



Promoting Healthy & Economically  
Developed Community

# MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY 2025 REPORT

Theme: Educate, Empower, and Transform  
the Conversation Around Menstrual Health

**Compiled by:** HEDSO with support from **We One Action  
Network** and partners

**Location:** Kisumu County, Kenya





## Executive Summary

In celebration of Menstrual Hygiene Day 2025, HEDSO led a countywide campaign focused on youth engagement, stigma reduction, and menstrual dignity. The initiative, under the KNIT HER FUTURE project and with support from We One Action Network, reached 406 participants (292 girls, 114 boys) across Akili STEM Academy, Kasagam Secondary School, and CAPYEI College.

Activities included school-based build-ups, creative performances, youth-led discussions, and product distribution. A total of 584 sanitary towels and 114 pairs of underwear were distributed. This report documents the process, partnerships, key insights, and recommendations for future programming.





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# Introduction

Menstrual Hygiene Day (MHM), commemorated annually on May 28, serves as a global platform to raise awareness about the importance of menstrual health and hygiene management. Despite being a natural biological process, menstruation remains heavily stigmatized and misunderstood in many communities. These misconceptions often result in school absenteeism, low self-esteem, and limited access to proper menstrual products—particularly for adolescent girls and young women in underserved areas.

The 2025 MHM theme, “Educate, Empower, and Transform the Conversation Around Menstrual Health,” called upon stakeholders at all levels to confront these challenges head-on by breaking silence, dismantling myths, and fostering inclusive environments for menstrual health dialogue.

In alignment with this global call, HEDSO, through its flagship initiative KNIT HER FUTURE, spearheaded a menstrual health awareness campaign across Kisumu County, targeting youth in both academic and community settings. With main support from We One Action Network and in collaboration with multiple grassroots organizations, the campaign focused on youth-centered approaches—leveraging creative arts, peer mentorship, and school-based engagement to normalize menstruation, engage boys and male allies, and uphold menstrual dignity for all.

This report documents the planning process, activities conducted, partnerships involved, and the outcomes achieved. It captures not only the events but also the voices of young people who participated, and the growing momentum to end period stigma and promote sustainable menstrual health practices across the region.



# OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Educate students on menstrual health, hygiene, and its impact on girls' education and well-being.
- ▶ Empower young men to be allies in menstrual health advocacy.
- ▶ Transform conversations around menstrual hygiene by challenging myths and stigma through creative arts.
- ▶ Support 250 vulnerable students with sanitary towels to promote menstrual dignity.





# Our Main Partner



## Other Partners





## Setting the Groundwork for Impact

In the lead-up to the Menstrual Hygiene Day 2025 celebrations, HEDSO conducted three strategic inception meetings at Akili Stem Academy, CAPYEI Kisumu Campus and Kasagam Secondary School. These engagements served as crucial planning forums, ensuring that activities were well-coordinated, inclusive, and aligned with institutional calendars.

At CAPYEI, the meeting convened key stakeholders including representatives from HEDSO, CAPYEI administration, student leaders. The session focused on shaping the overall direction of the MHM campaign, confirming key dates, clarifying partner roles, and aligning on resource mobilization strategies. One of the standout outcomes was the decision to integrate creative approaches such as fashion and theatre into the main event, a strategy aimed at enhancing youth engagement. Another major highlight was the emphasis on adolescent male inclusion to break gendered silence around menstruation.



At Kasagam Secondary School, the planning session was held with the school principal, health club patrons, and student leaders. The team agreed on key facilitation roles, thematic areas to be addressed, and age-appropriate content delivery. These courtesy visits and inception meetings laid a strong foundation for collaborative planning, ensuring that the MHM campaign would not only be impactful but also resonate deeply with both students and institutional stakeholders.



# Pre-MHM 2025 Build-Up Activities

Ahead of the Menstrual Hygiene Day 2025 celebrations, we conducted two impactful build-up activities at Akili STEM Academy in Obambo and Kasagam Secondary School in Kisumu. These sessions were instrumental in laying the groundwork for the main event by raising awareness, equipping students with knowledge, and promoting dignity through practical support.

At Akili STEM Academy, the build-up featured two targeted sessions. The first engaged 54 upper primary girls (ages 10–15) in an interactive menstrual health education workshop. Using visual aids, demonstration kits, and open sharing forums, facilitators addressed hygiene practices, product usage, and emotional readiness. Girls shared their first-period experiences and received clear, practical guidance, resulting in reduced fear and improved confidence in managing menstruation.

The second session focused on male allyship, bringing together 35 boys and 3 male teachers. Through open discussions, role-plays, and facilitator testimonies, boys explored the impact of stigma and their potential role as supporters. The session fostered empathy and encouraged teachers to create space for menstrual health conversations within the classroom.





At Kasagam Secondary School, the build-up activity engaged a total of 176 students, 103 girls and 73 boys. In a series of interactive sessions designed to challenge menstrual stigma and promote inclusivity. A key highlight was the facilitation of six Chat Corner sessions, where students had open and honest conversations around myths and taboos surrounding menstruation and explored ways to create safe, supportive spaces for girls during their periods.



The discussions were led by peer mentors, creating a comfortable and engaging environment for learning and sharing. Students, particularly the boys, showed strong interest and support for menstrual health issues, while teachers expressed the need for additional educational materials to strengthen menstrual health education within school clubs



Across both schools, 584 sanitary towels were distributed to girls and 114 boxers to boys, reinforcing messages of dignity, inclusion, and shared responsibility. These build-up activities played a vital role in fostering awareness, opening up dialogue, and preparing the students for active participation in the main MHM 2025 celebration.





## MHM Day 2025 at CAPYEI: Breaking the Silence on Menstruation

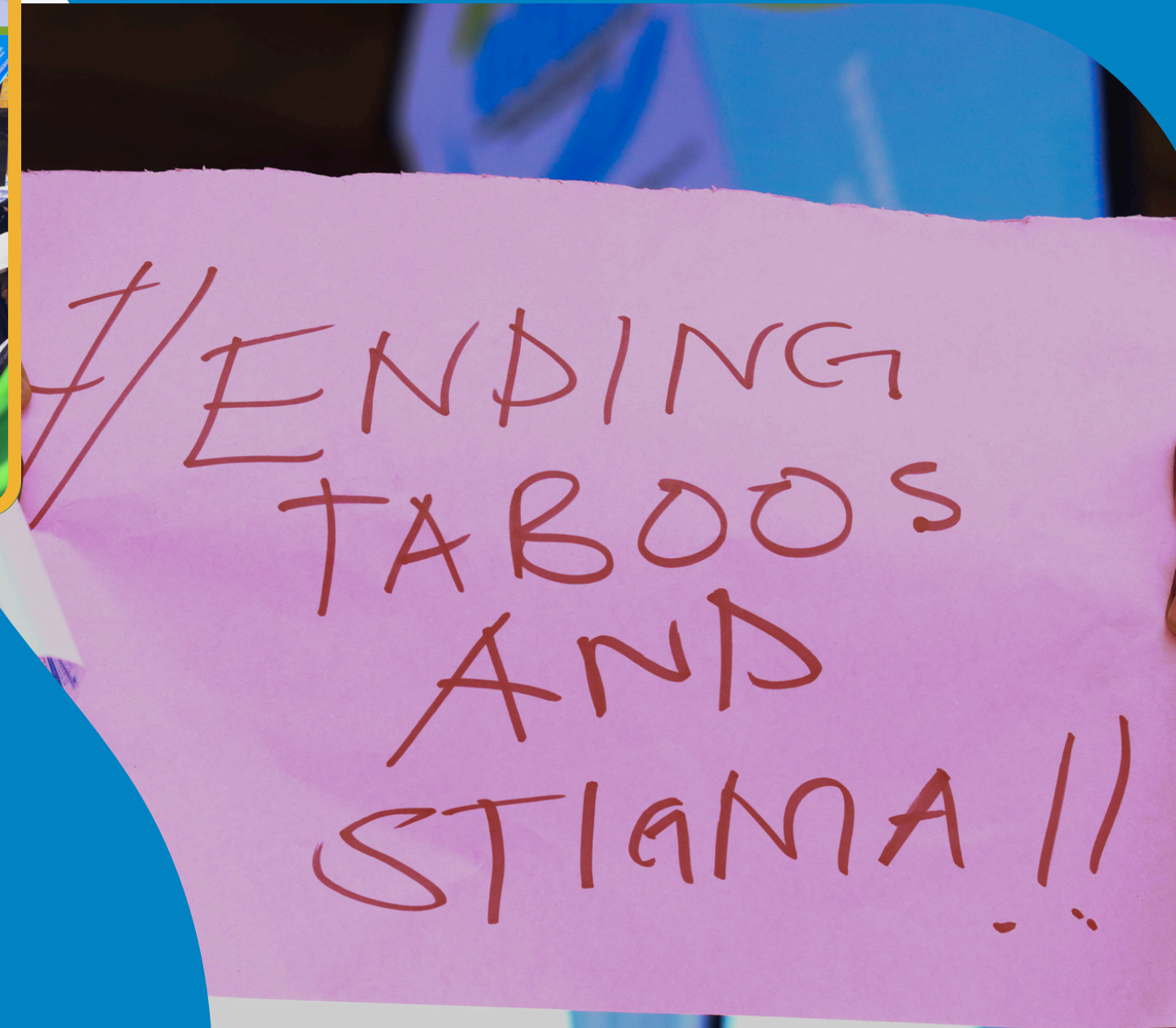
On May 28, 2025, HEDSO and partners commemorated Menstrual Hygiene Day with a vibrant and youth-led event at CAPYEI College, Kisumu, under the theme:

“Educate, Empower, and Transform the Conversation Around Menstrual Health.”





# MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY



The day began with a powerful awareness procession from Kondele Roundabout to CAPYEI, where participants carried informative placards with messages on menstrual hygiene. This walk wasn't just symbolic it served to raise public awareness, mobilize community support for girls and women, and challenge long-held taboos around menstruation. Onlookers along the route were engaged with chants, songs, and solidarity slogans promoting menstrual dignity.



# Main Highlights from the Celebration

The event was officially launched by Hon. Beatrice Odongo, County Executive Committee Member for Gender, Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs, who applauded the initiative and called for inclusive policies and open dialogue to eliminate menstrual stigma. Her remarks reinforced the day's theme: "Educate, Empower, and Transform the Conversation Around Menstrual Health."

The celebration featured a rich mix of advocacy, creativity, and peer-driven learning:



## Theatre for Change

A youth-led theatrical performance dramatized real-life struggles and myths associated with menstruation, sparking open conversations and empowering the audience to question societal norms.





# Fashion with a Message

A menstrual health-themed fashion show showcased bold designs symbolizing empowerment and dignity across various categories, casual wear, professional looks, creative pieces, and beachwear, all styled to reflect menstrual realities and resilience.





# MHM 2025

## Interactive Chat Corner Sessions

In small group spaces, students engaged in peer-led conversations tackling myths and taboos, how to create safe environments for menstruating girls, and shared personal reflections on navigating menstrual health challenges.





# EXPERT PANEL DISCUSSION



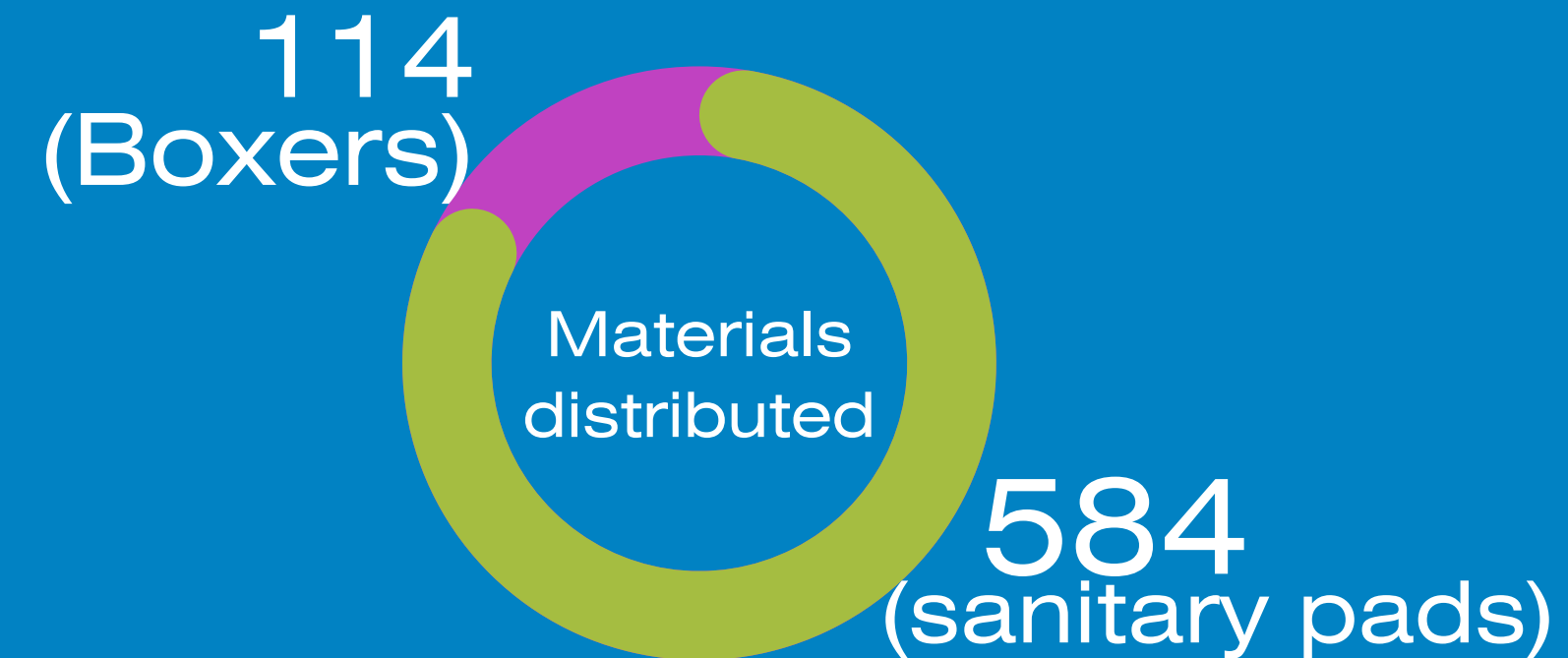
Panelists from Homeless of Kisumu, Riley Orton Foundation, HKSAI, and CAPYEI College offered expert insights on product affordability, policy gaps, and school-based support systems. Youth in attendance asked questions and proposed community-based solutions to close menstrual health gaps.





## Key Outcomes

- 3 institutions: Akili STEM Academy, Kasagam Secondary School, and CAPYEI College
  - Male engagement increased as boys and male teachers actively participated in discussions, gradually embracing their roles as supportive allies in menstrual health.
  - Youth-led advocacy was strengthened as students confidently proposed practical solutions to improve menstrual education and support systems within their schools.
  - Stigma around menstruation was reduced through creative activities like theatre and fashion, which encouraged open dialogue and normalized the conversation in relatable ways.
- Policy Engagement: CECM endorsed further MHM integration into county programming
  - Girls gained confidence and deeper understanding of menstrual hygiene, openly sharing their experiences and asking questions in safe, inclusive spaces.





# Challenges

**Limited time in schools to engage deeply with all students**

**Cultural sensitivities, especially around male participation**

**Resource constraints vs. high demand for MHM products**



## TESTIMONIAL

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“Before today, I used to be scared to ask questions about periods. Now I feel it's okay to talk.”

Student, CAPYEI College





## TESTIMONIAL

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“As a boy, I didn’t think I had a role to play. Now I know I can help.”

**Male student, Kasagam Secondary**





# RECOMMENDATIONS

**1.**

**Expand reach to more rural schools and mixed-gender settings**

**2.**

**Integrate peer mentorship programs long-term**

**3**

**Strengthen local policy engagement for sustained supply and support**

**4**

**Continue using creative arts to drive youth-led conversations**



# Pictorials





# MHM2025

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POWER