 Globally, many women and girls face challenges when managing their menstruation. Failure to address the menstrual hygiene needs of women and girls can have far-reaching consequences for basic hygiene, sanitation and reproductive health, ultimately affecting progress towards the SDG goal of gender equality.

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) refers to the practice of using clean materials to absorb menstrual blood that can be changed privately, safely, hygienically, and as often as needed for the duration of the menstrual cycle. PMA2020 is the first survey platform to provide data on MHM indicators on a large scale. The data presented here from the first round of national data collection in Niger is from 3,031 women.

Only 44% of women in Niger report having everything they need to manage their menstruation. This does not vary by age, indicating that across their reproductive years, the majority of women are unable to adequately meet their MHM needs.

63% of women report using cloths as their main MHM material. Although there is no consensus in the literature on what constitutes "hygienic" or "unhygienic" MHM materials, it is reported that the use of reusable cloths can increase the odds of a woman contracting a reproductive tract infection, such as bacterial vaginosis.

Wash, reuse and drying of materials

75% of women report that they wash and reuse their MHM materials. Of those who wash and reuse, 97% reported that their materials were completely dry before reuse.

PMA2020 uses innovative mobile technology to support low-cost, rapid-turnaround surveys to monitor key indicators for family planning and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). The project is implemented by local university and research organizations in 10 countries, deploying a cadre of female resident enumerators trained in mobile-assisted data collection.

During this first round of data collection at national scale, 51 new EAs were added to obtain estimates at the national level, as well as for Niamey, urban areas outside Niamey, and rural areas. PMA2020/Niger is led by the Institut National de la Statistique (INS) in Niger. Overall direction and support is provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health and the Johns Hopkins University Water Institute through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.