions about menstruation. | |
| 1. What are the terms that girls use to talk about menstruation? 2. How do other people describe girls or women who are menstruating? | * What terms are used with friends? * What do they mean? * Are ‘secret’ terms used so nobody else will know what is discussed? |
| 1. Did you learn about menstruation before or after your first period? 2. Can you tell me about the first time you learned about menstruation? | * How old were you the first time you had your period? * Who told you about it (family, friends, teachers, health worker)? * What did they tell you? * How did it come up? * What was your reaction? Why? * Did you still have questions? |
| 1. How has your understanding of menstruation changed since you first learnt about it? | * How did it change? * Who have you talked with about it? * What have you learnt about your experience? * What more would you like to know? * Who would you like to learn this information from? Why? |
| **Key Questions – 2. Personal experience with menstruation** | |
| **First menstrual/monthly period** | |
| **Questions** | **Probes/follow-ups** |
| 1. Can you tell me the story of the first time you got your period? | Context:   * In which class were you? * Did you know what to do? * Did you have supplies to manage? * Was there an accident?   Knowledge:   * Did you know what it was when you got it? How?   Resources/management/practices:   * What did you use (pads, cloth, tissues, etc.)? * Who/where did you get materials from? * Where did you go to manage your period (latrine, separate room, outside, etc.)? * Was there water, soap, privacy?   Support:   * Did you tell anyone? Pleases explain. * If yes, who did you talk with? Why? * Did you try to hide it or keep it a secret? Why? * What did you talk about? * Who did you not want to know? Why? * What else was memorable about that experience? |
| **Key Questions- Personal experience with menstruation continued** | |
| **Most Recent Monthly Period** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
| 1. Can you tell me about the most recent time you got your period at school? | Context:   * Where were you? * Were you prepared for it? * Did you bring supplies with you? * If yes, what supplies? * If yes, where did you keep them?   Attitudes/emotions:   * How did you feel?   Resources/management/practices:   * What did you do? * What clothes do you wear? * What did you do and/or use that day to manage it (pads, cloth)? * Do you normally use those materials? * Who/where did you get them from? * Do you use different supplies for different days (light or heavy menstrual flow)? * Do you use different supplies when at home or school? Why?   Support:   * Does anyone ever provide materials or supplies for you? Who? * If someone provides materials for you. Where do they get the materials? Do they cost something? * Who did you not want to know you had your period? Why? |
| **Key Questions – 2. Personal experience with menstruation continued** | |
| **If not prepared for the menstrual period** | |
| **Questions** | **Probes/follow-ups** |
| 1. Can you tell me about a time that you had your period at school and you weren’t prepared or didn’t have supplies? | Attitudes/emotions:   * What was your immediate reaction/feeling? * What were you feeling on that day?   Management/practices:   * What did you do first? * Where did you go? Stay at school? Go home? * What did you do/use (pad, cloth, tissue, etc.)? * Who/were did you get materials from? * Where did you go to clean up/change? * Was there water/soap/privacy?   Support:   * Who could you talk to about this? * Who helped you?   School challenges:   * Was anything difficult for you at school? * Did you stay at school that day? |
| **Key Questions- 3. Menstruation: Behaviours, Restrictions and Education** | |
| **Questions** | **Probes/follow-ups** |
| 1. Are there any activities you do not do when you are menstruating? | * Are there restrictions placed on you? Mobility? Cooking? Eating? Religious? * Are there things you prefer not to do? * Do you go to school? * Do you stay in school all day? * Any cultural or religious restrictions. |
| 1. Are there times that you as a student are expected to do something but you don’t feel you could do it because you were menstruating? Please explain. | * School attendance * Class attendance * Class participation * Treatment by teachers ( curiosity, punishments) * Rules on latrine use * Treatment from boys * Movements from class to the wash rooms * Answer questions? Write on a board? * Play games? Socialize? Sit near someone? |
| 1. Do you think that people treat you differently if they know you are menstruating? | * Family/teachers/friends/boys? * If yes, how do they treat you differently? |
| 1. Are there any advantages of menstruating for girls? Please explain. | * Rest from regular housework/school work? * Respect from others? * Disadvantages? |
| 1. Do you wear underpants? If not, why? 2. If yes, what is the role of wearing underpants (nickers)? 3. If yes, was this before or after menarche? 4. Do you use these underpants consistently? if not, why? If you experience challenges, how do you handle such challenges? | |
| **Closing Questions/ Recommendations** | |
| 1. We are going to come up with recommendations for the Ministry of Education that could help improve schools. What advice would you like us to pass along to them that you think would make this school better for girls who are menstruating? | |
| 1. What could parents/families do to support their girls? | |
| **Thank you for your participation. Your involvement is really important to us, and we appreciate you sharing your personal experiences.**  **Before we end, do you have any questions for me about menstruation, the interview, or other information we have discussed?** | |