The Impact of Mentoring on Learning Outcomes
Adolescent Girls and the Challenges of Menstruation

Mary Akinyi Otieno | Guest Scholar
Center for Universal Education
June 29, 2012
Presentation Outline

1. State of Adolescent Girls’ Education Worldwide
2. Impact of Menstruation on Girls’ Education
3. My Intervention: Mentoring
State of Adolescent Girls Globally and in Kenya

Global
• Adolescents make up 1/5 of the female population world wide
• Half of adolescent girls are married by the age of 20

Kenya
• Adolescent girls make up 1/4 of the female population in Kenya
• 36% of adolescent girls are either pregnant or mothers by the age of 20 (26% of these before age 18)
• HIV prevalence in girls aged 15-19 in Kenya is 4% and doubles by age 20-24 (three times as much as boys of the same age)
Dropout Rates Per Grade in Kenya

Source: ADEA, 2012
Students Reaching Reading Competency Level at Grade

Percent Reading Competency

0.2 0.2 2 1.7 9.2 8.7 24.1 24.2 29.8 32.3 16.5 16.8 13.3 12.1 4.5 3.6

6-7 yrs 7-8 yrs 8-9 yrs 9-10 yrs 10-11 yrs 11-12 yrs 12-13 yrs 13-14 yrs
Grade 1 Grade 2 Grade 3 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8

Source: SACMEQ, 2011
Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls Due to Menstruation

- Stigma
- Medical issues
- Lack of access to modern sanitary products
Review of Research on the Impact of Menstruation

• Kenyan girls miss 3.5 days of school every month
• Provision of sanitary products reduce absenteeism by 14%

• Lack information about the menstrual cycle
• Use of unhygienic sanitary products (such as rags)
• Limited support at home and in school during menstruation
Underlying Causes of Menstrual Challenges

- Lack of information/awareness
- Lack of free sanitary products
- Lack of support from home and school
- Social stigma around menstruation
Possible Solutions

• Education on menstruation
• Provision of sanitary products
• School support
  » Gender friendly sanitary facilities
  » Informed and supportive teachers
• Positive attitudes on menstruation from girls, peers, parents and teachers
Homabay County

- 50% live below poverty line
- 40% absenteeism rate
- 90% of Class 3 students cannot read a Class 2 story
- High dropout rate
Proposed Intervention

Enhanced Mentoring for girls ages 10-15 on (1) menstrual, (2) educational, and (3) psychosocial challenges by:

• Providing information on menstrual cycle
• Free distribution of modern sanitary products
• Enhancing school support
• Providing information on common psychosocial challenges such as the consequences of HIV/AIDS and benefits of positive self-esteem
Proposed Evaluation Methodology

Randomized control trial at the school level.

1. Randomly assign 1,000 girls to treatment and control groups
2. Conduct baseline survey
3. Roll out mentoring program
4. Monitor process
5. Conduct end-line survey
6. Evaluate
Baseline

500 girls ages 10-15 in Treatment and Control groups = 1000 in 20 schools

Girls in school

- Household data
- School data

Girls’ data:
- self-esteem
- attendance
- retention
- learning scores
Impact Evaluation

Analyze change over time between baseline and end-line surveys through:

• Document analysis
• Conducting in-depth interviews
• Administering questionnaires
• Moderating focus group discussions
Expected Impact of the Enhanced Mentoring Program

Mentoring - On

Mentoring - Off
Outcomes of the Mentoring Program

• Increased attendance
• Increased retention
• Increased self-esteem
• Better learning outcomes

Spill-over outcomes

• Greater transition to post-primary education
• Reduction in HIV/AIDS prevalence
Thank You!