

MPNS Training

Manual for TRAINERS

Overview

This manual will support you to train your team of enumerators (data collectors) on the Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (MPNS). It is applicable for all versions of the MPNS (36, SF and R). *The training activities are guidance only. All activities can be freely used, adapted and added to existing training packages where needed.*

Training is important for successful implementation of the MPNS. Enumerators should understand key features, terminology, the meaning of each item in the scale and *why* the scale is being used. This will ensure timely delivery of the survey, and enable them to answer any questions the respondent have.

How to use this manual

The manual contains five training sessions. For each session we provide:

- **Session Aims:** Purpose of the session
- **Activities:** Designed to get enumerators thinking about the topic. Some activities are highlighted as optional, and could be removed if the time for training is limited.
- **Group Discussion:** Led by the trainer using the discussion prompts. Talk about the activity and how it relates to the MPNS.
- **Explain:** Important information and key concepts to deliver to the team.

An accompanying manual “Enumerator Training Manual” should be given to each data collector to follow along with the training. Manuals are similar, however the Trainer Manual has extra information about set-up and facilitation. Enumerator Manuals have sections for note taking. An annotated version of the MPNS should be used as an accompanied resource in the training.

Session	Activities	Estimated time
<u>Introduction to the MPNS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Measure Needs • Independent Read-through (Optional) 	15 min 10 min
<u>The Most Recent Period</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling Recently 	15 min
<u>MPNS Response options</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses Role-play 	10 min
<u>MPNS Terminology</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material Match (Optional) • Term Talk 	20 min 20 min
<u>Location Dependency</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot the difference • Write the difference (Optional) 	15 min 20 min

1

Introduction the MPNS

- Provide background to the scale and why we use it.
- Introduce features of the scale.
- Data collectors begin to familiarise with the scale.



Activity - Why measure needs?



Aim: Enumerators understand why we are asking about needs and perceptions.

When to use: For all MPNS training. Data collection teams work best when they understand *why* data is being collected and the underlying purpose of the questions they are asking.

Time: 15 mins

Steps:

- The enumerators have 3 examples of data collected from surveys about menstruation in their manual.
- Each example reports two sets of data, one that captures menstrual practices and one that captures perceptions (met or unmet needs) about an individual's menstrual practices.
- In small groups, get the data collectors to read and discuss each example.
- After 5 minutes, come back as a group for discussion.

Menstrual Data examples:

1.
 - 80% of girls use pads.
 - 40% of girls report always having enough of their menstrual materials.
2.
 - 40% of girls use a sanitation facility to change their menstrual products.
 - 30% of girls use their bedroom.
3.
 - 20% of girls when at home changed their materials outside (bush/field)
 - 20% of girls never worried that someone would see them when changing their materials at home

Group Discussion

- What information does asking about girls' menstrual practices (the things they do) give us?
- What information does asking about girls' experiences and needs (their own perceptions) give us?
- How do you think we will use this information in this study?



Explain about the MPNS



- The MPNS is a set of self-report questions that measure respondents experience of managing their last menstrual period.
- It captures experiences of the practices undertaken to manage bleeding, such as changing and disposing of materials, and environments used to do so such as latrines, school, home or workplace.
- Items ask about: comfort, satisfaction, adequacy, reliability, worries and concerns.
- By understanding women's and girls' experiences we can also understand what needs are being met, or not being met, for our population.

Optional Activity - MPNS Read-through



Aim: Data collectors start to familiarise with the survey

When to use: Giving data collectors the opportunity to read-through the survey supports effective training and helps to consolidate learning.

Where the MPNS is being integrated into a larger survey, your training may have incorporated a 'read-through' of the survey prior to training or in an independent session.

Time: 10 mins

Steps:

- Guide the enumerators to independently read through the survey.
- This may be the original or the annotated version with notes.
- If they have any questions or notes, they can note them down in their manual.

2

The Most Recent Period

- Train on the MPNS recall period and why we use it – **the most recent or last menstrual period**
- What to do if a respondent is **currently** menstruating or hasn't menstruated in **more than 6 months**
- Ensure enumerators are confident to support the respondent with recall



Activity - Recalling Recently



Aim: To demonstrate recall challenges, how this impacts our survey. Brainstorm strategies to support respondents with recall.

When to use: We recommend this activity is used for all MPNS training. This activity can also be used with participants briefly during survey.

Time: 15 mins

Steps:

- In small groups, ask your team members to recall something that happened to them yesterday.
- It could be something they ate, a person they saw or an activity they did. ie: "I ate fish for lunch."
- Repeat the same activity for a week, a month, three and six months ago

Group Discussion

Lead a discussion about the challenges of recalling information.

Ask questions such as:

- Did you find that activity challenging? Why?
Likely it will be difficult to recall things from a week or a month ago
- Where you surprised by how much you could/could not remember?
- What helped you with recall?

Next, relate this to the MPNS and the last recent period.

Ask questions such as:

- How does this impact our survey?
Respondents could become distressed, or answer "I don't know" if they are unsure
- What could be some challenges with recall in our survey?
- What strategies could assist respondents with recall?
Calendar, dates, recent events, mood, body changes





Explain about the Recall Period

The MPNS focuses on a respondents' experience of their **last or most recent menstrual period**.

- We ask about the last menstrual period so that our data reflects participants **current reality**.
- In addition to making sure our data is up to date, when we use the MPNS to test the impacts of an intervention we want to accurately capture participants' experiences before, and after, the introduction of the intervention.

For example, if a school has constructed new menstrual-friendly toilets, we want to understand girls' recent experiences of using the toilet during their last period.

If a respondent is struggling to recall their last menstrual period, it could impact the survey results, and it could mean participants give less specific answers from their experience.

- For some respondents recalling the most recent period may be challenging.
- It can be difficult to recall experiences, even in the recent past.
- Help respondents to remember the **timing and context** of their last menstrual period.



Respondents who are currently menstruating

Mostly, respondents will be recalling (thinking back to) the period they have most recently had, a week, two weeks or three weeks ago (potentially longer in some cases).

- However, a small number of participants will be **currently menstruating**.
- In this case; Those who have just started (e.g., are currently on the first day of their current period), should think back to their **previous period**.
- Those who are on at least day two (or more) of their menstrual period should think about their **current period** as the most recent period.

Respondents who haven't experienced a menstrual period in more than 6 months

The MPNS should be used for participants who have experienced a menstrual period in **the past six months**.

- For participants who have not experienced a menstrual period in this time, they should skip this section of the survey.

3

Response Options

- Train on the 4-point response options: ‘never’ ‘sometimes/some of the time’ ‘often/most of the time’ or ‘always.’
- Familiarise with the pre-survey activity to undertake with respondents.
- Familiarise with the visual response options to support responding.
- Enumerators are confident to support the respondent with using the 4-point response options.



Activity - Responses Role-play



Aim: Enumerators practice a pre-survey activity to familiarise respondents with the response options. Questions are framed to practice the middle response options. Also “breaks the ice” by beginning the interview with simple questions and answers.

When to use: This activity should be undertaken as part of all MPNS training. It is highly recommended to do the ‘pre-activity’ before conducting the MPNS. Ensuring respondents are familiar with the response options will support the faster administration of the items themselves, and more accurate responses.

Time: 10 mins

Steps:

- Break the group into pairs
- Choose 2-3 questions from the below script, that are relevant for your context (or create your own simple questions).
- Ask each pair to take turns to read the script below as interviewer and respondent.

Script (examples should be updated for context):

Enumerator: I am going to ask you about your experience of managing your period. Women and girls have different preferences and concerns about caring for their body during menstruation. I am going to read a series of questions about different experiences that might apply to you. I will ask how often this applied to you during your most recent menstrual period. For each question, I’ll ask if this applied to you: 1 never, 2 some of the time, 3 most of the time, 4 always.

Let’s do an example...

1. “Over the past month, did you have rice with lunch?” [Likely answer “always” or “often”]
2. “Over the past week, did you eat street food?” [Likely answer “often” or “sometimes”]
3. “In the last week, did you meet friends outside of school?” [Likely answer “always” or “often”]
4. “In the last week, did you stay awake past 11pm?” [Likely answer “any”]
5. “During the last month, how often did you use the internet?” [Likely answer “any”]

Now think back to your most recent menstrual period [Begin to ask the MPNS questions].

Group Discussion

Ask the enumerators to reflect on the above activity. Lead a discussion about the responses to the questions in the above activity.



Ask the group:

- What was interesting about the responses?

Now think back to the MPNS survey context

- Why might respondents answer in a certain way?
- Which response options might be challenging for respondents to use?
- What are some strategies to support respondents with the response options?

Below are some examples of girls responses to the MPNS items, and the reasons they have for these responses. These examples come from interviews about the MPNS questions that were done with adolescent girls in Bangladesh.

MPNS Item	Participant response
1. Were your menstrual materials comfortable?	Sometimes - I use pads and cloths, when I use cloth it's uncomfortable. Always - I am comfortable with pads and cloth.
4. Could you get more of your menstrual materials when you needed to?	Always - If I run out of pads, I tell my mother. Then she buys pads for me. Most of the time - My mother always buys my pads but when they run out (finish), I use cloth.
6. Were you worried that your menstrual materials would move from place while you were wearing them?	Never - I am confident that my pad will not dislodge. It's never happened. Sometimes - I sometimes feel like the pad is slipping out of place. Most of the time - Because most of the time I use cloths.
13. Were you able to dispose of your used materials in the way that you wanted to?	Sometimes - We store our used pads altogether and throw them away when menstruation ends. Always - Yes, I have always thrown it the way I wanted. We have a dustbin in our house. Always left there.
15. Were you concerned that others would see your used menstrual materials in the place you disposed of them?	Never - My used menstrual pads are wrapped in plastic, so no one can see Always - I am worried about disposing the materials because my neighbours or others might see and ask questions.
20. Home - Were you worried that someone would see you while you were changing your menstrual materials?	Sometimes - I am careful when changing pads so that no one sees. Always - I am always worried my family members might see me while changing pads or taking the pads to the bathroom to dispose of them.
25. School - Did you have a clean place to change your menstrual materials?	Most of the time - Usually, the bathroom is clean but it gets muddy as many students use it. Always - Our school's bathroom is clean and it has dustbin box.
36. Were you worried that others would see your menstrual materials while they were drying?	Never - We dry our clothes with a fan Sometimes - My brother can see it at home, as we dry it behind a curtain, that can move anytime



Explain about the response options

Respondents answer whether each MPNS item was applicable to them: **'never' 'some of the time' 'most of the time' or 'always.'**

- It is important that they understand the **full scale of responses** so that they can best share about their experience.
- Particularly if they have been using different response options in the other parts of the survey.



For many participants this will be their first time being asked about their menstrual experience.

It may also be their first time using these types of response options.

It may take time for respondents to consider if they felt comfortable, worried, or satisfied etc.

Enumerators are responsible to support the participant with the response options. This could involve:

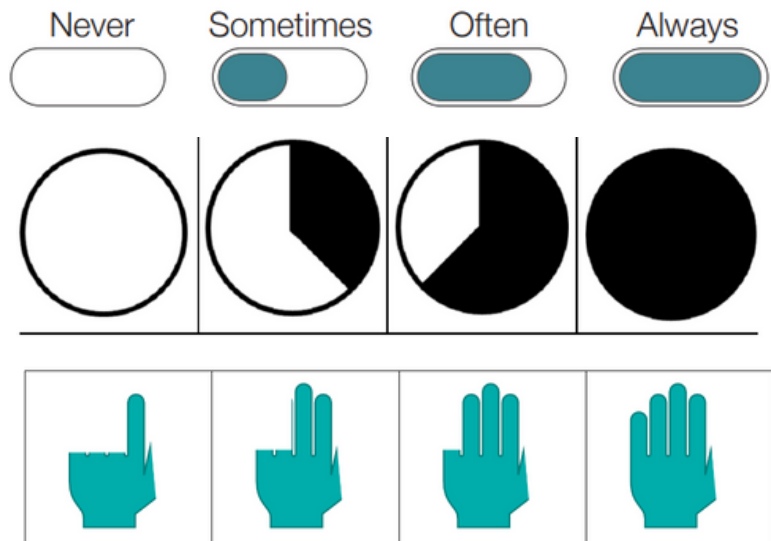
- Complete the response option familiarisation questions at the beginning of the MPNS;
- Make sure they have understood the question;
- Reminding the respondent of the response options throughout the survey;
- Utilizing visual response options if necessary.



Visual response options

To assist participant responding, we have developed a series of visual response tools.

- These may be useful for respondents to point to their response and to be reminded of the response options.
- Using the visual response options in not compulsory, and may not be suitable for your context.
- The bar and clock tools are designed to be printed, either in the survey itself (if participants have a copy) or on a separate sheet of paper.
- This may be helpful for girls in schools where diagrams may be more familiar.
- For adults, or contexts where printed tools are not appropriate, enumerators can use their fingers to help remind participants of the response options.



4

MPNS Key Terminology

- Understand why we use the term “**Menstrual Materials,**” and when it is appropriate to supplement this for a specific material.
- Comprehend key MPNS terms such as “satisfaction” and “worry,” to support translation into other languages and feel confident to support respondents to answer these questions.



Optional Activity - Material Match



Aim: Familiarise with all of the varying types of materials that could be used to absorb menstrual blood.

When to use: This activity is optional. It is likely to be most appropriate when there is limited other content in the survey. If your training includes questions related to blood management practices, then it is likely you have already covered some of the content below. This activity could also be adapted for training on survey questions capturing girls menstrual blood management practices.

If skipped, it is still important to explain why the MPNS uses the term ‘menstrual materials.’ Use the “EXPLAIN“ section to train on menstrual materials and their definitions.

Time: 20 mins

Steps:

- Use the Activity Deck material cards
- Place all of the cards face down – so the description and the image cannot be seen
- Play a game of “Match” matching the material with the description.
- Each data collector has a turn at turning over 2 x cards.
- Go around the circle until all of the materials have been matched to their definition

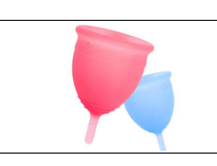
Group Discussion



Go through the table on the next page as a group.

- Are there any materials missing from the list?
- What are some common alternative names, or brands, of these materials in your setting?
- Where there any materials on the list you hadn’t heard of?
- Do you have any pre-existing judgements about materials?
- Why are some materials more socially acceptable in your context?

Menstrual Materials !

Material	Description	Image
Cloth/towel	Any fabric that is used to absorb menstrual blood. It may be cloths or towels that are purchased for the purpose of being menstrual absorbent, or repurposed bed sheets, towels or clothes.	
Disposable sanitary pad (panty system)	Single use menstrual pads are used once and thrown away.	
Disposable sanitary pad (belt system)	Single use menstrual pads are used once and thrown away.	
Reusable sanitary pad	Reusable sanitary pads are typically made of absorbent fabrics. They can be washed, dried and reused. They may also include locally made pads, such as 'Days for Girls' pads.	
Gauze	Medical gauze may be used in addition to pads, cloth or cotton wool to absorb menstrual blood and prevent the material from sticking to the body. This may be common among those working in health care facilities.	
Toilet paper	Toilet paper may be used to absorb menstrual blood.	
Cotton wool	Cotton wool can also be used to absorb menstrual blood.	
Mattress	Pieces of mattress can be used (in underwear or inserted into the vagina) to absorb menstrual blood.	
Underwear alone	A single, or multiple pairs of underwear (panties) can be worn to catch menstrual blood.	
Natural materials	Natural materials might include leaves, grass, cow pats, mud, sand.	
Menstrual cup	A menstrual cup is a small, flexible funnel-shaped cup made of rubber or silicone that can be inserted into the vagina to catch period fluid. It is then emptied, rinsed and reused (for up to 10 years).	
Tampon	A tampon is a commercially-produced absorbent material, typically made of cotton, which is inserted into the vagina to absorb menstrual blood. A tampon can be used for several hours, then taken out and replaced.	



Explain about the term Menstrual Materials

The MPNS uses the term “**menstrual materials**” throughout the survey to refer to any material that a respondent uses as absorbent.

- In some languages “menstrual material” may have a very understandable translation, in other languages and contexts it will be important to explain to participants what this means.
- We use this term to be inclusive of those who use pads, cloth, tissue paper, or other things as absorbent.
- There is no superior, or correct material to use.
- In some contexts, certain materials can be associated with wealth status, hygiene and even modernity.

Throughout the survey we will have reminders about what ‘menstrual materials’ mean.

- For some participants it may make sense to adapt the wording in the question to reflect the materials they use.

For example: if a participant **ONLY** uses cloth instead of asking: “Were your **menstrual materials** comfortable?” you may ask “Was your **cloth** comfortable?”



- Make sure to include **all of the menstrual materials used** during girls last period, even if those materials were only used briefly.

For example: if a participant used toilet tissue briefly because she didn’t have any pads with her, but then switched to pads, then you need to continue asking her about ‘menstrual materials’ in the MPNS (or you may note ‘your pads or toilet tissue’ in the questions).

- This will only be possible if your survey has previously asked about **all of the menstrual materials** used during the last period. If your survey does not ask this question, then it will be important to continue using ‘menstrual materials’ (with examples as needed).
- If you are using a digital survey tool, you can code this question to come up with the respondents preferred material(s).

Activity - Terms Talk



Aim: Understand the meaning of specific MPNS terminology. Data collectors are confident to explain a question/statement to a respondent.

When to use: This activity should be undertaken as part of all MPNS training.

When data collectors are comfortable with the wording of the survey and understand its meaning, they will be able to more confidently deliver the survey

Time: 20 mins

Steps:

- Split the enumerators into groups of four.
- Create four “stations” around the room. Each assigned a word: a) ‘Satisfied,’ b) ‘Worried,’ c) ‘Comfortable’ and ‘d) I Wanted.’
- Each group has 2 minutes at each station to brainstorm and write words (such as feeling, similar words, and meanings) they associate with the word at their station.

Group Discussion

Lead a discussion about the above activity. Discuss each word and ask:

- Is there a common understanding for each word?
- Do some people have different interpretations of the same word?
- Are there multiple translations for this word in English in your language/content, does the team feel the correct translation has been used?

Relate it back to the MPNS

- What questions use these terms?
- What challenges could come up?

Learn about Key Terms

Satisfaction

The MPNS has several items about a respondents “**satisfaction.**”

*MPNS3: “I was **satisfied** with the cleanliness of my menstrual materials.”*

- For most participants if certain criteria such as privacy, cleanliness and safety are met, they will likely be satisfied (happy).
- However, *everyone has different standards for what is acceptable to them.*



For example: Considering the same washroom, one respondent might answer “always” satisfied,” while another might answer “*some of the time.*”



Comfortable

- In English, the word comfortable can be used to describe a physical feeling, or an emotional feeling.
- The MPNS uses the word “comfortable” in both ways.
- Discuss with the group, which item refers to physical comfort and which emotional comfort.



*MPNS1: “My menstrual materials **were comfortable**.”*

*MPNS9: “I **felt comfortable** carrying menstrual materials to the place where I changed them.”*

Worry

Many MPNS items ask the respondent if they felt “**worried**” about different aspects of their menstrual management.

- The key thing to remember is that something does not need to have occurred for someone to **feel** worry.
- An assault does not have to happen for a girl to worry that it might.

One MPNS item uses the term “**concerned**”

- Is there a difference between these two terms?
- How would this be translated in your language?

*MPNS7: “Were you **worried** about how you would get more of your menstrual material if you ran out?”*

For example: It is possible that while changing menstrual materials, a respondent might fear assault, either physical or verbal and they feel frightened.



*MPNS15: “I was **concerned** that others would see my used menstrual materials in the place I disposed of them.”*

I wanted to

Many MPNS items end with “in the way I wanted to,” “when I wanted to,” or “how I wanted to.”

- There is a difference between being able to do something and being able to do something *when you want to*.
- To do something when you want to, or how you wanted to implies control, agency and choice.

*MPNS13: “I was able to dispose of my used materials **in the way that I wanted to**.”*

For example: a woman may feel that her pad is becoming full and she would like to change it - being able to change when she wants to means at the time that she felt the desire to change it, she was able to.



Discuss the difference between the statements:

- a) “I was able to [dry my materials]” and;
- b) “I was able to [dry my materials] when I wanted to.”

- Understanding the difference enables enumerators to deliver the item correctly and support the respondent if needed.
- The second sentence requires that a respondent was both able to dry their materials, and to do so at the time that they wanted to.

For example: they did not need to wait until their father or husband was out of the house to put their materials up to dry.

5

Location Dependency

- Understand the different locations asked about in the MPNS, and why we ask about them.
- Support respondents to understand why some questions are repeated across contexts.



Activity - Spot the Difference



Aim: Understand the possible variations of menstrual experience in different locations and why we ask about different environments.

When to use: We recommend this activity for all MPNS training. It is brief to implement and highlights the differences in experience across locations. If skipped, it is important to reinforce the likely differences across settings.

Time: 15 mins

Steps:

- Use the activity deck cards (printed or digital)
- The team (in groups or pairs) circle the menstrual related differences between the chosen two scenes.
- Three vignettes (pictures) are available: a scene of a i) HOME, ii) SCHOOL, iii) WORKPLACE

Things to highlight:

- Differences in location for changing material
- Frequency of changing material (including delaying changing)
- Material used
- Preparation, organisation and packing of materials (storage)
- Access to materials
- Confidence levels
- Privacy and safety considerations
- Different facilities in the two settings

Alternative Version

Aim: To discuss, and brainstorm the different features from home and school or work setting.

When to use: If you have time in your training schedule to deep dive into the difference in locations. This activity is best placed if your wider survey does not include questions about menstrual practices undertaken at home and at school (e.g., questions similar to the MPQ).

Time: 20 mins

Steps:

- Split the group in two.
- On one piece of paper/board draw a picture of a house. On another, draw a picture of a school building (or write the words SCHOOL/WORK and HOME on the top of two pieces of paper).
- One group will be the “Home” and the other will be the “School or Work” group.
- Ask the groups to list all of the things that girls do to manage their periods in your assigned group, either Home or School/Work

Group Discussion

Lead a conversation about the differences between the two settings and how menstrual practices change between the two.

- What are the key differences between locations?
- Why are there are differences between locations?

Come back to the MPNS survey, look at the questions that are in different locations.

- Why is this important?
- What to do if a respondent asks about the repetition?



Explain about the locations of the MPNS



- Menstruation occurs throughout the day and night.
- It is a relevant experience at home, school or work, or other places that women and girls spend time.
- Girls have different experiences managing menstruation at home compared to at school.
- For adult women who work, their experiences will be different at home, compared to in their workplace.
- When asking MPNS questions, make sure that you are clear for the set of items that ask about girls' experiences at HOME, and at SCHOOL.