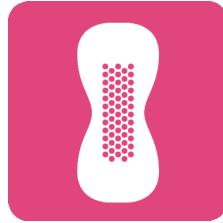


# Breaking the silence on menstruation



## HerWASH: Project Summary

HerWASH is a four-year project in Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The program combines age-appropriate and gender-responsive, high-quality menstrual health and hygiene education with the construction and rehabilitation of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure to advance the rights and health of women and girls.

## HerWASH in Action:

Menstruation was taboo in Luawa Chiefdom in Sierra Leone before HerWASH, and open conversations on menstruation and menstrual hygiene management were discouraged. As was the practice, women and girls isolated themselves when they had their periods and could not openly ask for support. They also used pieces of clothing for pads, whether the cloth was clean or not.

Through HerWASH workshops, trainings have been held to destigmatize menstruation, and increase participants' knowledge of menstruation and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH).

Elizabeth Vandy (65) is the Head of Sowe Community in Luawa Chiefdom and is one of the HerWASH workshop participants. As the head of the community, Elizabeth leads the traditional initiation ceremonies for girls as they transition into adulthood. She is also the voice of women in the Chiefdom, advocating for issues important to women and girls.

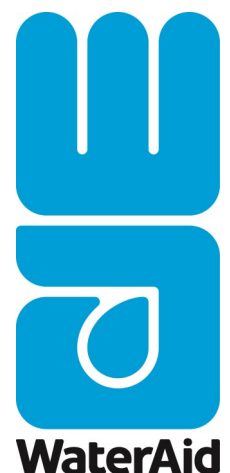
Since participating in the HerWASH workshops, Elizabeth has begun sharing information about MHH in her community, using her influence as a community leader. Elizabeth has also participated in radio awareness campaigns and community meetings to emphasize the importance of proper menstrual hygiene.



WaterAid/ Waheed Awonuga

**"The HerWASH project served as an eye opener to us about menstrual health and menstrual hygiene management. Issues surrounding these topics were previously seen as taboos.**

**Now, we have a better understanding as we have learnt that menstruation is not something to be ashamed of and we now discuss and talk about it." - Elizabeth Vandy**



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