

THE PUBERTY BOOK PROJECT:

REACHING VYA AT
THE *INDIVIDUAL*
LEVEL



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*“The first time I menstruated, I felt very bad.
I felt like I would die...*

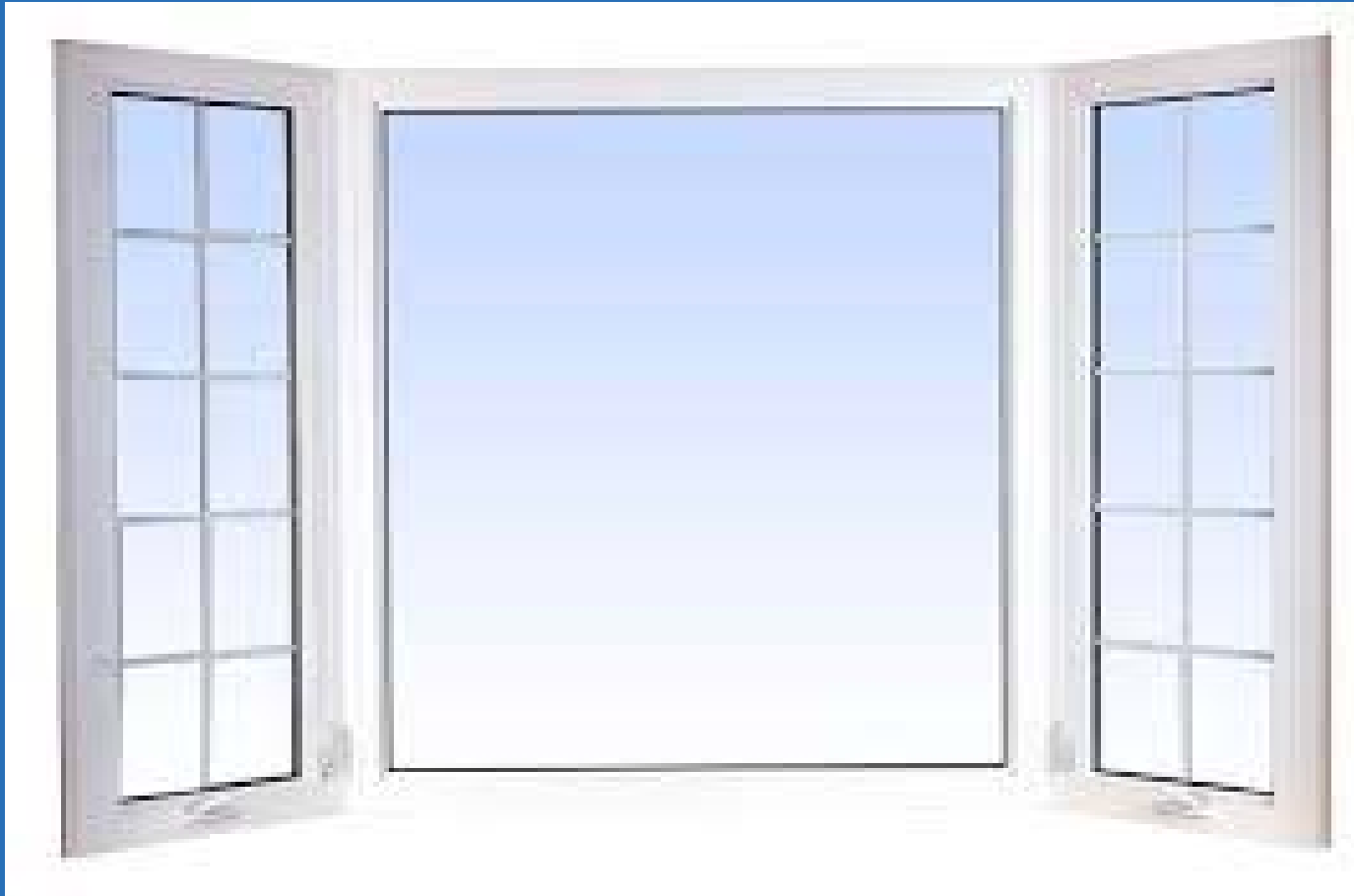
When I started for the first time, I did not understand myself. I saw that my underpants were stained by blood. I went and told the story to my sister, because I thought that if I told the story to my mother, she would think that I had a bad behavior.”

(adolescent girl student, urban Tanzania)

“The first day that I found myself ejaculating, I saw myself as a sick person. I thought it was a disease called syphilis . . . because of the stories I heard from my friends. I decided to keep quiet.”

(adolescent boy student, urban Tanzania)

VYA is....



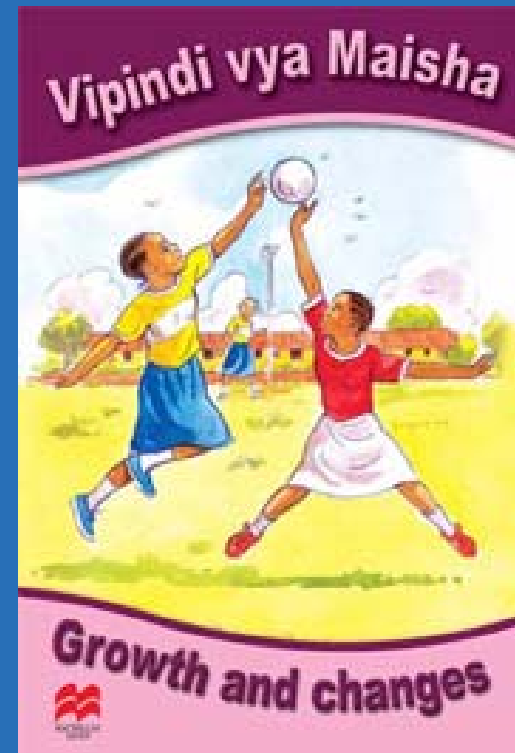
A window of opportunity

The Puberty Book Project aims to:

- Fill a gap in girls' and boys' puberty knowledge
- Build girls' and boys' levels of confidence and self-esteem about their changing bodies
- Reduce girls' and boys' fears about the body changes of puberty
- Improve parent-child communication about puberty (and sexual and reproductive health)

Girl's Puberty Book

- Originally developed in Tanzania
- Aimed at 10-14 year old girls
- Information on early puberty & menstrual hygiene management (MHM)
- Approved by the Ministry of Education



~ Over 420,000 copies distributed to date ~

What are the physical changes that take place in girls?

A girl's breasts start to grow and her hips get rounder. Hair starts to grow under her arms. Hair grows between her legs. She starts to menstruate (have periods or her "M.P." monthly period).



Ni mabadiliko gani mwilini mwa msichana?

Maziwa ya msichana huanza kukua na mifupa ya nyonga zake hutanuka. Nywele huanza kuota kwenye makwapa yake na nywele nyingine huota sehemu zake za siri.

Na hapo msichana huvunja ungo na kuanza kupata hedhi. Huanza kuingia kwenye siku zake (kuingia mwezini, kupata "M.P.").

What is menstruation?

Menstruation means that a girl's body is growing up, and is preparing for the future when she might get pregnant and have a baby.

During menstruation, the lining of the **uterus** comes out along with blood through the **vagina**. Bleeding usually lasts 4-7 days (but can last longer) and usually happens every month.

Monthly bleeding is not something to be scared of, because it is perfectly normal.



Hedhi ni nini?

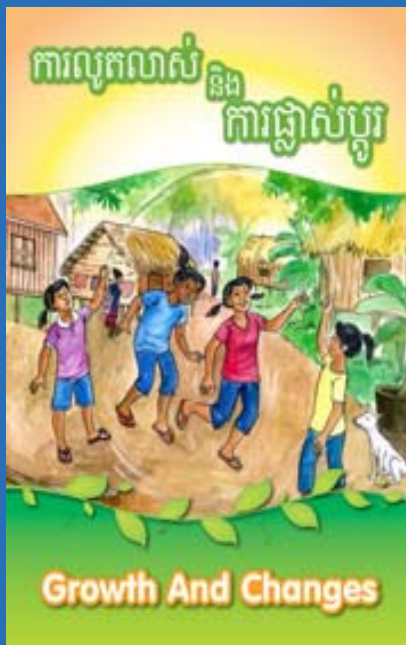
Kuvunja ungo na kuanza kupata hedhi (siku zake) ni dalili kwamba mwili wa msichana umekua na unajiaandaa kwa miaka ya baadaye ambapo anaweza kupata mimba na kuzaa mtoto.

Wakti wa hedhi, kuta za nyumba ya uzazi (**uterasi**) hubomoka na kutoka nje pamoja na damu kupitia **uke wake**.

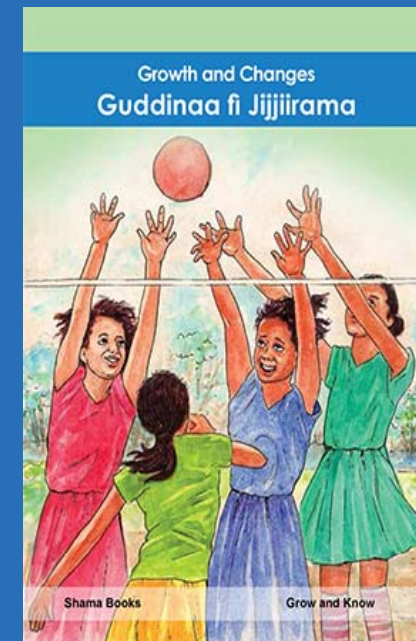
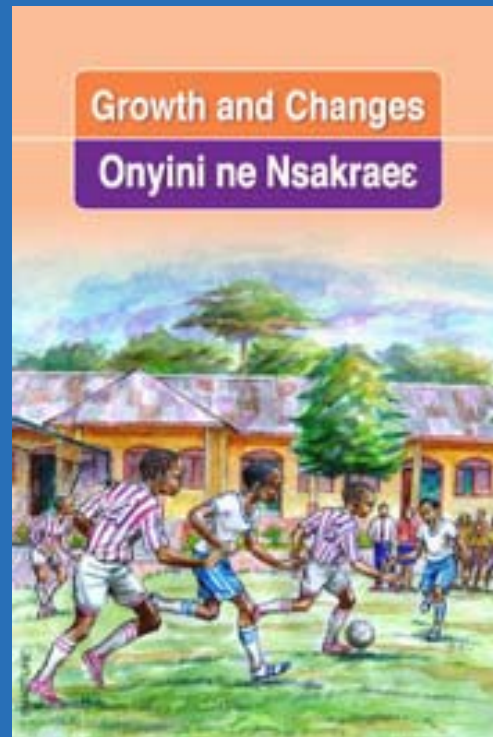
Kutokwa damu hudumu kwa siku 4 – 7 (japo yaweza kuendelea zaidi) kwa kawaida hutokea kila mwezi.

Usiwe na wasi wasi unapotokwa damu kila mwezi maana ni jambo la kawaida, ndio maumbile ya kila msichana.

Adapted to Ghana, Cambodia, Ethiopia



All approved by
Ministry of
Education
in each country



All available for
download on
mobile device
(e-readers,
phones)

How are the books distributed in each country?

- Designed to be given to girls to take home **to share** with parents, out of school girls, siblings
- **Published locally** in each country so easy to order
- UN agencies, Ministries of Education, NGOs, religious groups with puberty trainings
- **Over 800,000 copies distributed across 4 countries**

Who do you suggest should read this book?

Girls' Responses:

Tanzania:

I would suggest this book be read by girls who haven't reached puberty and those who have reached puberty. These books should be shared with our aunts, grandmothers & mothers.



Ghana:

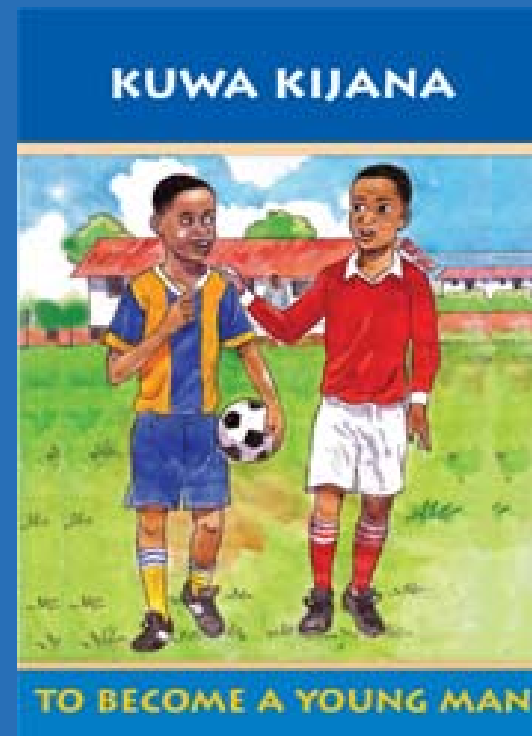
Our fathers should read this book so they will understand.

Ethiopia:

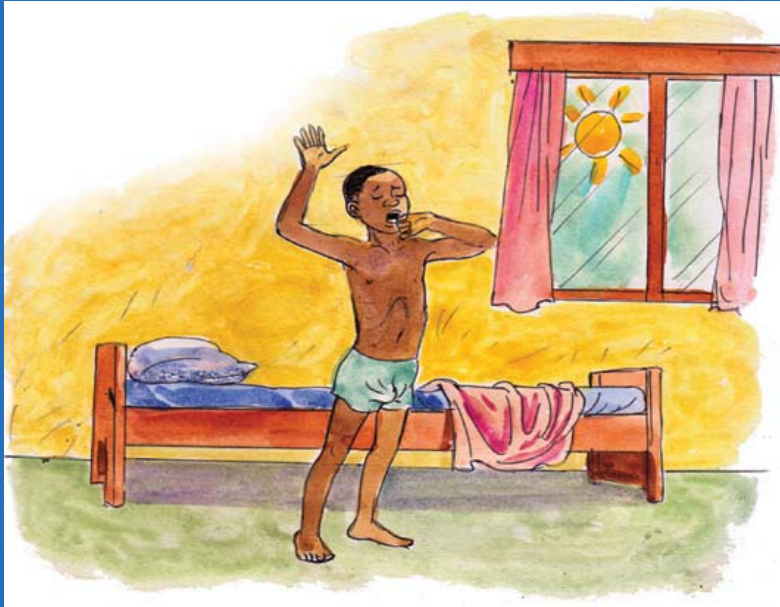
I should not be frightened when I see menstruation. This is the most interesting part of the book as to my understanding.

Boy's Puberty Book

- Tanzania boy's puberty book
- Includes content on: puberty changes, gender dynamics, peer pressures, violence, girls' body changes
- 15,000 distributed, a new order from Gov't/UNICEF Tanzania for 150,000



~ Cambodia boy's book to be completed 2015 ~



Reaching girls and boys at the *individual level*

- Opportunities
 - fills a gap in lack of activities focused on MHM, puberty knowledge and self-esteem
 - improves VYA levels of comfort in school
 - local publishing & MoE approval aids acceptance
- Challenges
 - reminding Ministries/NGOs to order books so that VYA can continuously be reached
 - is one component of holistic approach to MHM

Significant & Relevant because...

- Puberty books are hugely popular in each country where developed (VYA, parents, teachers)
- Numerous countries lack puberty books
- More organizations (in partnership with governments) need to be developing!

Thank You!



PDF files of all puberty books
can be downloaded at:
<http://www.growandknow.org/books.html>

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