

HOMF COMPLETION REPORT

SUMMARY

Project name	Building healthy schools for ethnic minority girls in Hoa Binh province
Agency name	East Meets West Foundation
Contact person's name	Ms. Tran Thi Thuy Ha
Project start and end dates	1 st December 2021 to 31 st May 2022
Total budget from HOMF	NZD 25,000
Report submission date	30 th June 2022

ASSESSMENT

<p>Achievement of project goal/objective(s)/output(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 02 hygienic toilets were upgraded for boys and girls at 02 secondary schools Trung Thanh and Cao Son. 02 handwashing facilities with soap were also installed near the toilets to be convenient for using. Trung Thanh and Cao Son schools are in Da Bac poor district of Hoa Binh province. There are 367 students in these 02 secondary schools, including approximately 169 girls and 198 boys who now have access to adequate WASH facilities to improve their health. - 01 clean and safe drinking water filtration system was installed at Cao Son secondary school. We tested the water quality before installation to determine the right water filtration system to install. The final filtered water through the RO system was also tested to ensure it met all qualities and requirements for safe drinking water before being used by students. Test results met QCVN 6-1: 2010/BYT standards for natural mineral water and bottled drinking water. - 400 students and teachers received individual water bottle. They would use these water bottles to avoid sharing cups to prevent disease and ensure good health. - 169 female students were provided sanitary napkin with bags. At the school health room, there is stock of sanitary napkins to be available for girls with unexpected menstrual periods at school. - EMWF collaborated with gender expert consultants to complete a handbook to communicate gender equality, adolescent and menstrual hygiene management, health and safety to students. - 02 trainings were conducted for 70 teachers and parents on gender equality, adolescent and menstrual hygiene management. The consultant provided knowledge to raise awareness among teachers and parents, and help students experience healthy puberty especially with an open view on menstrual hygiene management. - EMWF also collaborated with Hoa Binh Provincial Women's Union and 03 schools Trung Thanh, Cao Son, Doan Ket to organize a contest on gender equality and environmental protection called "Your dream". 16 students won prizes, including 1 first prize, 1 second prize, and 1 third prize. - 02 videos were created and shared on Hoa Binh Women's Union Facebook fan page, Hoa Binh provincial television channel, and EMWF's Facebook.
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Sustainability

1. After receiving the new toilets, the students participated in a communication and training session on proper maintenance of the hygienic toilet and practice good hygiene behaviour. A banner on how to use the toilet properly and wash hands with soap has been placed on the toilet wall. Students are sharing responsibilities of using and maintaining the new facilities.



Picture 1: A banner on the hygienic toilet maintenance and wash hands with soap

Picture 2: Communication session on maintenance for hygienic toilets and practice good hygiene behaviour

2. The supplier has installed the RO-UV water purifier and provided instructions for the person in charge of the system operation at the school, including prefilter and RO filter. The school reciprocates funding for the operation and maintenance of the water filter system.



Picture 3: Operating Instructions for prefilter

Picture 4: Operating Instructions for RO

3. The professional gender consultant held 02 trainings on gender equality, adolescent and menstrual hygiene management for teachers and parents at 02 secondary schools. Teachers not only received knowledge but also practiced incorporating and transferring knowledge about gender equality, puberty and menstrual hygiene into extracurricular lessons, biology lessons, and classroom activities. The duration for each session is 45 to 60 minutes.

<p>Challenges or lessons learnt (if any)</p>	<p>- Implementation time for the project was shorten due to needing more time on the approval procedure to comply with Decree 80/2020/ND-CP issued July 8, 2020, on management and use of grant aid not in the form of official development assistance from foreign agencies, organizations, and individuals for Vietnam. Thus, project design needs to consider additional amount of time to follow the Government's project approval procedures at the provincial level. In Hoa Binh province, the project was approved after 3 months of submission.</p> <p>→ It takes long time to get approval from provincial level as the Decree 80/2020/ND-CP issued July 8, 2020. Time for project implementation was shorten. We suggest planning more time for such project in the future.</p> <p>- The project area was in Trung Thanh and Cao Son communes, Da Bac poor district, Hoa Binh province, which is very remote and hard to reach. This in turn consumed more time on activities such as surveying and monitoring. The exchange of letters and papers back and forth among partners and the schools also took longer than if implemented in central area. Therefore, the handing over and receiving of receipts and documentations took longer than original planned.</p> <p>→ As implementing in mountainous areas, travel, goods and documentation transfers face additional difficulties. This means it is critical to have a good plan for the timing of surveying, monitoring, and implementing the project, especially to avoid bad weather. It takes longer time than expected to send and receive documents and goods. Therefore, all activities need to be planned well with extra time to compensate for the geographic challenges.</p> <p>-In ethnic minority communities, parents still have many gender stereotypes. They are shy and avoid talking about menstrual issues. Meanwhile, female students are going through puberty and need to have proper knowledge and feel safe to share their worries with their parents about their menstrual period. Besides, young female students, especial ethnic minority girls, are quite shy when interacting with strangers, and even more so in talking about menstrual hygiene management or puberty.</p> <p>Da Bac district is also an alarming place for child abuse.</p> <p>http://www.baohoabinh.com.vn/274/150184/Huyen-Da-Bac-Bao-dong-do-ve-toi-pham-xam-hai-tinh-duc-tre-em.htm</p> <p>Therefore, when interviewing the children, the homeroom teachers or the teachers in charge of the Youth Union have to be there to support. Otherwise, the children say nothing. The activities to improve children's confidence included:</p> <p>+ Divides the female students into small groups, especially the students from ethnic minorities, to impart knowledge on menstrual hygiene management.</p> <p>+ Organize the contest "Your dream". The students had the opportunity to share wishes on gender equality and environmental protection with gender mainstreaming. We also used this as part of the communication campaign about gender equality and empower female students at school.</p> <p>+ Provide children with materials on gender equality, puberty, and menstrual hygiene management to improve their knowledge and skills, helping them to be confident in life and education.</p>
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Cross-cutting issues (if any)

- The project used a gender lens and consideration of human rights and health protection during its implementation phase to empower vulnerable girls. Furthermore, EMWF also implemented activities following the principle of “leaving no one behind” as the project was selected and implemented in 02 secondary schools with over 90% ethnic minority students. The project always ensures fairness, integrity, and transparency in the implementable process. Specifically:

- The beneficiaries of the project were 357 ethnic minority students in 02 secondary schools in Da Bac district, Hoa Binh province, including approximately 169 girls and 198 boys. Ethnic minority female students were the project's target audience. The percentage of female students from ethnic minorities in the two schools participating in the project was 92%, equivalent to 159 students. The project activities were designed to attract the participation of girls, the first step toward women empowerment. 02 main focus topics were menstrual hygiene management and gender equality. The project successfully created a friendly environment for the management of menstrual hygiene:

+ The toilet was upgraded to be more friendly for girls with a mirror, a place to wash hands and soap, water in the toilet and a trash can with a lid.

+ Sanitary napkins were stored in the medical room. When you have a sudden period at school, you can use them.

+ To achieve gender equality and empower girls, TOT training courses on gender equality and menstrual hygiene management were conducted with male teachers invited. Communication materials on menstrual hygiene were also distributed to male students.

- Before implementing the project, a survey was conducted with 4 female students as participants (03 students from ethnic minorities) about their feelings and wishes regarding their needs on toilets, drinking water, gender equality where they live and the barriers to talk about menstrual hygiene management.

No.	Content	Agree (persons)
1	Clogged toilet and cannot be used	4
2	Men and boys are less likely to experience violence, abuse or child marriage	3
3	Afraid to drink water from the same cup with male friends	4
4	Menstruation is a taboo point, unlucky	4
5	Will join the discussion about menstruation if participants are only girls and female teachers	4
6	Do not talk about the menstrual problems with other people, including their mother	2
7	Need knowledge about puberty	4
8	Confidently say what you want to say	2

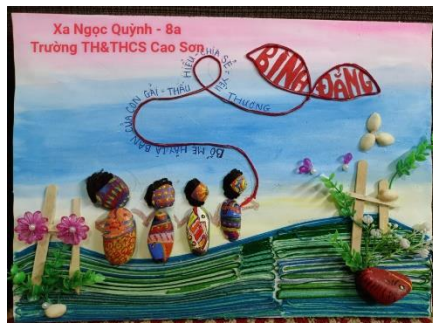
Table 1: Summary of information shared by female students at Cao Son and Trung Thanh secondary schools

After analysing the information obtained from female students in the table above, the project designed activities to attract the participation of ethnic minority female students included:

+ Add content related to puberty to the training agenda for teachers, parents and communication materials for students.

+ Organize a contest “Your dream” for female students to easily express their wishes and dreams about gender equality and environmental protection. The paintings below were examples of the competition. It seems that students prefer to express themselves through pictures rather than other means.

+ Only females participate in the training and communication classes on menstrual hygiene management so that ethnic minority girl students are not afraid to share information.



Picture 5: The contest submission “Parents are girls' friends”, Xa Ngọc Quỳnh, Cao Sơn secondary school



Picture 6: The contest submission “Confident and independent girl”, Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hoa, Cao Sơn secondary school

Risks (if any)

Heavy rains, flash floods and landslides were major risks encountered in mountainous areas. In fact, in May 2022, there was heavy rain, and a risk of landslides effected our implementation plan. EMWF has developed a plan to organize online training, communication and online monitoring and acceptance. The plan was also prepared in case Covid 19 broke out again. However, all activities were able to take place face to face smoothly.

Success stories (if any)

Trieu Thi Kieu Oanh, a female student of the Dao ethnic group, studying at Cao Son Secondary School, is one of 159 ethnic minority schoolgirls who have benefited from the project. Getting water for drinking and toilets not clean or unusable were the main challenges during her attendance at school. Even more challenging for her was to talk about menstrual hygiene management. Oanh and her friends did not receive proper knowledge about menstruation from parents or adults in their families. In the Dao ethnic group, menstruation is taboo and unlucky. Oanh’s friend had period at school but was not confident enough to ask the teacher to go home, afraid of being teased by her friends. “Building Healthy schools for ethnic minority girls” project has changed her learning environment. The upgraded toilet is very clean and convenience. She likes the mirror and soap in the hand washing place. “I also like the notebook with information about puberty and menstrual hygiene management. Menstruation is also not scary anymore because there are backup sanitary napkins in the school health room”, she shared.



(* Please attach scans of all relevant invoices and receipts

Finance

No	Output/Activity Description	Expenditure (USD)	Expenditure (NZD)	Comment (if any)
1	WASH FACILITIES and HYGIENE SUPPLIES: 01 Reverse Osmosis (RO) water filtration system + 02 hand washing troughs + 02 school toilets upgraded, drinking bottles and sanitary napkin with bags	10,155	15,043	
2	Training (online/offline) for teachers, student's parents (in 2 schools)	1,730	2,563	
3	Communications on gender equality, menstrual hygiene and health for students	637	944	
4	Consultant- lumpsum	1,085	1,608	
5	Personnel costs	2,434	3,605	EMW/TN covered 70%
6	Office cost	-	0	EMW/TN covered 100%
7	Travel costs	835	1,237	
8	Administrative/overhead costs	687		EMW/TN covered because of loss on ex rate: received \$16,877 vs \$17,564
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		17,565	25,000	
TOTAL BUDGET RECEIVED from HOMF		17,565	25,000	
BALANCE		- 0	0	

PHOTOS AND VIDEOS:  [New Zealand Embassy](#)