

FEMALE HEALTH AND HYGIENE ENTREPRENEURSHIP UNDERSTANDING THE ECOSYSTEM IN KENYA, UGANDA, AND GHANA

A compilation of insights, milestones, benchmarks and data points along the journey of building impact-oriented enterprises

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
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IN KENYA, UGANDA, AND GHANA





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● Abbreviations

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B2B – Business to Business
 B2C – Business to Customer
 B2D – Business to Donor
 B2G – Business to Government
 BoP – Base of the Pyramid
 FGM – Female Genital Mutilation
 FHH – Female Health and Hygiene
 GBV – Gender-based Violence

IO – International Organisation
 LMIC – Low- and middle-income countries
 NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
 MHH – Menstrual Health and Hygiene
 MHM – Menstrual Health Management
 SDG – Sustainable Development Goals
 SRH – Sexual and Reproductive Health
 WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
 FHHA - Female Health and Hygiene Accelerator





01

INTRODUCTION

01 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

In June 2024, Cewas and its partners launched the Female Health & Hygiene Accelerator (FHHA) for Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana. The acceleration programme is being carried out in collaboration with OPERO Services, the Water and Sanitation Entrepreneurs Association Uganda (WASEU), and MDF as local implementing partners in Kenya, Uganda and Ghana, respectively. It is funded by Siemens Stiftung, Knorr-Bremse, the Waterloo Foundation and The Case for Her, with expertise provided by partners including iRise and secon impact.

Degree of Need

The topic of female health and hygiene is a crisis of a global scale that disproportionately affects women and girls of lower economic status, and is often exacerbated by cultural and social stigma, a lack of attention to the topic as is often the case with challenges pertaining specifically to women and girls, and a lack of support for innovative solutions. WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) and gender are deeply interconnected, with several critical implications. These may be reflected in different ways for groups of women, whether it be very young girls who start menarche early and may not find the support network they require, or pregnant women who cannot access the medical guidance they need; and across different core aspects of society, by hampering women's and girls' ability to attend school, hold a job, or care for their family. Firstly, menstrual hygiene, which is a crucial aspect of women's reproductive health, is significantly impacted by access to suitable sanitary products, clean water, and sanitation facilities. Girls' education is also affected, as the lack of access to pads as well as clean, private toilets during menstruation can lead to school dropouts.

Additionally, the absence of easily accessible and adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities contributes to gender-based violence, particularly as women often must travel long distances to fetch water, putting them at risk of assault. Lack of access to safe sanitation can lead to open defecation, making women more vulnerable to sexual violence as they are forced to venture out into exposed, frequently dark areas. Pregnant women face dangers while fetching water and may suffer health consequences from consuming unsafe water. Furthermore, women and girls are predominantly responsible for water collection in many households in rural areas, which places a substantial burden on their time and energy, totalling a staggering 200 million hours worldwide and thus impeding their ability to actively participate in a country's workforce and contribute to its economy[1]. Overall, addressing WASH issues through a gender-sensitive lens is essential for promoting women's health, education, safety, and overall well-being.



[1] <https://www.wateraid.org/uk/media/stars-support-wateraid-campaign-to-highlight-the-200-million-hours-women-and-girls-lose#:-:text=Globally%2C%20a%20staggering%20200%20million,drying%20up%20springs%20and%20wells.>

The Opportunity

The need for innovative, inclusive female health and hygiene solutions covering the many corresponding sub-categories, such as menstrual health and hygiene, sexual and reproductive health, fertility, and birth, is widely recognised, and its impact on education, health and safety of girls and women are well understood. However, the gap between demand and supply is still staggering, and deeply rooted in compounding factors that can be traced back to awareness, access, politics, and social circumstances.

While several interventions are working to ameliorate the female hygiene situation in the target regions, often spearheaded by **WASH organisations**, they alone cannot address this highly multidimensional challenge, which requires a comprehensive, holistic approach that involves decision makers, educational approaches, and the private sector. The female health and hygiene market is projected to grow significantly and could be an important stimulant for growth in the target countries[2].

Despite the significant need, and the well-studied opportunities for the female health and hygiene economy[3], few businesses are managing to capitalise on this and create scalable, socially driven female health and hygiene enterprises. The enterprise landscape is dominated by informal or non-profit entities, with a small number of outliers trying to break through to offer services at scale. Many actors in the field see female health and hygiene as a side business or a charitable activity, with limited opportunity to make money. This goes hand in hand with a need for improved marketing for topics related to female health and hygiene, by deploying an approach that showcases the holistic benefits it brings in a way that is digestible and tangible to the population as a whole and works to effectively eradicate social stigma.

Beyond impact-oriented development support, businesses in female health and hygiene require in-depth support on technical, business, networking, and financing aspects to enable them to **(i) penetrate BoP markets; (ii) engage and partner with public sector clients; and (iii) build the required partnerships and operational capacities necessary to climb the growth ladder and enable access to further scaling support and finance.**

A key reason for our pursuit of this initiative in 2024 is our belief in how pivotal a programme this may be **to move female health and hygiene entrepreneurship forward** in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, but also generally in the Global South. With much talk of MHH entrepreneurship, few shining examples exist, and this programme could be catalytic in providing more breakthrough examples of scaling such enterprises in the region; thus, inspiring the rise of more likeminded changemakers.

We also believe that there are healthy ecosystem conditions in place in the three target countries which are conducive for success, with key stakeholders aligned on a vision and need for improved female health and hygiene products and services:

1. **Women and girls form the Base of the Pyramid that require access to products and services.**
2. **Ambitious (women) entrepreneurs that do not have access to the know-how or targeted support to scale.**
3. **Investors that have exhibited their willingness to invest patiently and with a gender lens in female health and hygiene businesses due to the significant potential for impact among a partly hard-to-reach customer base and with a very important offering.**

[2] <https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/tissue-hygiene-paper/feminine-hygiene/africa#revenue>

[3] <https://www.toiletboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2020-Female-Hygiene-Economy-Markets-Kenya-2020.pdf>

About the FHH Accelerator

The Female Health & Hygiene Accelerator is intended to be the kick-off of a series of interventions by Cewas, its partners and other ecosystem actors to invigorate a flourishing ecosystem for entrepreneurial solutions that benefit women and girls in the target countries – and beyond. The programme aims to transform solutions along the health and hygiene value chain into profitable and scalable business models in the target countries, while also assisting 8-10 high-potential enterprises dedicated to addressing women's health and hygiene challenges in becoming investment-ready. The accelerator adopted a broad approach in considering enterprise profiles, encompassing product, service, and solutions providers. In other words, the accelerator focuses on enterprises with the potential to scale nationwide and even regionally. It provides targeted resources, mentorship, and funding opportunities to businesses developing products or services in areas such as menstrual health, reproductive care, and personal hygiene. By fostering innovation, building business capacity, and facilitating partnerships, the partners hope to help these enterprises to grow sustainably, expand their impact, and overcome market barriers. Ultimately, the accelerator serves as a catalyst for enhancing access to essential health products and services for women and girls, while also driving social change and economic empowerment.



The present report is based on the key findings of the Ecosystem Analysis, the first activity of the programme, which is meant to inform the selection of enterprises, the design of the acceleration programme and tailored support as well as the engagement of partners. For this purpose, this report analyses 1) the framework for female health and hygiene in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, and 2) the most relevant stakeholders for the success of the enterprises. We paid particular attention to understanding the following four parameters: the governance landscape on FHH in each country, i.e., key stakeholders, relevant policies, legislation or standards; the market, i.e., value chain, coverage, bottlenecks, distribution and innovation; the financing landscape, i.e., relevant investors, availability of financing, willingness and ability to pay; and finally, the entrepreneurs themselves, i.e., the types of products and services that are present in the countries, their business models, challenges, opportunities, concerns and growth outlook. While the analysis draws heavily upon primary research gathered from dozens of stakeholder and enterprise interviews, any specifications and the origin of this information remains largely confidential in the context of this public version in order to avoid sharing sensitive or internal data of the interviewees. However, we wanted to make the gathered information available to interested enterprises, partners, and stakeholders to encourage the consolidation of a female health and hygiene ecosystem and continued exchange in the sector.

As of the time of publication, this analysis has been used to support the selection of a cohort of 10 enterprises out of several dozen applicants with the biggest potential to bridge the female health and hygiene gaps. Additionally, it provides the basis to work with the selected enterprises to develop feasible scaling strategies and facilitate market expansion. More information on the selected cohort and the programme can be found on the accelerator's landing page: <https://fhha.creation.camp>.

1.1 Important Considerations

Intersections with the Broader WASH Sector

This present ecosystem analysis places a focus on aspects and dynamics that are unique to the female health and hygiene sphere. However, naturally, there are numerous overlaps with broader WASH issues which need to be considered, for example the fact that local conditions such as access to clean water and safe toilets are preconditions for female health, or the embedment of MHH within governance structures, key ecosystem players, business support organisations, donor/NGO/IO programmes or financing opportunities, among others. Nonetheless, detailed ecosystem analyses and reports have already been drafted as part of the many acceleration programmes on related topics in the WASH sector that Cewas and its partners have implemented in recent years, including the [WA-KE Up Accelerator](#) (Kenya), the [Rural Water Supply Accelerator](#) (Kenya & Uganda), the [Sanitation Accelerator](#) (Kenya & Uganda) and the [Ghana WASH Accelerator](#). As such, the mentioned reports can be consulted for further information, yet their content won't be repeated in detail here^[4].

Impact Measurement

Impact measurement in Cewas' accelerators involves data gathering from the enterprises engaged using Cewas' Enterprise Diagnostics tool prior to the start of the program, and the same methodology applied at the programs' conclusion to assess the progress before/after. The diagnostic tool helps analyse the strengths and gaps of the enterprises, informing on aspects such as market potential, profitability, sales strategy, impact potential, and SDG related impact, among others.

In addition, in recent years relevant impact data frameworks have been developed for the FHH sector (such as the [Menstrual Practice Needs Scale \(MPNS-36\)](#) or the [Priority List of Indicators for Girls' Menstrual Health and Hygiene](#)). These are designed for the FHH organizations themselves to assess their beneficiaries' needs and monitor their own impact.

[4] These reports generally aren't shared publicly and used for internal knowledge building; however, the respective Cewas project leads can be contacted via the projects' Creation Camp landing pages for more information.

Definitions

Female health and hygiene management, as defined by this analysis, encompasses key biological and psychological stages throughout a woman's life, including menarche, menstruation, fertility, pregnancy, motherhood, and menopause. Each stage is completely natural and comes with its unique experiences, yet, if addressed incorrectly or insufficiently, it can exercise a great burden on the girl's or woman's ability to participate in public life, dignity, overall health, economic and educational possibilities, and emotional response.

Given the predominance of solutions related to menstrual health (pads and other products in particular) that have been identified during the mapping, it has been assumed from the get-go that such enterprises will make up a large share of the participants in the accelerator and potential future related programmes.

Accordingly, during this study, the focus has been placed on the menstrual health product side. However, pre- and post-menstrual solutions are also accommodated, and the organisers consider it crucial to make space for key topics linked to the female experience, such as fertility, pregnancy, maternity or menopause. Thus, while the common terminology "menstrual health and hygiene" / "menstrual health management" can also be understood to include those phases, we opted for "female health and hygiene" after exchanges with various sector experts to avoid a limited focus on the physical act of menstruation, especially by those who are less familiar with the sector.

For the sake of simplicity, female/woman/girl thus refer in this context to the biological status at birth, without intending to discredit the experience of menstruators who may not identify as either and who are still very much included in the target audience of this programme. We recognise that there is a long way yet to go, in the target countries and beyond, to sufficiently address and encompass the experiences of anyone who identifies as a woman or who relates to the female biological experience without identifying as a woman, and are hopeful that programmes such as this, and those that come after, help to lay the foundation for more sensitivity towards the topic of inclusivity.





02

FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR FEMALE HEALTH AND HYGIENE ENTERPRISES

02

FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR FEMALE HEALTH & HYGIENE ENTERPRISES

To establish the conditions under which female health and hygiene enterprises operate, key framework conditions are analysed along the value chain. The following sections analyse three interlinked framework conditions for the Kenyan, Ugandan, and Ghanaian context:

■ Governance

The governance framework for the female health and hygiene market in Kenya, Uganda and Ghana plays a crucial role in shaping the development and implementation of enterprises and initiatives. Entrepreneurial solutions can be found along different phases of the value chain, ranging from education via provision of menstrual health solutions, to safe disposal. Policies and regulations are, however, often set by different line ministries, and while national standards for some products such as sanitary pads are in place, an (international) standardisation for menstrual health products is still only being developed, leading to frequently sub-par quality. In consequence, the quality of products or services and accessibility differ significantly along the value chain. Overall, all three target countries are showing a growing awareness and dedication to solution finding in the sector on a policy and governmental level, but gaps in the availability of products and services are still often filled by NGOs or IOs.

While policy papers and guidelines have been or are being drafted, female health and hygiene still hasn't found its permanent dedicated space and is frequently moved out of the agenda of one authority and into another, for example from education ministries to health ministries to WASH-related ones, etc. This trend is often steered by individuals who constitute a driving factor in bringing female health and hygiene topics to the forefront of their respective organisations, such as highly dedicated female politicians or community leaders. However, once those individuals switch posts, the topic is again in limbo.

■ Market setup

The market framework for female health and hygiene products and services in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana is witnessing positive trends, with increasing recognition of the importance of private sector involvement. Market-based approaches are gaining momentum, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation in the female health and hygiene sector. However, challenges persist, such as lack of awareness and education, a growing but still insufficient prioritisation by public authorities, a limited ability to pay for female health and hygiene products and services which largely affects rural areas, and cultural or societal barriers that still stigmatise female health and hygiene, especially menstrual health, as something inherently sexualised or "dirty". Moreover, finding a business model that is sustainable over time has proven challenging and growing enterprises see themselves pressured to take over a large part of the educational work themselves in order to create demand and acceptance in the first place. Marketing also proves challenging in all three markets, especially for sustainably oriented solutions due to limited awareness, different marketing approaches needed, different types of products, and other reasons that will be dissected later.

■ Financing

The financing framework for the female health and hygiene market, along with the broader WASH market in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana presents a mix of opportunities and gaps. While similarly to the broader WASH sector there is a growing interest in private sector participation, funding remains a significant challenge. Large multinational players dominate the market, and growing companies have struggled to build convincing business cases to engage commercial investors.

As a result, the lion's share of investments in the sector is driven by foundations or donor organisations, that are often among the biggest clients of female health and hygiene enterprises. To bridge the financing gap, innovative funding mechanisms, such as impact investments, de-risking grants, and concessional loans, can be explored to attract both public and private sector investors. It is also crucial to view the accelerator as a means to build convincing best cases that can attract investment and inspire other companies to follow suit. Moreover, capacity-building efforts to improve financial literacy and project development skills among entrepreneurs can enhance their ability to access financing. Addressing the financing challenges and promoting effective resource mobilization will be key to achieving health and hygiene goals in the target countries.

2.1 Female Health & Hygiene Governance

Overall, effective governance in this context involves ensuring that women and girls have access to comprehensive healthcare services, including reproductive health services, maternal care, and menstrual health management, and that their rights and dignity are protected. This includes the implementation of menstruator-centric policy frameworks, which should go hand in hand with adequate healthcare infrastructure and a regulatory framework that ensures quality control and certain standards required to provide products or services.

The WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) defines Menstrual Health Management as "Women and adolescent girls are using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of a menstrual period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials"[5].

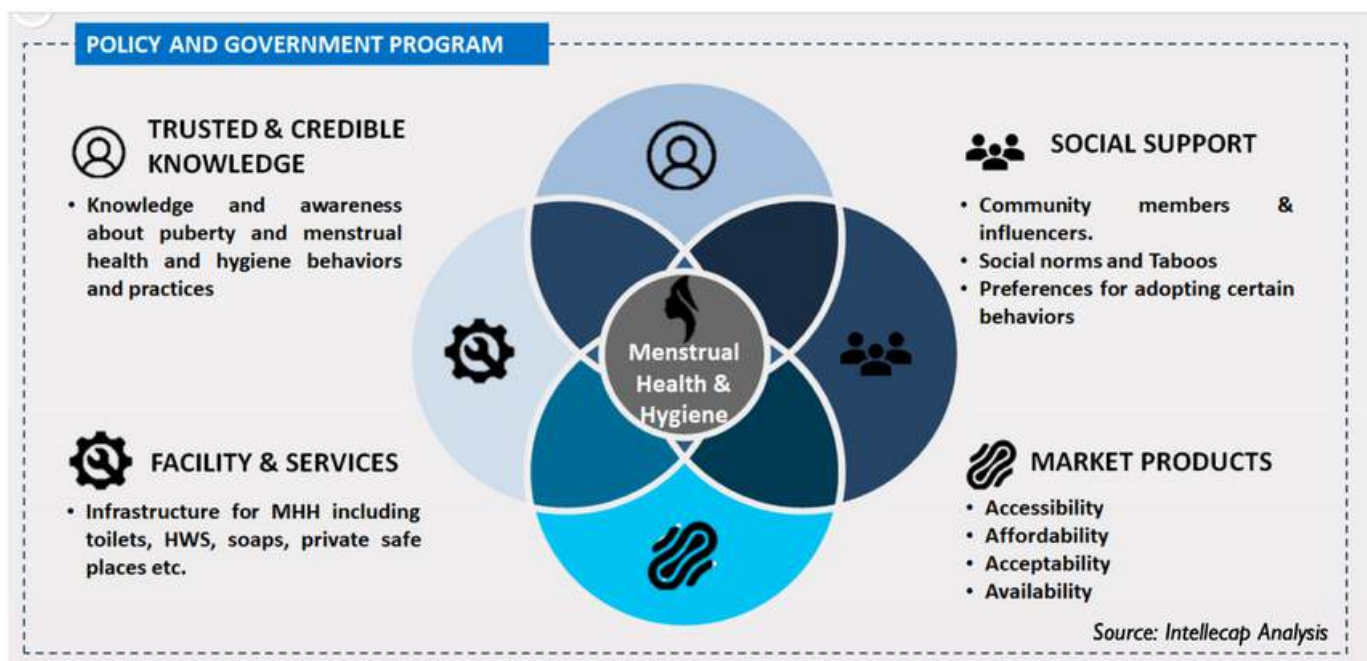


Figure 2: UNICEF, Critical components to practice safe MHH

[5] UNICEF Indonesia, Intellecap And SPIRE (2023). "Market Assessment Final Report of Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) Products and Services". Accessed via: <https://knowledge.unicef.org/wash/resource/market-assessment-final-report-menstrual-health-and-hygiene-mhh-products-and-services>

Period Poverty

As of 2020, 3.6 billion people still lacked safely managed sanitation services, which encompasses female hygiene, and 500 million women and girls worldwide struggled to access resources for menstrual health and hygiene[6]. In Kenya, more than half of women and girls cannot afford monthly hygiene products[7]. Kenyan menstrual health enterprise Zana Africa clocks this number even higher among school-aged girls, estimating that 4 out of every 5 are unable to access sanitary pads[8]. In Uganda, 65% of menstruators are unable to meet their menstrual needs[9], and although there is no definitive data for Ghana on access to menstrual products, 9 out of 10 girls regularly miss school during their periods[10]. These figures show the close link between economic and educational status and access to necessary hygiene resources, bringing with it severe implications on women's and girls' health and safety. This disproportionately affects those at the Base of the Pyramid (BoP) who often have no other choice but to resort to emergency methods such as fashioning pads out of dirty rags and newspapers, or to engage in transactional sex to secure the money needed to buy hygiene products[11].

Further, inadequate health and hygiene management may significantly increase the risk of further health issues for women and girls, such as urogenital tract infections, which in turn exposes them to other, more severe concerns including STIs (such as HIV) or fertility issues[12]. Besides the physical risk of infections, this is coupled with severe mental health issues that can be triggered by the discomfort and shame resulting from not being able to adequately manage one's hygiene practices and may negatively affect a woman's or girl's sense of dignity and standing in her community.

In addition, female hygiene and access to education go hand in hand. In Uganda, nearly a quarter of girls drop out of the education system when they start their periods, the ripple effects of which can be traced throughout their lives and quasi-eliminates their chances to break out of the poverty cycle[13]. The severe impact of inadequate access to female hygiene and health products and services is also illustrated in the example of Ghana by the fact that school absenteeism among girls seems to be often caused by inadequate sanitation facilities at schools that fail to provide suitable washing facilities and privacy, once again with public schools being more severely affected than private institutions[14], reinforcing the link between economic standing and access to health and hygiene solutions and setting girls up for a lifetime of less opportunities.

Governments in the target countries are often doing too little to significantly ameliorate the situation, although a growing potential and attention to the topic is there – Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda rank at 15, 17 and 34 respectively out of 52 surveyed countries on the African continent in terms of friendliness towards girls, placing them in the middle ranks overall[15].

[6] The World Bank (2022). Brief: Menstrual Health and Hygiene. Accessed via: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/brief/menstrual-health-and-hygiene>

[7] Republic of Kenya Ministry of Health (2020) Menstrual Hygiene Management Strategy, 2019-2030. Kenya Ministry of Health. Accessed via: <https://www.health.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MHM-Policy-11-May-2020.pdf>

[8] The Challenges Facing Girls, ZanaAfrica. <https://www.zanaafrica.org/home>

[9] Days for Girls International et al. (n.d) Menstrual Health Country Snapshot – Uganda.

[10] IRCWASH (2021). Policy Brief. It's time to invest in Menstrual Hygiene Management - Now!!! Accessed via: [policy_brief_on_mhm_mh_day_2021_final_14052021](https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/policy_brief_on_mhm_mh_day_2021_final_14052021.pdf)

[11] Phillips-Howard PA, Otieno G, Burmen B, Otieno F, Odongo F, Odour C, Nyothach E, Amek N, Zielinski-Gutierrez E, Odhiambo F, Zeh C, Kwaro D, Mills LA, Laserson KF (2015). "Menstrual Needs and Associations with Sexual and Reproductive Risks in Rural Kenyan Females: A Cross-Sectional Behavioral Survey Linked with HIV Prevalence". J Women's Health (Larchmt). Accessed via:

[12] <https://www.unicef.org/wash/files/UNICEF-Guidance-menstrual-health-hygiene-2019.pdf>

[13] Global Citizen (2019). "Uganda Must Tackle Period Poverty to Achieve SDGs, Education Ministry Warns." Accessed via: <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/uganda-period-poverty-sdgs/>

[14] Montgomery P, Ryus C, Dolan C, Dopson S, Scott L. "Sanitary pad interventions for girls' education in Ghana: A Pilot Study." PLoS ONE. 2012;7(10):1–7.

[15] ACPF (2020). The African Report on Child Wellbeing 2020: How friendly are African governments towards girls? Addis Ababa: African Child Policy Forum (ACPF).

At a continent-wide level, gender efforts in all African Union member countries are coordinated by the Strategy for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE). At a national level, all three target governments have in recent years implemented gender-sensitive policies and have statutes in place that are designed to pave the road towards gender equality[16].

Standardisation & Enabling Environment

One of the major issues the female health and hygiene sector faces is lack of awareness and, even if awareness exists, lack of trust. Governments have a huge role to play here by creating accommodating policies and guidelines, investing in awareness raising and expanding inclusive education. While efforts have been taken to varying success in the target countries, as outlined in the following subchapters, improving women's health and hygiene through such measures will have a tangible positive trickle-down effect on a country's overall performance in terms of life expectancy and health, but also education levels and productivity.

Implementing internationally aligned standards is one important way to ensure quality control and foster a safe environment for the promotion of women's and girls' health and wellbeing. While national standards already exist in many countries, these may vary – international standards are thus crucial to move forward, and fortunately they are already in the works for menstrual products[17]. Standards work to ensure the safety of raw materials used (thus minimising health risks through improper or even toxic chemicals), leak protection through an adequate degree of absorbency, a comfortable fit that doesn't prevent the woman or girl from going about her day, as well as accurate packaging and labelling to make sure the consumer knows what they are purchasing, and what, if any, safety warnings are to be considered. Also, standards should ideally also cover environmental considerations and provide guidelines about biodegradability or other forms of adequate disposal. Lastly, they will also facilitate the scaling process for female health and hygiene enterprises who, at present, struggle with adapting their offerings to varying standards and regulations in new potential markets. However, the development and application of cohesive standards may face several hindrances, including an extensive need for sensitisation, a lack of diversity at the decision-making table, as well as limitations in budget and knowledge. Research has also shown that enforcement may be rather lax in some of the target countries.

In addition, female health and hygiene solutions must be adapted to the cultural and social context in which they aim to find adoption, rather than the other way around. Solutions cannot be introduced rashly and without doing the educational groundwork required for acceptance, as otherwise they would likely be rejected by the target demography. Regional, national, and local institutions at various levels play a significant role in making this possible, as they are at the forefront of the creation and smoothening of the structures required to promote safe health and hygiene practices. However, no matter how progressive and ambitious national policies may be, it will be hard for them to find success if local authorities consider them prohibitive and block their implementation.

As for relevant policies, at a continent-wide level, gender efforts in all African Union member countries are coordinated by the Strategy for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) 2018-2028[18], which is a framework document to strengthen women's agency in Africa and ensure that women's voices are amplified, and their concerns are fully addressed through, among others, effective implementation of legislation and proper financing of gender equality work. The following sub-chapters provide an overview of key policies and actors along the female health and hygiene value chain in the three target countries.

[16] Examples include National Gender Policy (NGP) in Uganda, National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) or Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) in Kenya, National Gender Policy in Ghana.

[17] <https://thecaseforher.com/blog/the-world-votes-yes-to-menstrual-product-standards/>

[18] https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-au_strategy_for_gender_equality_womens_empowerment_2018-2028_report.pdf

KENYA

2.1.1 Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Kenya

Kenya has been at the forefront of Sub-Saharan African countries in promoting MHH and building a robust landscape of advocates for it, which has trickled into policy and manifested itself in numerous policies, acts and interventions geared to improve health and hygiene conditions for women and girls across the country. Yet, vast differences still exist among different income classes and demographics, rural and urban areas, and cultural/religious groups in terms of their ability to access solutions that are up to par with the basics needed to lead a dignified life.

Key Actors in Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Kenya

Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action and State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action.

The State Department for Gender (SDG) was established in November 2015 following a re-organization of government Ministries. It is one of the two State Departments in the Ministry of Public Service and Gender, the other being the State Department for Public Service. The State Department was created from the former Ministry of Devolution and Planning to promote gender mainstreaming in national development processes and champion for the socio-economic empowerment of women.

The Ministry of Health through the Department of Environmental Health oversees coordination and convenes the MHH Task Force under the Hygiene Promotion Technical Working Group. It is tasked with drafting and executing the MHH Policy 2019-2030 (see below). As part of its efforts, it made Menstrual Health education a component of school curricula by providing a handbook for teachers in 2020.

The Kenyan National Gender and Equality Commission, an independent constitutional commission established under Article 59 of the Kenyan Constitution of 2010, plays a crucial role in advancing gender equality, protecting women's rights, and fostering a more inclusive and equitable society in Kenya.

Policies, Regulations, & Governance Frameworks in Kenya^{*19}

In 2004, Kenya became the first country to scrap its VAT related to sanitary towels and tampons and followed this up in 2011 by removing the import duty on pads and raw materials for their manufacture. Yet, as in many other countries globally that have scrapped taxes, inflation means that savings are not always passed down to the consumer and instead often retained by the retailer or manufacturer, as is the case with Kenyan market leader Always (owned by Procter & Gamble)[20].

[19] Short summaries on the respective policies for the three countries have mostly been copied directly from the relevant governmental sources and sometimes complemented with commentary.

[20] <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL1N34I248/#:~:text=Kenya%20scrapped%20its%2016%25%20value,materials%20used%20to%20make%20pads>

Notable initiatives and policies in the country include:

- **Menstrual Hygiene Management Policy 2019-2030:** “The Government through the Constitution 2010 and the Kenya Vision 2030 has created an enabling and secure environment for all stakeholders to contribute towards making a reality, the collective aspiration to enable every Kenyan, including women and girls enjoy high quality of life in a clean, secure, and healthy environment. The mission of this policy is to ensure that all women and girls in Kenya can manage menstruation hygienically, freely, with dignity without stigma or taboos, and with access to: the right information on MHM; menstrual products, services and facilities; and to safely dispose of menstrual waste.” [21] However, it is challenging to find detailed information on how this policy is implemented, both in terms of financial resources made available for its implementation and details on the governance structure and coordination of the involved actors. Moreover, there are rumours that since being transferred from the Health Ministry to the Sanitation Ministry, it has fallen flat, and it has even been removed from the website.
- **Sanitary Towels Programme:** Signed into law in 2016 and updated in early 2024, the Basic Education Act Section 39 (k) states: “It shall be the duty of the Cabinet Secretary to provide free, sufficient and quality sanitary towels to every girl child registered and enrolled in a public basic education institution who has reached puberty and provide a safe and environmentally sound mechanism for disposal of the sanitary towels”[22]. Penetration has been cited as patchy and budget cuts in 2022 have lessened coverage even further, and there have been significant delays and controversy[23] around its distribution. The Ministry of Education oversees distributing the sanitary towels to girls and training teachers on the educational aspects of menstrual health and hygiene.
- **Breastfeeding Mothers Bill, 2019**[24]: The bill foresees that a woman may breastfeed her child in public. The act of a woman breastfeeding a child in public shall not be construed to amount to an indecent act. In addition, every employer should provide a safe and secure space at the workplace for breastfeeding.
- **National Gender and Development Policy (NGAD), 2017:** The NGAD Policy 2000 was reviewed, and a Cabinet memorandum has been finalised. The objective of the Policy is to provide a framework for the integration of gender concerns into the development process across all sectors in the National, County Governments and private sector policies, programmes, and plans[25].
- **The National Equality Policy, 2017:** “The Policy and the accompanying Cabinet Memorandum were finalised and submitted to the Cabinet in 2016. The policy provides a comprehensive framework to give effect to the equality Constitutional principles and secure the practical realisation of equality and non-discrimination. It sets out legislative, administrative and policy measures and programs intended to address the existing gaps in the realisation of the right to equality and non-discrimination. It also sets out the institutional mechanisms for implementing the policy to ensure that discrimination is eliminated and that everyone has equal opportunities to contribute to national development”.

[21] https://menstrualhygieneday.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Kenya_MHM-Policy-Final.pdf

[22] Ministry of Gender, Culture, the Arts and Heritage Kenya, 2023

[23] <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/gender/period-of-change-why-women-reps-are-taking-over-sanitary-towels-programme-4639066>

[24] <http://parliament.go.ke/sites/default/files/2019-11/Breastfeedind%20Mothers%20Bill%2C%202019.pdf>

[25] <https://gender.go.ke/background>

- **Policy for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation, 2017:** “The Policy and the accompanying Cabinet Memorandum have been developed, aiming to strengthen multi-sectoral interventions, coordination, networking, partnership, and community participation in accelerating the eradication of FGM and to address emerging trends and practices aimed at challenges faced on enforcement of the law.”[23]

Licences, Permits & Service Agreements Required for Enterprises in Kenya

In December 2020, the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) published the reusable sanitary towel standard (KS 2925:2020)[24]. Disposable maternity pads are also standardised under DKS: 2881. KEBS is responsible for developing and enforcing standards for various products, including menstrual hygiene products, to ensure their safety, quality, and efficacy. It sets standards for the materials, design, performance, labelling, and packaging of menstrual products, as well as manufacturing practices and quality control measures.

In addition, all enterprises in Kenya are required to register their business with the relevant government authorities. This involves obtaining a business name, sole proprietorship, partnership, or company registration from the Registrar of Companies.

[26] https://members.wto.org/crattachments/2022/TBT/KEN/22_1549_00_e.pdf



WOMEN AND GIRLS IN KENYAN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS FACE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES IN MANAGING THEIR MENSTRUAL HEALTH DUE TO INADEQUATE ACCESS TO SANITARY PRODUCTS, CLEAN WATER, AND PROPER SANITATION FACILITIES.

Source: KELIN Kenya. (2023)

UGANDA

2.1.2 Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Uganda

Uganda is among the countries that have ratified numerous international instruments aimed to protect fundamental rights and freedoms. Despite these endorsements, specific programming for MHH remains limited. MHH initiatives began to rise among international development organisations and NGOs only in the last decade, with the local leadership of the Ministry of Education and Sports, that has played a crucial leadership role in advancing MHH progress within the country, particularly in schools. Although multi-stakeholder coordination efforts seem promising (for example with the Menstrual Health Coalition), their effectiveness in bridging the menstrual hygiene gap is yet to be seen, as there is limited information that can be found on the internet.

Key Actors in Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Uganda

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is the primary government agency responsible for formulating health policies, providing healthcare services, and coordinating health programs in Uganda. Within the MoH, departments such as the Reproductive Health Division and the Community Health Department oversee programs related to maternal health, family planning, and menstrual hygiene management.

In addition, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is tasked with promoting gender equality, social protection, and women's empowerment in Uganda. This ministry is highly involved in implementing programs related to women's health, including initiatives focused on menstrual hygiene management, gender-based violence prevention, and women's economic empowerment.

The Ministry of Education and Sports' Gender Unit coordinates the Menstrual Health Coalition. This consists of the Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Environment, Private sector, and non-state actors like civil society organisations. In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a set of guidelines to all schools outlining specific actions to address the needs of girls in schools. In 2017, Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) was incorporated into the Planning and Implementation framework for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in schools. By 2019, 574 secondary schools, accounting for 50% of all secondary schools in Uganda, had implemented Menstrual Hygiene Management systems[27].

Local Government Authorities on district and sub-county-level are involved in implementing health programmes and services at the grassroots level. Local government authorities receive funds from the central government and coordinate with relevant ministries to deliver healthcare, sanitation, and hygiene initiatives targeting women and girls in their respective jurisdictions.

[27] Days for Girls International et al. MH Resources & Landscapes for Africa 10.22. Accessed on 14.05.24 through <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1QrKv8r7keU1TpQWY3o49N-K3MfmicDTunyGQnUParks/edit#gid=1904915805>

Policies, Regulations, & Governance Frameworks in Uganda

The Ugandan government promised to scrap taxes related to sanitary products, but the reality seems quite different. Pursuant to the Third Schedule, Nr. 1 lit. j of the VAT Act 2005 (Inserted by VAT (Am) Act 2005 and substituted by VAT (Am) Act 2009), "the supply of sanitary towels and tampons and inputs for their manufacture" are zero-rated. The supply of menstrual cups was exempted through an amendment in 2017. In 2020, the government announced an exemption from excise duty on raw materials used in the manufacture of sanitary pads[28]. However, similarly to the Kenyan case, it is unclear whether this is implemented, and whether the savings trickle down to the customer[29].

Important policies and documents include:

- **National Strategic Plan for Menstrual Health and Hygiene 2021 – 2025**[30]: a draft plan intended to inform all MHH-related work undertaken in the country and provide guidance for all actors involved in the field.
- **MoES & UNICEF**: Published standards for WASH in schools incorporated a strong component of MHM, in particular female friendly toilets.
- **National Water and Sanitation Strategy (2019)**, contains thematic area 6: Menstrual Hygiene Management, with the goal of increasing sustained access to quality and appropriate menstrual hygiene services through practices, facilities, and awareness.
- **National Gender Policy (NGP)**, ratified in 1997 and reviewed in 2007: The policy highlights the Government of the Republic of Uganda's commitment to take actions that will bring about more equal gender relations and aims to ensure that all government policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels, are consistent with the long-term goal of eliminating gender inequalities.
- **Gender in Education Sector Policy (GEP), 2009**: The Second Gender in Education Policy links with all the other policies and programmes of the Ministry of Education and Sports and seeks to build on the progress registered by previous policies and programmes on promoting gender equality in education.
- **National Policy Guidelines for Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, 2006**: This spells out the general rules and regulations governing reproductive health services and training, target and priority groups for services and basic information education and communication.

[28] <https://taxsummaries.pwc.com/uganda/corporate/other-taxes>

[29] <https://allafrica.com/stories/202403210345.html>

[30] <https://www.daysforgirls.org/blog/ugandan-government-steps-closer-to-implementing-their-menstrual-health-hygiene-strategy/>

Licences, Permits & Service Agreements Required for Enterprises in Uganda

A standard for reusable sanitary pads was passed in 2017 by the Ugandan Bureau of Standards under US: 1782. Disposable sanitary towels are also standardised under US EAS 96-1:2018, tampons under US 2381: 2023, and menstrual cups under US 2381: 2023. Products can and should also be certified^[31].

All companies operating in Uganda are required by law to be registered. The procedure for incorporation of a company in Uganda demands that business owners register their company with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB).

^[31] <https://www.unbs.go.ug/content.php?src=product-certification&content>



WOMEN AND GIRLS IN RURAL UGANDA FACE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO MANAGING THEIR MENSTRUAL HEALTH DUE TO INADEQUATE ACCESS TO WATER, SANITATION FACILITIES, AND AFFORDABLE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS.

Source: Unicef (2024)

GHANA

2.1.3 Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Ghana

Ghana is one of the countries on the continent that struggles the most with the provision of WASH services, including those linked to female health and hygiene. 23.7% of the population has access to safe and basic hygiene, 41.5% has access to basic hygiene, and 59.3% of households have access to toilet facilities, though 55% of the population uses shared facilities[32]. Progress to promote gender mainstreaming and improve the country's standing on menstrual health and hygiene can be observed in recent years thanks to various governmental interventions and civil society efforts, but there is so far little cohesion or real tangible success in dismantling barriers.

Key Actors in Female Health & Hygiene Governance in Ghana

The Ministry of Education (MoE), particularly its School Health Education Programme (SHEP), and their Ministry of Health (MoH) are actively undertaking efforts to broaden MHH education and deconstruct cultural myths surrounding menstruation, for example through the GAMA project[33], which has designed components dedicated to better understanding the impact of MHH on education and aims to build WASH facilities at a number of schools around the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area.

Several IOs, NGOs and social enterprises operate in Ghana to promote menstrual hygiene awareness, provide access to affordable menstrual products, and offer reproductive health services. These organizations work in collaboration with government agencies, healthcare providers, and communities to address women's health and hygiene needs.

Policies, Regulations, & Governance Frameworks in Ghana

The Ghanaian government applies its standard tax rate of 12.5% to the sale of menstrual products. However, there appear to be plans in place to scrap this for locally produced pads[34]. A tax of 20% is levied on imported pads and products.

As of 2021, Ghana joined other nations in celebrating an annual National Breastfeeding Week[35], which is intended to desensitise, inform and destigmatise breastfeeding (in public). The country has also been celebrating the menstrual health hygiene day in schools over the years through the Ministry of Education (GES - SHEP).

[32] <https://ghana.un.org/en/224267-un-ghana-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-support-programme#:~:text=However%2C%20the%20sanitation%20situation%20in,pose%20serious%20public%20health%20risks.>

[33] <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P119063>

[34] <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1273357/2024-budget-taxes-on-locally-produced-sanitary.html>

[35] <https://ghs.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Press-Release-WBW2022.pdf>

Other interventions include^[36]:

- **Adolescent Reproductive Health Education in school curriculum:** The Ghana Education Service (GES) with support from development partners, has developed and rolled out menstrual hygiene management and adolescent reproductive health education packages. Education topics such as those need to be mainstreamed in the education curriculum to make the access to information systematic and coherent and enable all girls and boys in schools to be empowered to reach their full potential.
- **GES minimum Guidelines for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools:** According to the GES guidelines, all toilets in schools should be gender separated and private, equipped with water supply and with a safe space available for girls to change their sanitary pads and clean themselves up. Yet, 1 in 4 schools across the country still doesn't ensure that.
- **Girls' Iron Folate Tablet Supplementation (GIFTS) programme:** The Government of Ghana GIFTS Programme is the first holistic intervention to respond to the nutritional needs of girls in puberty with the provision of iron-folate supplements, health and nutrition education. Its demonstrated evidence in anaemia reduction and improved health and nutrition knowledge among girls presents a strong case for scale up to all regions and makes it an important investment in healthy menstrual hygiene management.
- **Data and Evidence on Menstrual Hygiene:** In 2019, the Education management information system (EMIS) integrated an indicator on menstrual hygiene. The Ghana Statistical Service's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) also collects data on menstrual hygiene. However, there is still a need for further evidence building to strengthen policy recommendations. Future research is needed on affordability, quality and safety of available sanitary materials, and management and maintenance of school toilet facilities.
- **Girls' Empowerment and Community Engagement for adolescent protection:** It is critical to support the scale up of community-based programmes engaging with adolescent girls and boys – particularly those out of school, caregivers and community leaders, on issues of life skills, adolescent development and protection, adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR), MHM taboos to address high risks associated with household discrimination, commercial sexual exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), often experienced by adolescent girls in Ghana.

[36] https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/policy_brief_on_mhm_mh_day_2021_final_14052021.pdf

Licences, Permits & Service Agreements Required for Enterprises in Ghana

There is a standard on disposable pads in place, implemented through GS 1248:2019. While it is difficult to find information on reusable pads, several enterprises have cited that there is already a standard and certification process that they are undergoing or have completed, indicating that the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) has already addressed this after extensive advocacy.

Similarly to the other countries, companies in Ghana are required to be certified and legally registered with the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) before being allowed to conduct any business.



IN GHANA, PARTICULARLY IN PERI-URBAN AREAS, MENSTRUAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT IS IMPEDED BY SOCIO-CULTURAL LIMITATIONS, POOR SANITARY CONDITIONS, AND UNHYGIENIC PRACTICES DURING MENSTRUATION.

Source: MDPI. (2023)

2.1.4 Implications for Entrepreneurs & Business Support Organisations

1. By drafting policies and assigning responsibilities, all three countries have shown an increasing commitment to female health and hygiene, however, actual follow-through appears to vary. Kenya is undoubtedly a comparative success case, despite all the gaps it is still experiencing and the possibility that the Menstrual Hygiene Management Policy 2019-2030 has fallen flat. Yet, policy-level support for FHH in all three countries is still often tied to individual politicians or community leaders, and it often doesn't have a fixed place in budgets or programmes.

2. There is a need and clear benefit for enterprises to coordinate/collaborate with water and sanitation service providers, particularly for health-care institutions and schools to ensure infrastructure accessibility for washing, disposal, etc. This should also involve close alignment with public sector initiatives that work on optimising infrastructure to ensure that FHH is sufficiently integrated into the planning of new facilities, and upgraded in existing ones.

3. Enterprises' expenditures on awareness raising for market demand is one of the main pain points they experience. In this sense, collaboration efforts with government/NGO education programmes could help develop new markets for businesses by sensitising a potential customer base to their brand. A good starting point could be joining existing coalitions, such as the Menstrual Health Coalition in Uganda, that could provide a springboard to gain visibility and trust from key stakeholders.

4. Compliance with specific standards can be difficult to navigate, as these vary greatly from one country to another, are constantly evolving, and access to the right and updated information is not a given. In particular, when enterprises consider expanding to other markets, they should make sure they are on top of relevant regulations, as FHH products may be categorized differently and therefore fall under different legislation (for example, a menstrual pad may be considered a hygiene product in Uganda, but a health product in Tanzania). This could significantly prolong the time needed for successful market entry if not addressed from the get-go and should thus form an important part of market studies. Also, business support organisations should ensure to have experts on hand who can guide enterprises in the legal and regulatory sense.

5. Competition with subsidised services or free provision of goods/services by governments/non-governmental programmes related to the female health and hygiene sector, such as free pad distribution programmes, is a concern, but there are ways to turn it into an opportunity. Enterprises could provide those products or services to the NGO or IO that then distributes them; they could leverage the additional awareness for brand recognition, or alternatively, adjustments in branding (such as SoSure, Afripads' commercially oriented brand) could avoid any possible negative connotations with a brand that is also used for humanitarian purposes, as has been reported to sometimes be the case.

2.2 Female Health & Hygiene Economy

Understanding the Female Health and Hygiene Value Chain

In order to better understand the value chain surrounding the female health and hygiene sector, and the lived experience of women and girls, we clustered our understanding into four key phases, as well as three parallel running streams that must be in place throughout all respective phases for a functioning female health and hygiene value chain (access to knowledge, products & services, and logistics & distribution). All levels along the value chain represent an opportunity to be addressed by enterprises in the female health and hygiene space in some capacity or another.

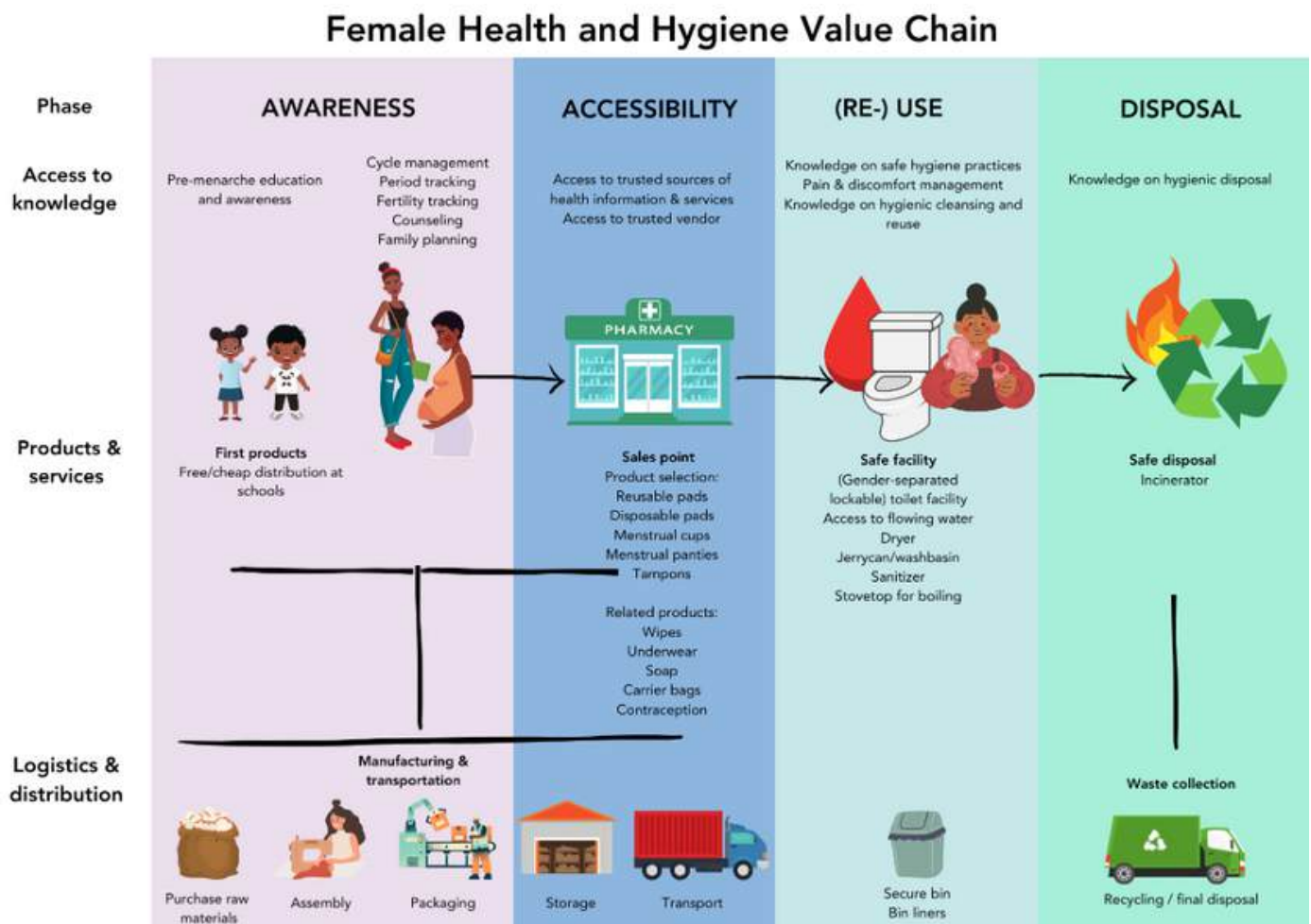


Figure 3: An overview of the female health and hygiene value chain based on key findings of this ecosystem study

Awareness is the stage at which educational activities are key to ensure a gradual abolishment of the stigma surrounding menstruation, and which should thus start at pre-menarche by familiarising both boys and girls with the biological experience of a menstruator, and which should foresee first initiatives to get girls acquainted with products and services available to her. In addition, the awareness phase extends through a woman's life as it also informs her access to various other crucial services such as counselling or family planning.

Accessibility implies that there should be access to trusted health service and information providers, and vendors where menstrual and maternal health products can be acquired. These vendors should not just stock the products themselves, but ideally also enable access to related products of importance (such as soap and wipes).

During the **(Re-) Use** stage, it should be ensured that a menstruator has access to a safe and hygienic space where they can manage their menstrual flow, breastfeed, or whatever other health- and hygiene-related need they wish to pursue. Consideration should also be given to how the used products can then be disposed of or cleaned in a safe and private environment.

Finally, the final **Disposal** stage foresees mechanisms to ensure safe disposal on site through an incinerator, or transportation to the final location. While not impossible, sanitary products are difficult to recycle, although with the right material composition, they can be compostable or biodegradable. Poor menstrual waste disposal is largely attributed to a lack of resources to provide appropriate facilities. In any case, managed disposal is essential to minimise the risk of environmental harm as much as possible.

In many emerging economies, including all three target countries, there is a marked difference between the availability of health and hygiene products and services, which is often interlinked with discrepancies between rural and urban areas. Reasons are manifold – a knowledge and awareness gap, lower income in rural areas vs. urban centres leading to the market being concentrated in the latter, cultural stigma, and difficulty in distribution (or collection, when it comes to disposal). Supermarkets that display sanitary products may not have branches in rural, decentralised areas due to the lack of profitability of underpopulated areas. Likewise, routes may not always be well developed or frequented enough to ensure a steady supply. Logistical components are thus crucial to maintain a flourishing market and ensure that products and services can get to where they are most needed.



A Basket of Solutions

Just like no woman or girl is 100% alike, neither are her preferences or needs for health and hygiene practices and solutions. There is no one-size-fits-all approach – perception of safety and cleanliness, cultural or religious considerations, and comfort may all factor into which solution a menstruator finds preferable[37]. For example, having undergone FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), unfortunately still a prevalent practice in the target countries, especially in Kenya (15% of women and girls between 15 and 49 years old[38], against 4% in Ghana[39] and 0.3% in Uganda[40], the lowest in East Africa), may make it impossible for some menstruators to use insertable products such as cups or tampons. In short: while female health and hygiene does present a growing market opportunity, it should be steered and informed by the opinions of people who menstruate. In addition, informed users are quick to discard products that they consider less comfortable or leak-proof and would rather pay a premium for a reliable product, if available. Buy-in from menstruators is essential for success, so it makes sense to involve them from as early as possible and at all steps along the value chain and an enterprise's journey to growth.

In many parts of the world, markets are adapting, offering a range of tailored products or services at different price points. However, in the target countries, lack of understanding of the biological stages of girls' and women's life and limited access to knowledge on different types of products or services often do not allow them to adequately assess the options available and choose the one that is suitable for them – or a combination thereof. When managing their period in particular, menstruators often stick with the first product that was introduced to them, which opens up a key opportunity for providers with significant marketing pull, often multinational corporations (MNCs), to establish themselves early as the preferred option, for example by handing out free product packs to young girls around the age of menarche. Yet, there are other key moments in a woman's life when she gets exposed to new influences and insights around her, such as entering university or the workplace, getting married or childbirth[41]. This may cause a shift in preferences regarding the products and services she utilises and presents an important moment for learning.

Similarly, post-use, women may face different restrictions or have varying preferences. When dealing with disposable products, it is almost always essential to provide access to a bin that keeps the used product out of view and deters insects or rodents from accessing it. Products such as menstrual cups or reusable pads, on the other hand, make access to flowing water and a space to clean and dry them away from the glances of curious neighbours or from natural influences (dirt, rain, insects, etc.) essential.

[37] Breakdown of MH products - https://soyonsreglos.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2018MakanyandTrevet_MenstrualHygieneProductsinKenyanMarkets.pdf

[38] Thomsen, A. Nilofer, S. (2023). Men and boys key to ending FGM in Kenya. Unicef. Accessed via <https://www.unicef.org/kenya/stories/men-and-boys-key-ending-fgm-kenya#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20recently%20released.Yet%2C%20progress%20is%20being%20made.>

[39] Unicef (2022). Ghana case study. Review of technology-based interventions to address child marriage and female genital mutilation. Accessed via <https://www.unicef.org/media/137581/file/Tech-based-Interventions-Adress-Harmful-Practices-2023-Ghana-v2.pdf>

[40] Unicef (2020). Female genital mutilation (FGM) in Uganda. Accessed via https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/8931/file/FGM%20Evidence%20from%20Uganda_Policy%20Brief_12%20October%202020.pdf

[41] Hystra (2023). Scaling Up Access to Menstrual Health in the Global South.



Important Considerations Regarding Reusable Options & Sustainability

There are undoubtedly numerous benefits to reusable options to manage one's menstrual health and hygiene – less waste, less resources needed to manufacture the supply to meet the demand, often an increased level in comfort or security, and less money spent over the mid- to long-term. Yet, disposable options often remain the preferred solution for many women and girls, who consider them cleaner and safer, and do not wish to be exposed to managing the blood upon use, as is the case with reusable products that would need to be cleaned.

Moreover, business models built on promoting reusables can be difficult to run profitably, as the return customer frequency is substantially lower given that a woman usually only needs 10-15 reusable pads as opposed to 120-180 single-use pads per year. Several of the enterprises interviewed during this study and the subsequent selection interviews mentioned that one of the main bottlenecks for them is the high upfront investment in new customers outreach, as existing customers may not need to repurchase their products for years.

Yet, many donor programmes in particular try to promote reusables, although it is important to always keep in mind that every girl and woman should be given a choice to select the option that is most suitable for her needs. It may also lead to the perception that reusables are for poor people, precisely because donor programmes have placed a focus on them, which may deter more affluent consumers from using them to avoid association. If reusables are to gain a higher market share, this must inevitably go hand in hand with consumer-oriented marketing and education efforts to highlight their benefits. When introducing reusable solutions to markets where they have previously been less prevalent, it is thus even more important for companies to consider the educational aspect. While they'll need to account for the fact that they will have to handle a share of the work themselves through their marketing, potentially pairing up with key local players that hold the target population's trust, such as NGOs, community leaders, grassroots organisations or women's associations could prove effective. Interventions such as the one conducted by [WoMena](#) in Uganda demonstrate that with the right approach, menstruators will use their reusable option over the long term^[42].

Disposal is also a major issue^[43]: Single-use menstrual products often contain plastics and synthetic materials that are non-biodegradable, leading to increased waste accumulation in landfills and water bodies. Open dumping or burning of menstrual waste can release harmful toxins into the environment, contaminating soil and water sources. Besides the environmental impact, improper disposal of menstrual products can also pose health risks, particularly in areas with inadequate waste management infrastructure, as is often the case especially in rural areas in the target countries. Used pads and tampons may contain bloodborne pathogens, bacteria, and viruses, which can spread diseases if not disposed of safely. Also, wrong disposal is still prevalent due to lack of knowledge or alternatives, for example by flushing a pad or tampon down the toilet. This not only clogs sewage systems but also contributes to poor sanitation, once again posing risks to public health and exacerbating issues of water contamination and waterborne diseases. These poor practices are often exacerbated by the shame and stigma still associated with menstrual hygiene management, which may force girls and women to look for a degree of secrecy when it comes to disposal of their products. Single-use options are not intrinsically negative, but they do make the availability of safe disposal methods, i.e., incinerators, necessary.

Biodegradable disposable options already exist, for example by [EcoBana](#) from Kenya who uses banana fibre, but are often much more expensive due to the increased cost in raw materials. Their success is additionally hampered by the fact that environmental concerns are often not at the forefront of consumers' minds, especially if they are already struggling to afford the products in the first place. Here, it would be essential to investigate locally available options that can be easily and relatively cheaply obtained and processed, which may drive down the price.

Lastly, profitability is at the forefront of concerns linked to successfully building a female health and hygiene product-focused enterprise. So far, it has been challenging to find examples of successful businesses built solely on one reusable product, be it cups or pads, as the profit margin is simply too small to justify the costs of marketing and distribution.

[42] <https://womensdk/new-publication-menstrual-cup-interventions-follow-up-study-report-uganda/>

[43] Mahesh P., and Mehotra A., (2021). "Menstrual products and their disposal", accessed via: <https://counterviewfiles.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/menstrual-waste-report.pdf>

Impact on Education & Productivity

It is crucial to carefully analyse and understand the impact that inadequate health and hygiene management has on a girl or woman's education or work life. For girls, upon menarche, menstruating can be prohibitive to their school attendance due to discomfort and pain, embarrassment, and a lack of information and WASH services at school. Schools are often not equipped to provide a secure and safe space for girls to manage their hygiene needs, let alone provide a supply of products to manage menstrual flow. This is even more prevalent and complicated for girls with disabilities. In Kenya, data from the Ministry of Education indicates that a girl that is absent from school for four days in 28 days (month) loses 13 learning days, equivalent to two weeks of learning in every school term. In an academic year (nine months) a girl loses 39 learning days equivalent to six weeks of learning time. A girl in primary school between grades 6 and 8 (three years) loses 18 learning weeks out of 108 weeks. Throughout high school (4 years), a girl can lose 156 learning days, which equates to almost 24 out of 144 weeks[44]. In Ghana, similarly, 90% of girls are still regularly missing school due to being unable to manage their menstrual health and hygiene while outside of the home[45]. This further exacerbates the gap between girls' and boys' access to education and significantly sets them back compared to their peers.

Many workplaces are equally insufficiently equipped to allow a woman to take care of her needs in a private, safe, and protected environment, whether it be to change her pad, have access to clean running water to wash her menstrual cup (or at least a private space to cleanse it by using water from a bottle), to breastfeed her infant or to discard used disposable items like pads or tampons. To exacerbate the issue of period poverty even further, lack of access to products and suitable facilities directly impedes on a woman's productivity, as it may force her to not work for a couple of days each month. This extends beyond the time of a life when a woman menstruates – insufficient access to knowledge or discomfort management related to menopause may make it similarly difficult for a woman to actively participate in public life. This lack of access also makes traveling for work or participating in opportunities such as marketplaces, professional trainings, etc., much more complex for a menstruating or breastfeeding woman.

[44] <https://gender.go.ke/sanitary-towels-program/>

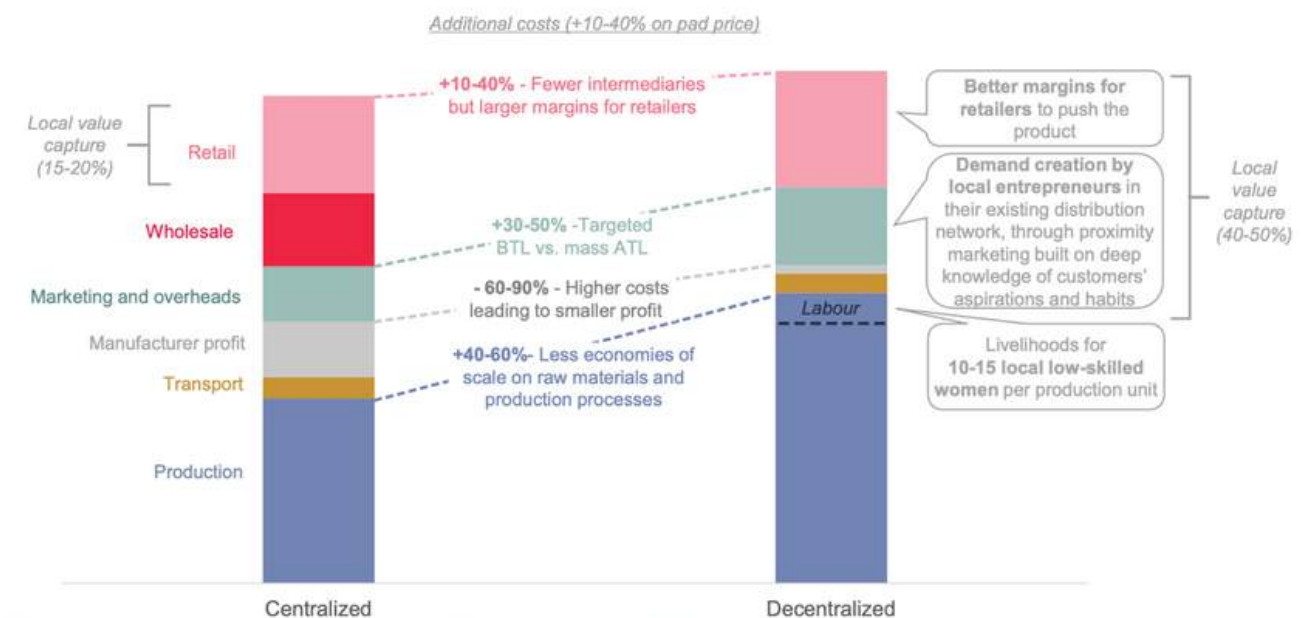
[45] https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/policy_brief_on_mhm_mh_day_2021_final_14052021.pdf



Decentralised Production as the Silver Bullet?

Many growing female health and hygiene companies couple their mission with efforts to improve the framework conditions of those women and girls that would also benefit from their products. This may translate to training local, rural women to drive a decentralised production system of menstrual products, especially reusable or disposable pads. IOs and NGOs have also historically favoured this model as its inherent baseline assumption is clear: it improves livelihoods and increases coverage. However, precedent shows that this model will usually not achieve sustainability. Raw materials will still have to reach the decentralised manufacturing sites (and their bulk is often bigger than that of the final product, such as a thin pad). Additionally, the gap between the relatively small number of jobs created to service the site vis-à-vis the large number of menstruators in need of solutions is considerable, and the needs of the many, in this case, may outweigh those of the few. Finally, artisanal and decentralised production means that there is less quality control, potentially leading to sub-par products that may deter customers. Afripads, the Ugandan pioneer enterprise in reusables, mentioned in an interview that while they had adopted a fully decentralised approach in the beginning, it proved challenging to maintain as the quality of raw materials locally was substandard. They replaced this strategy by importing raw materials and manufacturing locally.

While there may be some cases where decentralised approaches could be profitable, this must be assessed carefully on a case-by-case basis, and marketing around why each product may look or feel different may be needed for customer acquisition and retention. That said, the potential for any kind of job creation is nonetheless a huge incentive to invest in FHH both for governments and non-governmental entities, so it should not be disregarded.



Source: Hystra calculation based on expert interviews and field visits with companies (2023).

Figure 4: Pad price breakdown depending on the production model used (share of end-user pad price), based on a 2023 assessment by Hystra

2.2.1 Specific Aspects of the Female Health & Hygiene Market in Kenya

Outperforming its low- and middle-income country (LMIC) peers over recent years, Kenya is on track to become an upper middle-income country. It has successfully established a diverse and dynamic economy, and its market is bouncing back from shocks experienced throughout COVID-19. In what can be attributed to favourable policies and a major push in promoting female health and hygiene on a multitude of levels, the Kenyan FHH market generated a revenue of US\$208.20 M in 2024 and is projected to experience an annual growth rate of 5.59% (CAGR 2024-2028)[46]. While these figures do include the hygiene market as a whole, not just related to the scope of the accelerator (meaning that products such as household tissues or toilet paper are factored in), they still underline the growing potential of the market – with a special focus on reusable and eco-friendly MHH products. In supermarkets, health centres and pharmacies, women and girls in Kenya have access to a range of products, including disposable sanitary pads, reusable pads, tampons, and menstrual cups. However, coverage varies greatly depending on the geographical and social context.

Kenya, like the other two markets, suffers from a gap between rural and urban coverage. As outlined above, this is due to less distributors having fixed presence in rural areas, and distribution costs being significantly higher, thus raising the price of health and hygiene products – if they are available – even more. In comparison to other countries on the continent, the tax exemption does make products in Kenya more affordable overall, but the cost is still prohibitive to many poorer households, as a pack of disposable pads is priced at around 50 Kenyan Shillings for the cheapest products[47]. ZanaAfrica, whose warehouse for their disposable pads NIA is located in Nairobi, laments that transporting the product to other areas in the country, especially rural ones, cost up to four times the delivery price within Nairobi[48]. This 300% premium, accordingly, is reflected in the final price as there are no set maximum prices on sanitary pads. Given the already lower income in rural areas, this may price the product effectively out of reach of most rural Kenyan girls and women, even if it is available.

VCTs (Voluntary Testing Centres) can be found all over Kenya and provide a first point of contact for women concerning many issues, including domestic violence or sexually transmitted diseases, but also menstrual health. They would also be an important mechanism to engage on the provision of products and services.

At a gender pay gap of around 17%[49] hourly and 31% monthly, mitigating measures for women's comparatively lower purchasing power need to be considered by enterprises working in the female health and hygiene space.



[46] <https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/tissue-hygiene-paper/feminine-hygiene/kenya>

[47] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66423981>

[48] Hystra (2023). Scaling Up Access to Menstrual Health in the Global South.

[49] https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/un_women_kenya_gender_pay_gap_brief.pdf

2.2.2 Specific Aspects of the Female Health & Hygiene Market in Uganda

Uganda is firmly on course to become an upper middle-income country by 2040. Its economy more than doubled from 2010/11 to 2021/23 in nominal terms. Similarly to Kenya, the Ugandan female hygiene market is predicted to grow over the coming years: valued at US\$93.88m in 2024, projections show an annual growth rate of 8.62% (CAGR 2024-2028)[50].

While the use of female health and hygiene products or services is more widespread in urban areas and menstruators have access to a range of products in theory, donor-led efforts are at the forefront of promoting female health and hygiene in Uganda, similarly to the other two target countries - especially when it comes to accessibility for base of the pyramid (BoP) customers, given the financial constraints faced by many families.

Disposable pads are the preferred menstrual product option for many girls and women in the country due to their convenience and the one most used by women with the necessary purchasing power. However, they are replaced by homemade solutions such as cloth or rags in more rural, poorer households. A month's supply of disposable sanitary towels is currently priced at 5,000-10,000 Ugandan Shillings[51]. Key factors influencing product choice include cost, accessibility, ease of use, disposal methods, and environmental impact. Aligning with national standards and considering sanitary insights and disposal approaches are essential for effective marketing and sustaining a robust menstrual business ecosystem. Proper disposal is a challenge in the country, with most menstruators discarding their used products directly into the latrine, which can lead to clogging and environmental harm.

In rural areas, VHTs (Village Health Teams) are prevalent at a community level and often the first point of contact for women regarding health needs. In addition, menstrual health and hygiene products are available in many supermarket chains or pharmacies.

Women in Uganda still earn around 25% less by the hour than men[52], and over 32% less per month, which makes it necessary to actively involve boys and men in awareness activities around female health and hygiene to ensure that they recognise the necessity of supporting and empowering the women close to them in the acquisition of these essential products and services.



[50] <https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/tissue-hygiene-paper/feminine-hygiene/uganda>

[51] [https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/lets-talk-about-menstruation-simple-way-eradicate-period-related-absences-ugandan-school#:~:text=A%20five%2Dpiece%20package%20of,%2D2.5%20euros\)%20per%20month.](https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/lets-talk-about-menstruation-simple-way-eradicate-period-related-absences-ugandan-school#:~:text=A%20five%2Dpiece%20package%20of,%2D2.5%20euros)%20per%20month.)

[52] https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/un_women_uganda_gender_pay_gap_report.pdf

2.2.3 Specific Aspects of the Female Health & Hygiene Market in Ghana

Ghana has been in the throes of its worst economic crisis in decades as a result of spiralling public debt, but the country appears to be slowly recovering. Comparatively growing a bit slower than the other two markets at a rate of 5.18% per year, yet boasting projections that shouldn't be neglected, Ghana's female hygiene market is currently estimated to reach US\$104.10m as of this year. Imported menstrual care products are considered luxury items under Ghana's tax system, leading them to be taxed at 20% currently^[53], on top of 12.5% VAT.

While progress has been made in addressing female health and hygiene needs in Ghana, there are still challenges related to affordability, accessibility, and cultural norms that need to be addressed. The market for menstrual hygiene products in Ghana is quite diverse and includes sanitary pads, tampons, menstrual cups, and other related items, but accessibility remains an issue. There is a growing awareness of the importance of menstrual hygiene management, leading to increased demand for these products, particularly in urban areas. Also, reusable options have recently been standardised, allowing for companies manufacturing reusable pads to finally get their products on the shelves. In comparison, prices for products in Ghana appear to be among the steepest, with a pack of sanitary pads costing around 20 Ghanaian Cedis^[52] as of 2023.

Ghana has a network of healthcare facilities, including hospitals, clinics, and community health centres (called Community-based Health Planning and Services or CHPS), where women can access reproductive health services, including prenatal care, family planning counselling, and gynaecological services. Yet, this coverage is also scarcer in rural areas.

Ghana has the largest pay gap out of the three target countries at over 34%^[53], making it essential to actively engage and involve the men of the household in educational and awareness raising activities to create a market for female health and hygiene products and services, especially in remote areas where the wage gap may be largest.



[53] <https://blogging.africa/general/period-poverty-undermining-gender-equality-in-ghana/>

[54] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66423981>

[55] <https://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/fileUpload/pressrelease/International%20Equal%20Pay%20Day%20press%20release%20from%20GSS.pdf>

2.2.4 Implications for Entrepreneurs & Business Support Organisations

1. As demonstrated in numerous analyses and case studies, **diversification** is key for a company to not just stay afloat, but flourish. Companies should thus be encouraged to diversify their revenue streams. Also, especially when it comes to bringing down the upfront cost of reusables for consumers, embedding the reusable product within a broader portfolio could help alleviate some of the expenses than if a company was to build its business model solely around selling, for example, menstrual cups[56]. So far, it has proven extremely challenging if not nearly impossible to build a sustainable business case solely on reusable products such as menstrual cups or pads: in well-functioning companies, they are almost always part of a broader basket of solutions, as otherwise their profit margin would be too small to justify the steep marketing and distribution costs.

2. The willingness and especially the ability to pay for female health and hygiene solutions remain a critical challenge for growing businesses, and figuring out the optimal **pricing** is a key bottleneck for many of them. If a consumer must choose between buying food for the family or paying for sanitary products, they will often choose the former, although not always, which may lead to conflicts at home. In addition, and perhaps somewhat paradoxically, there is a growing trend to prioritise comfort over price. Therefore, the accelerator should support participants in analysing options for end-user financing through micro finance, self-help groups etc. that could help in growing sales and possibly open avenues to new, less affluent customer segments. The key is to find the sweet spot between a product or service's reliability and affordability. Here, enterprises will have to be mindful of avoiding competition with NGO-led programmes that distribute free menstrual products. Free distribution programmes are crucial in all three target countries and shouldn't necessarily be seen as competition as they also aid with market creation – enterprises should rather focus on finding ways to complement these efforts that could evolve into partnerships. In addition, the prevalent gender-based wage gaps in all three countries underline the importance of gearing marketing and engagement efforts also towards men, as they may often hold a larger power over financial decision-making than the girls and women in their household.

3. Picking up on point 2, finding the right **marketing approach** is essential. Growing companies, especially those with a focus of sustainability, shouldn't be marketing themselves the same way as Always or other major MNCs in the sector do. First, they do not possess the same reputational pull that large corporations do, secondly, they do not have the profit margin to allow for similar interventions, and thirdly, they must account for much more thorough educational work, especially when trying to reach underserved markets or promote reusable products. Thus, companies should practice some creativity in their marketing strategies, and focus a lot on awareness and habit creation, as well as working with trusted community leaders. This will likely take more time, effort and resources than simply designing an ad campaign and placing a product on a supermarket shelf. Also, companies should work hard to identify other underlying causes that may keep consumers from adopting their products and address those head-on. Afripads, for example, has started selling underwear to which its pads can be fastened as they discovered that many women don't own knickers to keep a sanitary pad in place.

[56] See example of Indian company [Sirona](#).

4. It is important to gauge what can be done for **cost minimisation**, since the relatively steep cost vis-à-vis the monthly income of an average woman in the target countries represents a huge hurdle in terms of accessibility. For example, optimising production and manufacturing processes may decrease the thickness of pads (without sacrificing efficiency), thus saving on logistics and raw material costs. Alternatively, increasing the absorbency may allow for pads to be worn longer. The latter would need to be communicated well to make sure menstruators' confidence is increased. Innovation can also help, for example when it comes to raw materials that have absorbent qualities (i.e., banana stems, jute etc.) but are available at a lower price or even for free as by-products or waste from other manufacturing processes. In addition, exploring the use of local, natural raw materials could also lead to better environmental performance of products as it may increase their biodegradability and lead to lower import rates, as well as help improve menstruators' health by cutting down on potentially toxic chemicals[57].

Also, enterprises and their supporters need to put some thought into how to tackle the higher up-front cost of reusable products, for example by improving efforts to showcase their mid- to long-term savings and convincing consumers of their worth (for example cutting down on marketing expenses by providing free educational content and tutorials – however, this approach may be mostly geared towards urban, more tech savvy customer segments).

5. **Distribution** is another key factor that growing companies need to look at closely. First, the question is how and through whom to distribute to gain consumers' trust – which is especially necessary in the case of newer products, such as cups or menstrual panties. Distributing via a trusted pharmacy may increase confidence vis-à-vis the anonymity of a hypermarket. On the other hand, it may diminish the factor of anonymity that some menstruators may prefer. Secondly, when it comes to rural coverage, distribution costs can price products out of reach for many. The acceleration programme should explore ways to streamline distribution, for example by piggybacking on existing distribution channels. This also highlights the importance of female health and hygiene marketplaces such as Kasha, that take care of the distribution of products via their existing channels. Moreover, selling to NGOs and letting them handle distribution via their health programmes (Business-to-Business-to-Consumers or B2B2C model) remains a valid strategy.

Yet, challenges present themselves when it comes to the distribution of relatively new solutions such as cups or panties, as the entry barriers due to scepticism remain relatively high and thus gaining the consumers' trust requires extra efforts that go beyond offering the opportunity to pick the product up from a shelf. Here, again, collaborating with a distributor who already has the consumer's trust would be beneficial, especially as traditional retailers may also be disincentivized from carrying reusable products due to the low return customer frequency. Incentivisation strategies could also be created, for example money-back guarantees or by partnering with local community leaders and investing in their education, to then help sell the cup on to other menstruators in their community and, for example, offer a refund on their own product if they sell a certain number of products.

[57] Toxics Link (2022). "Wrapped in Secrecy: Toxic Chemicals in Menstrual Products", accessed via: <https://toxicslink.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Menstrual%20Waste%20-%202022.pdf>

6. As with any growing venture, **partnerships** are crucial in the path to scale. FHH enterprises should explore opportunities with businesses offering complementary products (for example underwear) or services (for example public toilets, where pads dispensers could be displayed), increasing distribution channels by engaging businesses with local outreach, and reducing awareness raising/activation expenses by teaming up with non-for-profit organisations, relevant government agencies and even informal community groups. Also, pursuing the right types of partnerships can help significantly in addressing the aforementioned challenges, especially those tied to distribution and marketing.



2.3 Financing Female Health & Hygiene Enterprises

The financing landscape for the female health and hygiene market is still relatively scarce across most of Africa. This is rather surprising, considering that, by purely looking at predictions and figures, the relevant market segments are predicted to experience significant growth over the coming decade, at 5.12% globally and even 7.92% in Africa, making it the fastest growing continent, with Western Africa at 9.73% the fastest growing region[58]. According to Fortune Business Insights, the global market size was valued at USD 41.29 billion in 2023 and, by 2032, can be expected to reach USD 73.07 billion by 2032[59]. For the most part, the financing landscape in all three target countries is dominated by international donor funding and aid efforts, usually funnelled through governmental donor programmes or international/UN organisations. However, financing the female health and hygiene market, and menstrual health in particular, is still far from a priority on the international development agenda, although a wealth of convincing arguments exists to argue for its permanent integration in funding schemes[60]. In addition, products are certainly in the centre of attention, but it needs to be remarked that their success is contingent on the availability of appropriate WASH facilities, not to mention social and cultural acceptance, which is often neglected or considered a tangential activity in relevant programmes. Relevant services are beginning to gain traction, as marketplaces are created, awareness and counselling becomes more in-demand, and networks are formed to accommodate the FHH space.

Prominent financiers overlap largely with the WASH market overall, as female health and hygiene is often embedded within sanitation- and hygiene-related approaches, making it highly advisable to engage investor networks from the WASH space that Cewas has already contributed to building in order to explore synergies. In addition, over recent years, a couple of dedicated entities have emerged that have made it their mission to proactively fund menstrual health, including The Case for Her, the Sanitation & Hygiene Fund, ShEquity or The Rising Tide. Other important investors that should be engaged and may be investing or have an interest in investing in the female health and hygiene market include the non-profit impact investment fund Acumen, venture capital firms Novastar (with focus on Kenya) and TLCOM Capital, the investment network Invest in Africa, Wellcome Trust, as well as foundations with a track record in tangential fields such as Doen or Ford Foundation.

Institutional Donors	Foundations / Philanthropy	Multi-Laterals / Multidonor Funds	National Governments	Private Sector
AFD	BMGF	WorldBank	India	Johnson & Johnson
BMZ	CIFF	Amplify Change	Indonesia	Kimberly Clarke
FCDO ^b	af Jochnick Foundation	Global Fund For Women	Kenya	P&G
DGIS	Osprey Foundation	Grand Challenges Canada	Nepal	
GAC	Segal Family Foundation	Humanitarian Innovation Fund	Nigeria	
NORAD	Sid & Helaine Learner	WSSCC	South Africa	
PEPFAR	The Case for Her		Uganda	
SIDA	Vitol Foundation			
Wateraid Sweden	Sall Family Foundation			
USAID				

Figure 6: Donors active in the MHH space as per the “Making the Case” Report

[58] <https://fr.statista.com/outlook/cmo/tissue-hygiene-paper/feminine-hygiene/worldwide>.

[59] <https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/feminine-hygiene-products-market-103530>

[60] PSI, Simavi, THE CASE FOR HER, WASH United (2021). “Making the Case for Investing in Menstrual Health & Hygiene”

While it has been challenging to find detailed information on financing mechanisms available specifically in the three target countries, the following sub-chapters provide a brief overview on what has been discernible throughout the ecosystem study research. However, this should be complemented by other accelerator programmes' research and lessons learned, as well as access to existing investor networks in the three countries that have shown an interest in supporting entrepreneurship in the broader WASH space.



Female Health Hygiene Generator



 fhha.creation.camp



2.3.1 Female Health & Hygiene Financing in Kenya

Public Funding

The Kenyan government allocates funds to support menstrual health and hygiene programs as part of its healthcare and education budgets, although exact figures are difficult to track down. This may include funding for the distribution of menstrual hygiene products in schools, training for teachers and healthcare workers, and awareness campaigns. Some examples have been outlined above in the governance section. The Sanitary Pad programme's budget for 2023/24 had been set at 940 million Kenyan Shillings, the equivalent of roughly 7.2 million USD.

Donor Funding

Organisations such as UNICEF, UNFPA, and various international NGOs provide financial support to menstrual health and hygiene programs in Kenya. This aid may be directed towards supplying menstrual products, implementing education and awareness campaigns, and supporting research and policy initiatives. In addition, numerous local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) work on menstrual health and hygiene in Kenya. In fact, the country has seen a widespread advocacy and awareness campaign on menstrual health and hygiene over recent years, that was driven by grassroots and civil society actors. Due to their credibility and access, these organisations often receive funding from international donors, foundations, and individual supporters to implement projects focused on providing menstrual products, education, and access to proper sanitation facilities.

Private Sector Financing

Recently the Diamond Trust Bank and Together for Better Foundation announced a Menstrual Health Initiative to provide reusable menstrual pads to over 5,000 girls. Likewise, Rubis Energy Kenya is a known contributor to MH initiatives, in particular funding a marathon to (GirlsRun Initiative) to support an MHM program run by the Women Development Centre (WODEC) that makes reusable sanitary pads.



2.3.2 Female Health & Hygiene Financing in Uganda

Public Funding

Similarly to Kenya, the government of Uganda allocates funds to support women's health and hygiene programs as part of its healthcare and social development budgets. Like in Kenya, though, it is difficult to dissect exactly how large the share for FHH is. This includes funding for maternal health services, family planning programs, and initiatives to improve menstrual hygiene management in schools and communities.

Donor Funding

Like most countries in the region, Uganda receives support from international organisations, bilateral donors, and development agencies to finance women's health and hygiene programs. Organisations such as UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the World Bank are active and provide financial assistance for maternal health, reproductive health services, and menstrual hygiene initiatives in Uganda, including to refugees and people at the BoP. This also applies to Organisations or Embassies such as Netherlands, USAID, and Embassy of Ireland among others; Simavi Netherlands, Plan International Uganda, Save the Children, World Vision, and Catholic Relief Services. They are often also still one of the major clients of female health and hygiene enterprises as they can buy in bulk. In addition, NGO and civil society programmes play a critical role in implementing female health and hygiene programs in Uganda. These organisations receive funding from international donors, foundations, and grants to conduct healthcare services, education, advocacy, and community outreach activities related to women's health and menstrual hygiene.

Private Sector Financing

In recent years there has been a distinctive trend where funding is selectively channelled towards innovation hubs specialising in the healthcare sector. Notably, initiatives such as Outbox Uganda have facilitated ventures such as EcoSmart Pads, which received substantial support through participation in an accelerator programme hosted by the hub. Similarly, Wabibi Pads also received significant backing from the Innovation Village Hub. Nonetheless, it remains apparent that the scope of support within this domain lacks the requisite depth and breadth for widespread impact.

2.3.3 Female Health & Hygiene Financing in Ghana

Public Funding

In Ghana, financing for menstrual health and women's health and hygiene initiatives comes from various sources, similar to Uganda and Kenya, but with some differences in terms of the specific funding mechanisms and stakeholders involved. The Ghanaian government allocates funds to support women's health and hygiene programs through the Ministry of Health and other relevant ministries. These funds may be directed towards maternal health services, family planning programs, and initiatives to improve menstrual hygiene management, such as the provision of sanitary products in schools and communities.

Donor Funding

IOs such as UNFPA and UNICEF are also present and active in Ghana and represent a major player in health and hygiene financing. In Ghana, UNICEF supports initiatives to improve access to menstrual hygiene products in schools, promote menstrual health education, and strengthen sanitation infrastructure. They often collaborate with the Ministry of Education and other partners to implement these programs. UNFPA is very involved in maternal health and family planning, both through financing as well as technical assistance. The EU and various bilateral donors are also notable sources of female health and hygiene financing in the country. In addition, KGL Foundation and SEHP Foundation provide funding for the sector specifically, as well as GIZ and Grand Challenges Canada.

Private Sector Financing

There appears to be no investors specifically targeting female health and hygiene topics in Ghana, but rather in some tangential areas such as agriculture, for example Injaro Agricultural Capital Holdings or Sinapi Aba. However, there is a growing start-up and entrepreneurship scene that could also encapsulate such enterprises and whose representatives also provide funding (often at seed level). Some leading support organisations include the Kosmos Innovation Center, the Meltwater Entrepreneurial School of Technology, and Orange Corners.

2.3.4 Implications for Entrepreneurs & Business Support Organisations

1. To tap available impact-first investments from international foundations focusing on the WASH sector, it seems most promising to focus on a clear pathway, how the best performing business units could move towards profitability. For some solutions such as reusable products, a convincing business case will still need to be demonstrated, for which the Female Health & Hygiene Accelerator is an excellent opportunity – although a possible outcome may be that reusable products may inevitably need to be bolstered through other revenue streams, at least in the early stages.
2. (Mostly international) philanthropic investors and foundations will likely play the most important role in financing the acceleration of female health and hygiene enterprises. Business support organisations, including accelerators, should therefore allocate adequate resources and support to help enterprises develop convincing impact models and monitoring systems and build skills to communicate the impact they generate. This impact reaches across health via education and productivity to the prevention of GBV, making it more than just a by-product of other interventions. But tracking and building convincing data and an evidence base is still essential to encourage more funding into the sector.
3. Enterprises should explore initiating or docking into existing end-user financing models such as self-help groups, composed of a dozen or so members who save together and offer credits to each other to facilitate the purchase of products or services. Another strategy to ease the financial burden which distribution and logistics pose on a growing company would be placing a couple of menstruators in a community in charge of distributing and selling products to other members of their community at a margin or a reduced price on their own products.
4. To make the market even more appealing for the international donor community, it is key to find donors and investors that are interested in pushing R&D to improve sustainability, input of local biodegradable and healthier materials and convince them of the long-term value of doing so. This could be a crucial moment to involve NGOs and IOs, which could then later help unlock commercial investments once there's proof of concept. Some, such as UNICEF^[61], already prioritise environmental considerations in their procurement of health and hygiene products, and others are likely to follow suit.
5. Financing for menstrual health products represents an interesting case of a commercially marketed sector with vast social and environmental impact potential that is, however, often treated as a philanthropic space. Certainly, the case can be made that menstrual health products should be available for free or at heavily subsidised prices, and some governments across the globe have recently taken steps accordingly, such as France making reusable products available for free to under-25-year-olds – yet this trend is progressing extremely slowly.

[61] UNICEF (2019). "Guide to menstrual hygiene materials". Accessed via: <https://www.unicef.org/media/91346/file/UNICEF-Guide-menstrual-hygiene-materials-2019.pdf>



03

FEMALE HEALTH AND HYGIENE ENTERPRISES MAPPING

03

FEMALE HEALTH & HYGIENE ENTERPRISES MAPPING

As has been sufficiently highlighted in preceding chapters, the female health and hygiene space is broad and, while many challenges and opportunities extend across borders, a lot of particularities exist based on the respective region, culture and economical context. Thus, the project team considered it imperative to understand what types of enterprises are active in the target countries to make sure that the programme is designed for them, with their needs in mind, and not the other way around. In order to gain a better understanding of the landscape a rigorous, yet naturally non-exhaustive, mapping of enterprises that could fit the criteria for participation in an accelerator formed an integral part of the ecosystem analysis. This highly valuable exercise served to confirm, or counter, assumptions at the outset of the programme in terms of prevalence of certain types of solutions and brought plenty of insights into the reality of growing companies in the FHH space.

It also showed that, while enterprises of sufficient traction for an accelerator programme do exist, there are plenty of high-potential solutions that may yet be too early-stage, or in some cases even slightly too advanced, to benefit from what the FHH Accelerator offers. This opens the door to discussions about how they can still tangentially be involved in the Accelerator to inspire and engage them, and about further interventions to make sure their needs can also be encapsulated, which will contribute to the formation of a thriving ecosystem rather than a series of one-off programmes.



Source: Wababi Pads Uganda

3.1 Enterprise Categorisation

One of the key learnings is that enterprises often cannot be strictly confined to a single business category; they commonly engage in multiple fields of business activities. To streamline the analysis and provide a clear overview, we have opted to classify them according to maximum 3 business categories as shown in the table on the next page.

**WOMEN-
FOCUSED
HYGIENE
PRODUCTS**

REUSABLE PADS

BIODEGRADABLE SINGLE-USE PADS

OTHER FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

MARKETPLACES

LAST-MILE DISTRIBUTION SOLUTIONS

**REPRODUCTIVE
& MATERNAL
HEALTH**

COUNSELLING, TRAINING AND REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES

FEMTECH SOLUTIONS

**SAFE AND
GENDER
SENSITIVE
FACILITIES**

SANITARY WASTE INCINERATORS

SAFE & GENDER SENSITIVE TOILETS, SHOWERS, AND
HYGIENE FACILITIES GEARED TOWARDS WOMEN

Business models in this field can easily be geared towards BoP beneficiaries, as the pads are cost effective in the sense that they require a one-time investment and can then be reused over their life cycle with proper care. Innovation is a large component of the reusable pads market, with existing approaches leveraging easily accessible biomaterials such as banana leaves, or recycling fabrics and scraps in a hygienic and safe manner. They also help ease some of the pressure which single-use sanitary products exert on the environment, as they reduce the total amount of waste produced and are designed to be durable.

A growing number of enterprises is capitalising on natural materials, often locally sourced (banana fibres, papyrus or similar), but also frequently imported, to produce single-use pads that will minimise the challenges for the environment through their biodegradable and/or compostable qualities.

Period products, which include single-use sanitary pads, tampons, menstrual cups, menstrual panties or maternity pads, offer women a range of choices for managing their hygiene and menstrual cycles comfortably and healthily.

Marketplaces provide a platform for easy access to these products, ensuring that women can obtain them conveniently and affordably. By offering a variety of options, period product marketplaces empower women to make choices that suit their preferences and lifestyles, promoting a sense of autonomy and dignity. Additionally, these marketplaces, alongside with other potential distribution channels such as traditional wellness shops or pharmacies that want to increase their focus on female hygiene products, contribute to breaking down the stigmas and taboos surrounding menstruation by creating a normalised and accessible space for women to procure the products they need.

Last-mile distribution solutions contribute to making sure that the products and services can reach everyone who needs them, even in more remote areas. These are usually enterprises with a very strong social focus, which often results in them choosing to become a non for profit and base their revenue model in donor money.

A large number of mapped enterprises provide counselling, training (of trainers) and other reproductive health focussed services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, education and awareness. Clients are often from a developmental or philanthropic background, and these services may accompany the sale of a product such as reusable pads or cups where awareness raising on their use and benefits is still necessary among the target beneficiaries.

Geared towards women, these digital solutions help to empower women with knowledge and tools to take control of their reproductive health and well-being. They provide valuable insights into menstrual cycles, fertility, pregnancy, and various health conditions, offering women the ability to make informed decisions about their bodies. Moreover, they foster open conversations and reducing taboos. Femtech and apps bridge gaps in access to healthcare information, particularly in underserved areas, making it easier for women to seek medical advice and support when needed. Such apps not only promote women's health but also contribute to greater gender equality by ensuring that women have the means to manage their health and hygiene effectively, enhancing their overall quality of life.

These products aim to provide a sustainable, efficient, and hygienic solution for managing sanitary waste that benefits both communities and the environment while eliminating health concerns associated with the disposal of menstrual hygiene products and other sanitary waste. By incinerating sanitary waste at high temperatures, they prevent the release of harmful pathogens and toxins into the environment, mitigating the potential for disease transmission and safeguarding public health and relieving the environmental footprint of landfills.

Safe and gender-sensitive facilities, by providing privacy and dignity, are a cornerstone of inclusive, respectful, and equitable societies where everyone's rights and well-being are upheld. These facilities ensure a secure and comfortable environment for all individuals, regardless of gender, ensuring that every user can maintain their personal hygiene with confidence and without fear of harassment or violence, which makes it particularly relevant for women and girls as well as other marginalised individuals that face an elevated risk of sexual violence in public facilities.

Further, there are some other potential mapping categories that were investigated but which failed to showcase sufficient traction (yet), such as in more logistics-oriented fields like raw material manufacturing or import. Thus, they haven't been included in the formal mapping. Yet, as mentioned in the scope of the study, such solutions should still be considered eligible for participation on a case-by-case basis. It was also difficult to identify enterprises in the space of safe & gender sensitive toilets, showers, and hygiene facilities geared towards women, but the category was still included as it allowed for the possibility to look into participants of other current or previous acceleration programmes that Cewas and partners are running and gauge whether they have a strong enough women focus.

Across the region, a handful of female hygiene businesses have managed to experience significant growth: those include Afripads, which was started by a Canadian couple in Uganda in 2005, the femtech solution [Grace.health](#), whose founder is Swedish, or the e-commerce platform [Kasha](#), which was launched by a Polish-Canadian woman in 2016 and recently raised \$21 million in its series B. The access to knowledge, opportunities and most especially investment available to these foreign-founded entities have been critical in their success. This acceleration programme aims to bring the same access to knowledge, opportunity, and investment to Kenyan-, Ghanaian- and Ugandan-led female health and hygiene enterprises.

3.2 Enterprise Mapping & Profiling of Suitable Enterprises

The present section presents the enterprises that we have found to match the categories described above in the target countries. With the support of Opero Services, WASEU and MDF as local partners, and including the companies who applied to the call for applications to the FHH Accelerator, a total of 92 enterprises were mapped. Of these, 34 are from Kenya, 38 from Uganda, and 20 from Ghana.

In terms of business models, a majority (38) corresponded to the reusable pads category, followed by the often-complementary categories of counselling, training & health services (28), and other FHH products (22). The rest of the categories were populated as follows: Biodegradable single-used pads (16), Femtech (12), Last mile distribution solutions (9), Marketplaces (7), Sanitary Waste Incinerators (2) and Gender sensitive toilets (0).

It is worth pointing out that the mapping highlighted that many enterprises have recognised the need to have multiple revenue streams; therefore, one same enterprise was often found to fall into different categories. The counselling, training & reproductive health services category, whose wide presence was a revelation for our team, is explained by the focus on education and awareness raising activities that accompanies the distribution of the enterprises' core products, including training of trainers or enterprises effectively acting as a liaison between health institutes and beneficiaries. This is often contracted as an additional service to the buyer of the pads, which, in most cases, is a humanitarian actor, NGO, or IO. The need for this can be traced back to the fact that the products still present some need for learning before being accepted by a broader pool of prospective buyers, and due to the absence of government-spearheaded integration into school and health programme curricula, enterprises often find themselves responsible for, essentially, creating their own market. The higher the number of market-based approaches in a country, the more the need for this may decrease.

Additionally, some companies have a humanitarian-oriented arm, as well as a commercial one, which may be reflected in different marketing, packaging and distribution of the same products. This is due to commercial customers sometimes not responding well to being targeted with the same products as who they believe to be poor people, i.e., recipients of donor-funded product or service distribution programmes. Additionally, this strong social focus leads to many of the organizations manufacturing reusable pads locally to register as a non-for-profit rather than a business.

Figure 7 shows a non-exhaustive overview of the enterprises mapped and the different categories that apply to them.



KENYA

Company	Reusable Pads	Biodegradable Single-use Pads	Other Feminine Health & Hygiene Products	Distribution Solutions	Marketplaces	Femtech Solutions	Counselling, Training & Health Services	Sanitary Waste Incinerators
A Pack a Month	●							
Ahadi Reusable Pads	●							
Ari the Pad ATM				●				
Boxgirls Kenya				●		●		
Caryle Enterprises	●							
Centre for Advisory, Counseling and Support Services							●	●
Chandi	●		●					
Days for Girls Kenya						●	●	
Decent Products Kenya Ltd.		●	●					
Dial a Pad				●		●		
Eco-Pads Africa	●							
Ecobana		●						
FEMME International Kenya			●				●	
Genesis Care	●		●	●				●
Huru International Kenya	●			●			●	
K De Ingratium International (KDII)	●							
Kasha					●			
Kujuwa Initiative			●					
Life Lifters Kenya							●	
Makini Pads - Kenya Works	●							
Malaica							●	
Marvel Five			●					
Mfariji Africa							●	
MY BODY MY BODY			●				●	
Nyangorora Banana Processors Ltd.		●		●				
Pad Heaven	●		●					
PadMad	●						●	
Saidika			●				●	
Shujaaz Inc.							●	
SOKO Community Trust							●	
Sosian Health Initiatives							●	
The Confidence Queen			●				●	
The Grace Cup			●					
Zana Africa		●					●	

UGANDA


Company	Reusable Pads	Biodegradable Single-use Pads	Other Feminine Health & Hygiene Products	Distribution Solutions	Marketplaces	Femtech Solutions	Counselling, Training & Health Services	Sanitary Waste Incinerators
Afripads	●							
Autonomy Health Initiative							●	
Bulamu Bridge AI Technologies					●	●		
C and J Reusable Sanitary Pads	●							
Chil Femtech Center					●	●		
Days for Girls Uganda						●	●	
EcoFemme Pads Uganda	●						●	
EcoOptions		●						
Ecopads Uganda	●							
EcoSanitary Uganda	●							
EcoSmart Pad		●						
Enerforte Uganda Ltd.	●							
Esonga Menstrual Care	●	●					●	
Gejja Womens Foundation	●							
Girl Potential Care Centre	●						●	
Healthy Entrepreneurs				●	●			
Herworth Foundation	●							
Maka Pads		●						
Malaika Sanitation Specialists	●		●					
Mapalo Pads								
Mirembe Safepads Ltd	●							
Msichana Uganda	●						●	
PadShare / Sharecard				●		●		
Plavio Uganda	●							
Safe Pads	●		●					
She Deserves Uganda								
She for She Pads	●						●	
She Smiles					●			
Shuya Pads			●					
Smart Choice Business Solutions	●							
Smart Girls Uganda			●			●		
Technology for Tomorrow (T4T)		●						
Twekonyere Foundation							●	
Uzazi Hub					●	●	●	
Wabibi Pads Limited	●							
Womana			●				●	
YIEN Uganda	●							

GHANA

Company	Reusable Pads	Biodegradable Single-use Pads	Other Feminine Health & Hygiene Products	Distribution Solutions	Marketplaces	Femtech Solutions	Counselling, Training & Health Services	Sanitary Waste Incinerators
AfriPride		●	●					
Be Girl	●							
Chuchu Softies	●							
EcoMe	●							
Ene Empower	●						●	
Fay International		●						
FEEP Fibertech		●	●					
Flow Wellness Ltd.				●	●			
Green Africa Youth Organization	●							
Health Nexus Network						●	●	
HERGhana			●					
Inspire Her	●							
Kodu Technology		●						
Ohhema	●							
Poka Technology						●		
Reflo pads			●					
Reproductive Health Advocate							●	
Talk to your midwife							●	
The Red Revolution	●					●		
Yazz Sanitary Pad			●					

After the initial mapping efforts, a number of enterprises were contacted to collect further insights into the ecosystem and landscape of the sector in the target countries, and to better understand the market challenges and opportunities. 9 enterprises accepted the invitation to a 30' interview (6 of them from Uganda, 1 from Kenya, 2 from Ghana).

During the interviews, it was noticeable that:

- While many of them focused on reusable pads manufacturing and/or sales, they have usually diversified their offers by adding at least 1 more product or service (awareness raising and trainings; other period products; baby diapers; baby sheets, among others), which shows that they are aware of the need to diversify to thrive.
 - Almost all interviewees combined a B2B/B2D with a B2C approach. Two of them also sold to governments (B2G), while very few enterprises only had one target customer, either B2C (marketplace) or B2B. This indicates the potential to strengthen B2G approaches, for which a thorough understanding of the procurement processes is essential.
 - Bottlenecks mentioned included marketing and customer outreach; quality control; obtaining necessary certificates; importing raw materials; pricing; access to finance and production capacity. When asked about their support needs, they mentioned 1) marketing; 2) pricing strategy and financial management; 3) access to policy makers; 4) HR management. The average amount they mentioned they needed was 90,000 USD (with a few notable exceptions that aim for sums in the millions).
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04

THE WAY FORWARD
(AND BEYOND)

04

THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A ROBUST FEMALE HEALTH AND HYGIENE ECONOMY IN THE TARGET MARKETS (AND BEYOND)

The Ecosystem Analysis has demonstrated a growing market and fundamental need for a robust and expansive female health and hygiene economy in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana. Based on source material reviewed throughout the research and on conversations with partners and other stakeholders, it can be deduced that this similarly applies to the rest of the African continent, where FHH is predicted to grow the fastest globally. With an increasing awareness of the impact of girls' and women's health and wellbeing on a country's overall economy, society and culture, the importance of providing adequate products, services and infrastructure cannot be understated.

However, a multitude of obstacles also still exist for this market to grow and take hold. Some of these are soft factors that may be deeply rooted in the respective country's society and mindset, including stigma, religious or traditional factors, discrimination, prevalence of GBV, and lack of education. These obstacles require coordinated efforts by all key stakeholders, including enterprises, to trigger real change over the mid- to long-term. Others are of a more tangible nature and include the lack of (access to) finance to allow solutions to grow, poor supply chains and distribution channels, unclear or fuzzy regulation or adherence to standards and quality measures.

To create a sustainable market, we must first address the existing structural challenges. Key among these is the need for more innovative and accessible financing. As interviews and further research sufficiently showed, enterprises in the FHH space often struggle with limited access to capital, constraining their ability to scale and reach underserved communities. Governments and financial institutions should create targeted financing programs, such as grants, low-interest loans, or impact investment funds, aimed specifically at female health and hygiene businesses. Blended financing models that combine public and private investment would provide much-needed liquidity and reduce the risks for investors, thereby increasing investment in this critical space.

Improving legislation and policy frameworks is another fundamental step. Governments must prioritise female health and hygiene in national strategies and budgets, ensuring that these topics are included in broader reproductive health policies. This can be supported by clearer and more comprehensive regulations for menstrual health products, ensuring they meet quality standards while remaining affordable, and an increased push for cohesive standardisation. Policymakers should also consider tax reforms that exempt menstrual products from VAT or other taxes, as this would significantly reduce the cost of these essential items and increase their accessibility, particularly in low-income communities.

At the same time, fostering partnerships between enterprises, NGOs, and government agencies will strengthen the ecosystem around female health and hygiene. Enterprises can benefit from collaborating with local and international NGOs that have expertise in community outreach and health education. These partnerships can amplify the impact of private sector initiatives by extending their reach into rural areas, where access to menstrual health products and services is often limited. Governmental actors, for their part, should work to integrate menstrual health education into school curricula and community health programs, ensuring that women and girls have the information they need to manage their health with dignity.

To further solidify this ecosystem, it is essential to invest in capacity-building initiatives for businesses and business support organisations operating in this space.

Training programs on topics such as product innovation and environmental considerations, supply chain management, and investment readiness will help enterprises develop sustainable business models. Business support organisations can facilitate networking, knowledge-sharing, and mentorship opportunities, fostering a collaborative environment that nurtures growth. The Female Health and Hygiene Accelerator is a first step in the right direction, and we are excited to see additional business support organisations and programmes populating the space. During our mapping and selection process, we had to exclude many promising enterprises as they hadn't quite yet reached the maturity needed for an accelerator programme. We consider it imperative to building a sustainable pipeline of companies to create additional, complementary programmes that intersect at different instances throughout the entrepreneurial life cycle to make sure that the talents of tomorrow receive access to support mechanisms.

Finally, sustained public education and advocacy are vital for creating an enabling environment. Reducing the stigma associated with menstruation and reproductive health is key to normalizing conversations around these issues. Governments, media, civil society, and businesses all have a role to play in driving cultural change that empowers women and encourages investment in female health and hygiene. While it is likely that enterprises will always have to be somewhat involved in those efforts, the burden shouldn't fall to them at the risk of overextending themselves and their resources.

By addressing these financial, policy, and social challenges, we can build a thriving female health and hygiene market in Kenya, Uganda, Ghana and beyond – one that not only enhances the well-being of millions of women and girls but also contributes to broader economic development and gender equality. The time for action is now, and with concerted efforts from enterprises, governments, NGOs, business support organisations and financial institutions, we can create an ecosystem where women's and girls' health and hygiene are prioritized, supported, and sustained.



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FEMALE HEALTH & HYGIENE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN KENYA, UGANDA, AND GHANA: A PATH FORWARD

This report provides a focused analysis of the Female Health & Hygiene (FHH) landscape in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana. Developed through the Female Health & Hygiene Accelerator launched in June 2024, it's a collaboration between Cewas, OPERO Services, WASEU, and MDF, funded by Siemens Stiftung, Knorr-Bremse, The Waterloo Foundation, and The Case for Her.

We explore the core elements shaping the FHH sector: governance, economics, financing, and entrepreneurship. This publication distills insights from extensive research and interviews, offering a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities within the FHH space. It's designed to guide the selection and support of enterprises in the accelerator, aiming to build a scalable, impactful FHH economy.

This work is about more than just understanding, it's about action! It's about creating an environment where innovative solutions can thrive, directly addressing the health and hygiene needs of women and girls.

We believe in the potential of this sector to drive real change in Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, and hope this publication will inspire further efforts in other regions. For more on the accelerator and the selected enterprises, visit <https://fhha.creation.camp>.

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Cewas is committed to driving meaningful change in alignment with SDG-6 and sustainable agriculture. We firmly believe that solutions in agriculture and water efficiency achieve genuine sustainability when they empower communities to thrive.

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The Female Health & Hygiene Accelerator is a targeted initiative aimed at scaling innovative solutions in menstrual health, reproductive care, and hygiene across Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana. By providing mentorship, resources, and funding, the accelerator empowers high-potential enterprises to expand their impact, enhance access to essential health products, and drive social and economic change for women and girls.

Visit: fhha.creation.camp