

Menstrual Hygiene Week 2023 | We Are Committed

# Breaking the Silence: Working Together to Improve Menstrual Hygiene Practices

Promoting Collaboration and Commitment to Address the Myths  
and Challenges around Menstrual Hygiene

Maharashtra's: In the Spotlight



# Our Partner Organizations

The torchbearers in Menstrual Hygiene and Health Management across Maharashtra



As a part of  
 Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Sanitation Coalition –  
 A joint initiative by UNICEF Maharashtra and RCUES of AILSG Mumbai

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## Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the collaborative work carried out by committed partner organizations under the secretariat, Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Sanitation Coalition, to celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Day (MH Day) 2023. MH Day is an annual event observed worldwide on May 28th to highlight the importance of maintaining good menstrual hygiene. Since its inception in 2013 by the non-profit organization WASH United, MH Day has aimed to raise awareness about the challenges women face during menstruation and mobilize various stakeholders to address these issues. The primary objective of the day is to raise awareness about the challenges women face during menstruation and to harness the collective influence of non-profit organizations, government agencies, individuals, and the media to address these issues. Since 2014, the celebration of Menstrual Hygiene Day has served as a platform to engage decision-makers and stimulate action to improve menstrual health and hygiene conditions globally.

**Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Sanitation Coalition (Maha-UWES-C)** –a joint initiative of the Regional Center of Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG), Mumbai and UNICEF, Maharashtra, has undertaken multiple activities during the Menstrual Hygiene Week 2023. These are in collaboration with the help of Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin 2.0 and various departments of Government of Maharashtra (GoM) like Rural Development Department, Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Department of Education, Department of Health and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) under Urban Development Department. The activities were organized mainly from the 25<sup>th</sup> of May to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2023 for multiple stakeholders involving various age groups, and professions. The celebration **emphasizes the direct and indirect linkages between SDGs and Menstrual Hygiene and Management**. This included capacity building of women groups (SHGs, CBOs, CSWs, ICDS, women from tribal community, school students, teacher and parents etc.) youth and adolescents collaborated with Maha-UWES-C to celebrate. In addition to this, MAHA-UWES-C this time partnered with MahaPECONet and its associated partners for scaling up the initiative and creating maximum impact with reach like Kshitij Foundation, Myana Mahila Foundation, SACRED, Vacha Trusts, Muktai Bahu Udeshiya Seva Vikas Sanstha, Social Empowerment & Voluntary Association, Indo-Global Social Service, Dnyandeep Rashtriy Samajik V Shaikshanik Vikas Sanstha, Abhinav Bharat Samaj Seva Mandal, URMEE Urban Rural Management Empowerment Establishment, Grameen First Development Foundation, Muktai bahu udeshiya Seva Vikas Sanstha, CASA and Idobro Impact Solutions etc.

These individuals and community groups were inspired to not only acquire knowledge but also to disseminate it at the grassroots level, aiming to contribute towards the global agenda of eliminating the taboos surrounding menstruation and normalizing it as a natural aspect of life. We strongly believe that the combined impact of capacity building, and awareness sessions carried out by partner organizations through Maha-UWES-C and implementation at grassroots also creating infrastructure for MHM, will lead to significant improvements in MHM in Maharashtra. The sustained efforts and commitment will contribute to the long-term goal of ensuring that all women and girls have access to proper menstrual hygiene facilities and information. In conclusion, the collaborative work of partner organizations under the MahaWASH Coalition during Menstrual Hygiene Week 2023 has laid the foundation for positive change. By addressing the challenges associated with menstrual hygiene and promoting awareness. The collective efforts of the organizations involved, combined with the support of government agencies and local communities, will pave the way for sustainable improvements in menstrual hygiene practices and the overall well-being of humans. Menstrual Hygiene Week 2023 achieved a significant amount of direct engagements of Adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers including school children involving men against Menstrual Misconceptions and Equity. **Maha-UWES-C along with MahaPECONET with support of UNICEF Maharashtra and through the collaboration with over 22+ Development Partners have directly reached around 325018 Individuals including Men this time. And has an indirect reach of around 639407 Individuals.**

## Glossary

### M

#### **Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH)**

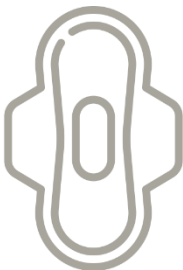
*Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) encompasses the needs of individuals who menstruate, ensuring they have access to essential information, supplies, and infrastructure to manage their periods with dignity and comfort. MHH goes beyond menstrual hygiene management and recognizes the broader systemic factors that link menstruation with health, gender equality, empowerment, and more.*



### L

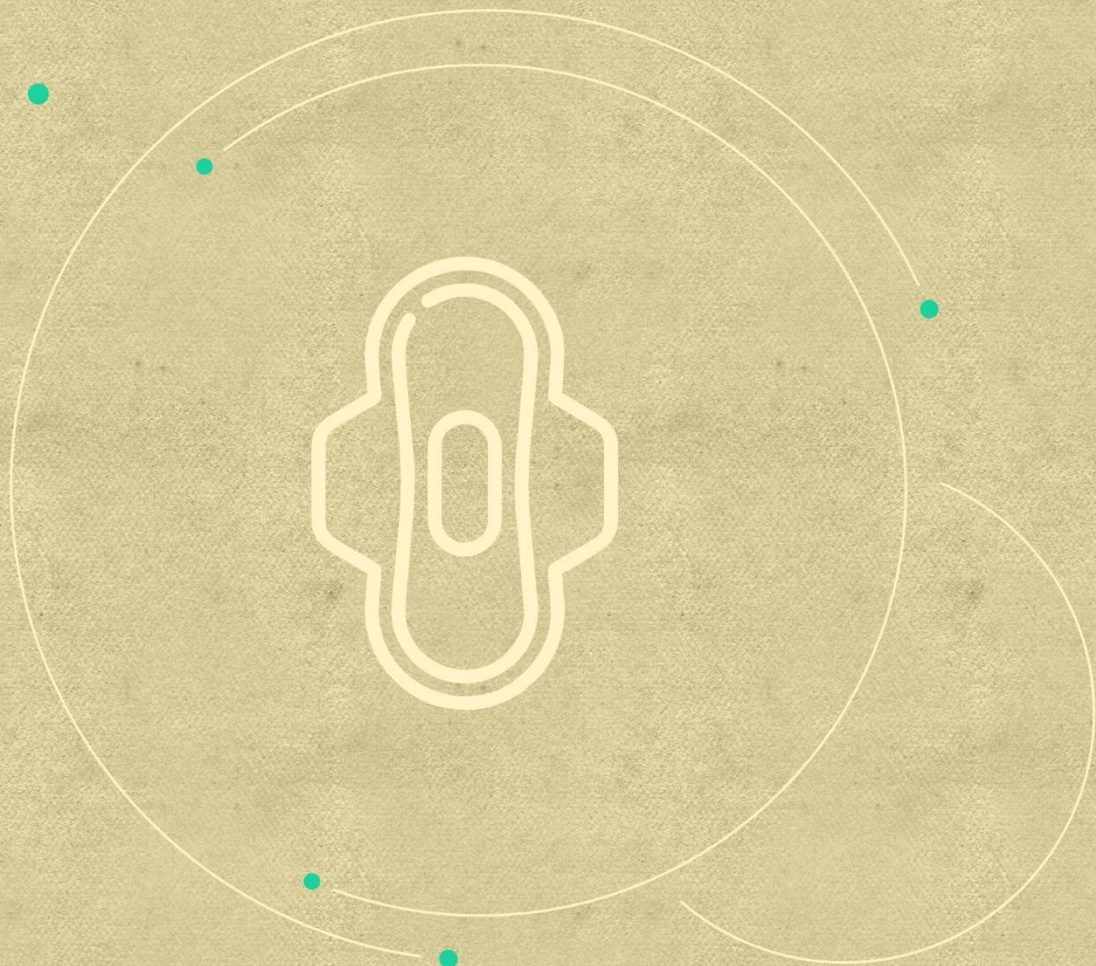
#### **Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

*Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) involves considering sub-national contexts in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda. This includes adapting goals, targets, means of implementation, and utilizing indicators to measure and monitor progress at the local level. Localization encompasses two aspects: utilizing the SDGs as a framework for local development policy and enabling local and regional governments to actively contribute to SDG achievement through bottom-up actions.*



## Acronyms

AIIISG	All India Institute of Local Self Government
CACR	Citizens Association for Child Rights
CPSF	Common People Social Foundation
CSW / CSWs	Commercial Sex Worker(s)
CYDA	Center for Youth Development and Activities
DAY-NULM	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission
GoI	Government of India
GoM	Government of Maharashtra
GP	Gram Panchayats
ICDS	Integrated Child Development and Services
Maha-UWES-C	Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Sanitation Coalition
MahaPECONet Ownership	Maharashtra Partner and Networks supports Enterprises, Citizens,
MHH	Menstrual Health and Hygiene
MoHUA	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affair
NISD	National Institute for Sustainable Development
RCUES	Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies
RISE	Rise Infinity Foundation
SDG / SDGs	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SHG / SHGs	Self Help Group(s)
ULB	Urban Local Body
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene



# Introduction



# 1. Introduction

Menstruation, from a scientific perspective, refers to the regular release of blood, secretions, and tissue debris from the uterus in non-pregnant female primates of reproductive age. It occurs approximately once a month and signifies the return of the uterus to its non-pregnant state after the ovulation process. Menstruation is a natural and essential biological process that every female experiences. Unfortunately, it faces significant social stigma and is surrounded by taboos that exacerbate the challenges faced by women in dealing with this normal bodily function. Inadequate menstrual hygiene impacts health and education, with immediate consequences.<sup>1</sup>

Menarche marks the beginning of menstruation, a crucial phase in a female's physiological development, requiring regular management of menstrual blood, addressing contraceptive effects on bleeding, and addressing menstrual discomfort and disorders with inadequate awareness, diagnosis, and treatment options. In most societies, menstruation is burdened with social taboos and a culture of secrecy, which can impede the ability to manage menstruation comfortably and confidently.

The theme for MH Day 2023, 'We are committed,' aims to raise awareness and promote the vision of normalizing menstruation by 2030. The vision includes ensuring affordable access to a variety of menstrual products, providing comprehensive information about menstruation to all individuals, eliminating period stigma, and ensuring the availability of period-friendly water and sanitation facilities worldwide. These suggest the direct impact on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the sectors like Education, Gender, Health (Sexual and Reproductive Health; Psychosocial Wellbeing), and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).<sup>2</sup> The SDGs are a collective agenda that identifies how the global society can enable sustainable economic, social, and environmental development for all, with an ambitious set of 17 goals and the respective 169 targets.

While highlighting the relevance of menstrual health and hygiene across a broad set of globally accepted 17 SDGs the researchers have indicated that MHH may align with SDGs in the following ways<sup>3</sup>.

- 1) MHH directly contributes to achieving a given SDG (MHH directly contributes to SDGs)
- 2) MHH contributes to achieving a given SDG through clear indirect pathways (MHH indirectly contributes to SDGs)
- 3) MHH is influenced by progress towards a given SDG (SDG directly contributed to MHH)
- 4) Potential but unclear relationship between SDG and MHH (SDG indirectly contributes to MHH)

Examining SDG 3, which focuses on health, it becomes evident that achieving health and well-being for all is impossible without adequate Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) practices, knowledge, access to healthcare, and support. Similarly, SDG 4 emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education, but the absence of safe and clean toilets in schools can hinder girls and female teachers from effectively engaging in the learning process. SDG 5, which promotes gender equality, cannot be achieved without creating social and physical environments that enable safe, hygienic, and comfortable management of menstruation in schools, workplaces, and households. This highlights the direct linkages between MHH and the SDGs.

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<sup>1</sup> Tiwary AR. (2018), Role of menstrual hygiene in sustainable development goals. *Int J Health Sci Res*; 8(5):377-387

<sup>2</sup> Marni Sommer, Belen Torondel, Julie Hennegan, Penelope A. Phillips-Howard, Thérèse Mahon, Albert Motivans, Garazi Zulaika, Caitlin Gruer, Jacquelyn Haver, Bethany A. Caruso & Monitoring Menstrual Health and Hygiene Group (2021), How addressing menstrual health and hygiene may enable progress across the Sustainable Development Goals, *Global Health Action*, 14:1, 1920315, DOI: 10.1080/16549716.2021.1920315



In addition to SDG 6, which addresses water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, poverty and inequality (SDG 1) play a significant role in influencing access to menstrual materials. The need for proper disposal systems for menstrual waste also has implications for the environment (SDG 15) and requires consideration by rural and urban planners in terms of gendered sanitation and basic services (SDG 11).

By linking MHH with the SDGs, we not only recognize the interconnectedness of MHH with other global priorities but also facilitate the development of indicators and measures that can be integrated into existing systems for tracking each of the linked goals.

## 1.1 Menstrual Hygiene Week 23<sup>rd</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023: Key Themes and Messages

Menstrual Hygiene Day, observed annually on May 28th, serves as a platform to address a multitude of significant themes that are crucial for advancing menstrual health and well-being worldwide. These themes encompass a range of issues, each holding its own significance and contributing to the overall goal of creating a more inclusive and informed society. The Coalition celebrated the MHM week by focusing on key themes as follows:

### *Themes -*

- 1) **Awareness on Menstrual Hygiene Day (#MenstrualHygieneDay):** This annual event on May 28th aims to raise awareness and promote good menstrual hygiene practices.
- 2) **End Period Poverty (#EndPeriodPoverty):** This theme refers to the lack of access to menstrual products, education, and facilities, which can affect menstruators around the world.
- 3) **Sustainable Menstruation (#SustainableMenstruation):** This theme focuses on eco-friendly options for menstrual products, such as reusable pads, menstrual cups, and period underwear.
- 4) **Menstrual Education (#MenstrualEducation):** This theme highlights the importance of educating girls and women about their menstrual cycle, anatomy, and hygiene.
- 5) **Menstrual Health and Well-being (#MenstrualHealth):** This theme focuses on the physical, emotional, and social aspects of menstrual health, including menstrual disorders, mental health, and stigma.
- 6) **Menstrual Equity (#MenstrualEquity):** This term refers to the need for equal access to menstrual products, education, and facilities for all girls and women, regardless of their socioeconomic status.
- 7) **Menstrual Rights (#MenstrualRights):** This theme highlights the need for recognizing menstrual health as a human right, and advocating for policies that support menstrual health and well-being.
- 8) **Menstrual Health in Emergencies (#MHMinEmergencies):** This theme focuses on the challenges and solutions for managing menstruation during humanitarian crises, such as natural disasters or conflicts.
- 9) **Menstrual Health and Menopause (#MenstrualHealthAndMenopause):** This theme highlights the importance of addressing the menstrual health needs of women transitioning to menopause, including menstrual disorders and health risks.
- 10) **Menstrual Health and LGBTQ+ Communities (#MHMAndLGBTQ):** This theme focuses on the unique menstrual health needs and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, and the need for inclusive and accessible menstrual health services.
- 11) **Period-Friendly Toilets For All (#PeriodFriendlyToiletsForAll)** The theme talks about easy access to safe and period-friendly toilet infrastructure to be built for women and other genders considering the end-to-end menstruation process.



# **Local Actions for Global Impact**



## 2. Local Actions for Global Impact

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) apply universally to all the nations, and local governments play a crucial role in localizing and implementing these goals. Local governments act as intermediaries between national governments and communities, bridging the gap and ensuring effective implementation of the SDGs. To achieve menstrual health and hygiene targets within the SDGs, collaborative efforts are required from international, national, sub-national, and local governments, as well as various stakeholders such as civil society organizations, the private sector (including micro, small, and medium enterprises), academia, and individuals.<sup>3</sup>

In line with this approach, MAHA-UWES-C and its partner organizations organized awareness and training sessions to commemorate Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023. These activities aimed to take a holistic approach, addressing not only health education, menstrual hygiene, and waste management but also exploring opportunities for employment and marketing of menstrual hygiene products. The involvement of local communities, non-governmental organizations, and government organizations throughout the week highlighted the importance of collaboration and knowledge transfer in achieving comprehensive menstrual health and hygiene goals.

### 2.1 Gamification of Menstrual Hygiene a Revolutionary Change

#### 2.1.1 Go Nisha Go, a role-play, choice-based mobile game available in India teaches girls about menstrual health. / Game of Choice Not Chance project, Howard Delafield International



Figure 1 Go Nisha Go, a role-play game

Women and girls in India, like many places in the world, are often not taught about their human physical anatomy and menstruation. And it's not only the female half of the population lacking in menstruation knowledge. This information gap contributes to stigma and taboos that prevent people who menstruate from fully engaging in community and economic life.

A scarcity of safe, private latrines at work and school creates additional barriers when people menstruate, impacting their health, development, and access to opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP, UN Habitat (2016), Roadmap for localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Sub-national Level

<sup>4</sup> <https://medium.com/usaaid-2030/how-a-mobile-game-is-normalizing-periods-and-creating-access-to-products-through-gameplay-532afee035e2> Mobile Game is Normalizing Periods and Creating Access to Products Through Gameplay

### 2.1.2 Essar Foundation’s Sahej App – One-stop solution for menstrual hygiene management

Essar Foundation’s Sahej is an Android-based app that offers a one-stop solution for menstrual hygiene management. The app features a one-of-a-kind e-store of menstrual products manufactured by women-led micro enterprises and SHGs. It also provides a platform to donate sanitary napkins to underprivileged women, as well as equip Aanganwadi workers with the right information for educating girls from rural India on correct menstrual hygiene. Additionally, the app provides for unique ways to promote menstrual hygiene awareness through interactive game-based learning, educational videos by renowned doctors, and a period tracker.

App available on Google Play Store

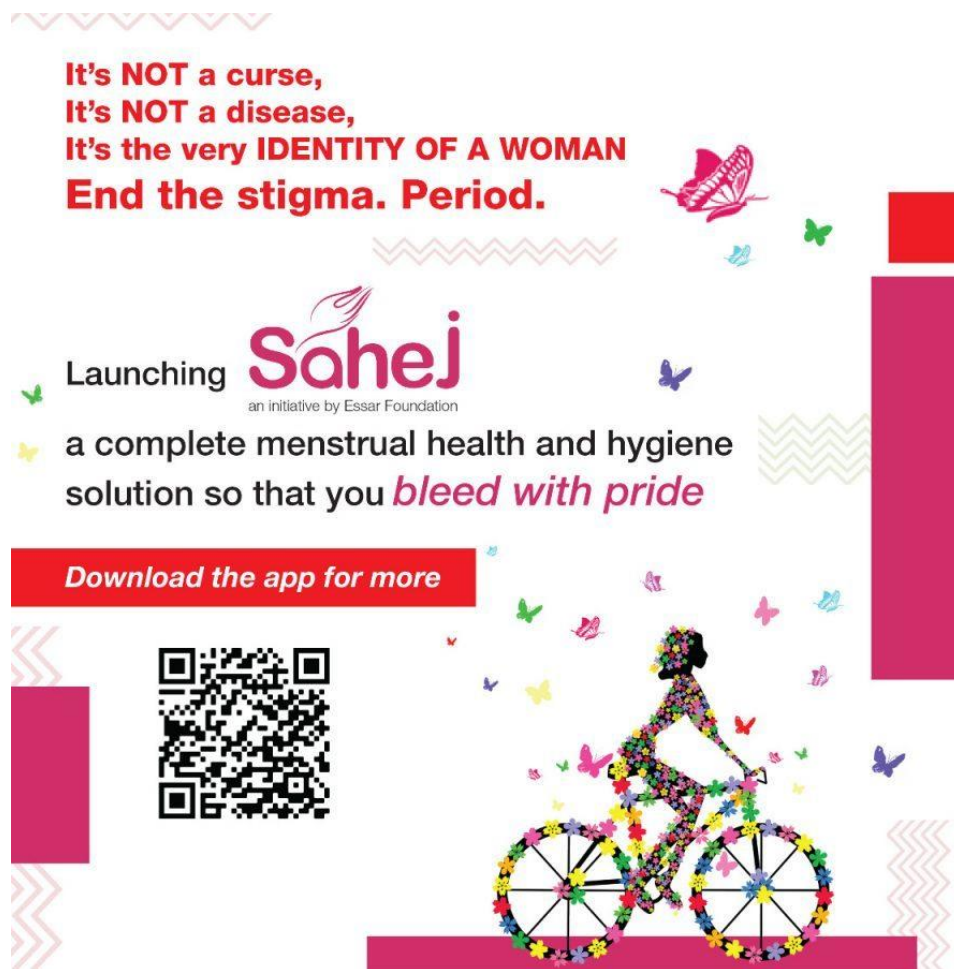


Figure 2 Essar Foundation’s Sahej is an Android-based app

## 2.2 Leading with our partners

MAHA-UWES-C, which is a joint initiative of the Regional Center for Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG), Mumbai, and UNICEF Maharashtra,

facilitated a common platform for the local level community groups (SHGs, CBOs, CSWs, etc.), non-profit organizations, private and government organizations to come together and collaborate to work towards a common mission of improving WASH related services (including menstrual health and hygiene) in Maharashtra. The various departments of Government of Maharashtra (GoM) like Department of Education, Department of Health and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) under Urban Development Department of Government of Maharashtra (GoM) have joined the platform to support improvement in menstrual health and hygiene.

MAHA-UWES-C this time partnered with MahaPECONet and its associated partners for scaling up the initiative and creating maximum impact with reach. MahaPECONet brought extraordinary contribution by activating its associated partners who leveraged the activities in their own way with their beneficiaries. A consultation meeting with partners of both Maha-UWES-C and MahaPECONet paved the way for multiple partnerships with organization like Kshitij Foundation, Vacha Trusts, Social Empowerment & Voluntary Association, Indo-Globe Social Service, Society, Dnyandeep Rashtriya Samajik V Shaikshanik Vikas Sanstha, Abhinav Bharat Samaj Seva Mandal, Grameen First Development Foundation, Rise Infinity Foundation and Idobro Impact Solutions and many more initiated the awareness building on Menstrual Hygiene aligning the activities to all 11 themes under We Are Committed.

## 2.3 Engaging Grassroots Communities for Collaborative Meaningful Impact

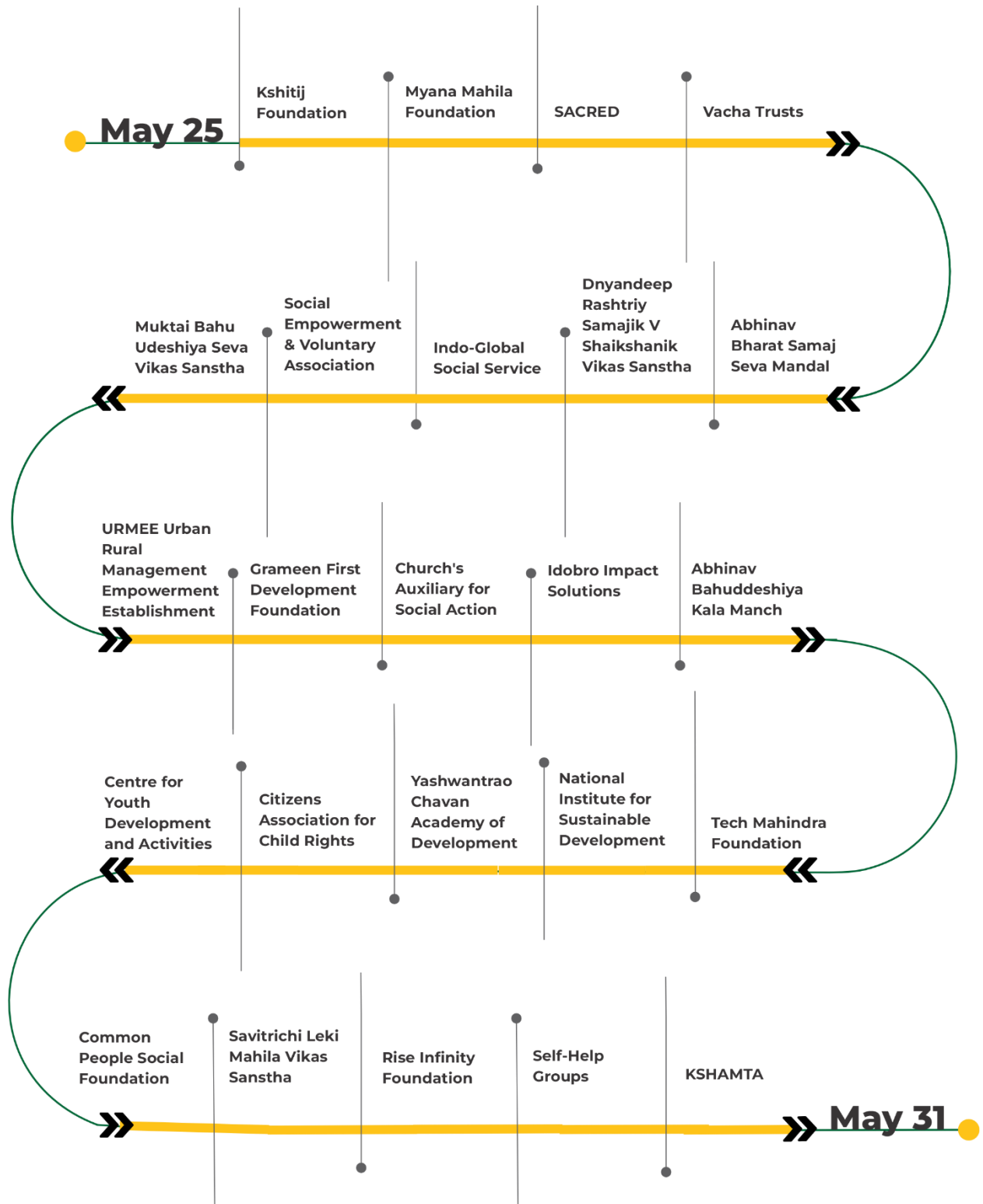
The partners of MAHA-UWES-C organized a series of activities from May 25th to May 31st, 2023, aiming to raise awareness about menstrual health and hygiene across Maharashtra. These activities encompassed various initiatives:

- 1) Empowering master trainers in self-help groups (SHGs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and community social workers (CSWs and in communities) through educational sessions on menstrual health and hygiene. The trainers were encouraged to spread knowledge through engaging activities such as group discussions, MH bracelet making, the Red dot challenge, and debunking menstruation myths.
- 2) Enhancing the knowledge and skills of sanitation workers in managing menstrual health and the proper disposal of menstrual waste.
- 3) Facilitating sessions and group discussions to provide a platform for beneficiaries to share their experiences and discuss challenges related to menstruation.
- 4) Organizing a poster-making competition and letter writing involving men, students, teachers, and parents to visually depict the appropriate disposal methods for menstrual absorbents.
- 5) Conducting a menstrual hygiene sanitary pad making and film screening activity to promote awareness and sensitivity towards Menstrual Hygiene and Health Management
- 6) Workshops were organised to involve men in understanding menstruation and women health-giving importance to availability of new products in the market
- 7) Distributing sanitary pads to women in various vulnerable groups, including those using community toilets, SHG members, CBO members, CSWs, adolescents, ICDC sevikas, and urban, rural and tribal communities.
- 8) Utilizing multiple media channels, such as social media, radio, newspapers, and videos, to reach a wide audience and spread awareness about menstrual health and hygiene.

In summary, the MAHA-UWES-C partners employed a range of collaborative actions and innovative approaches to effectively reach and educate individuals about menstrual health and hygiene in

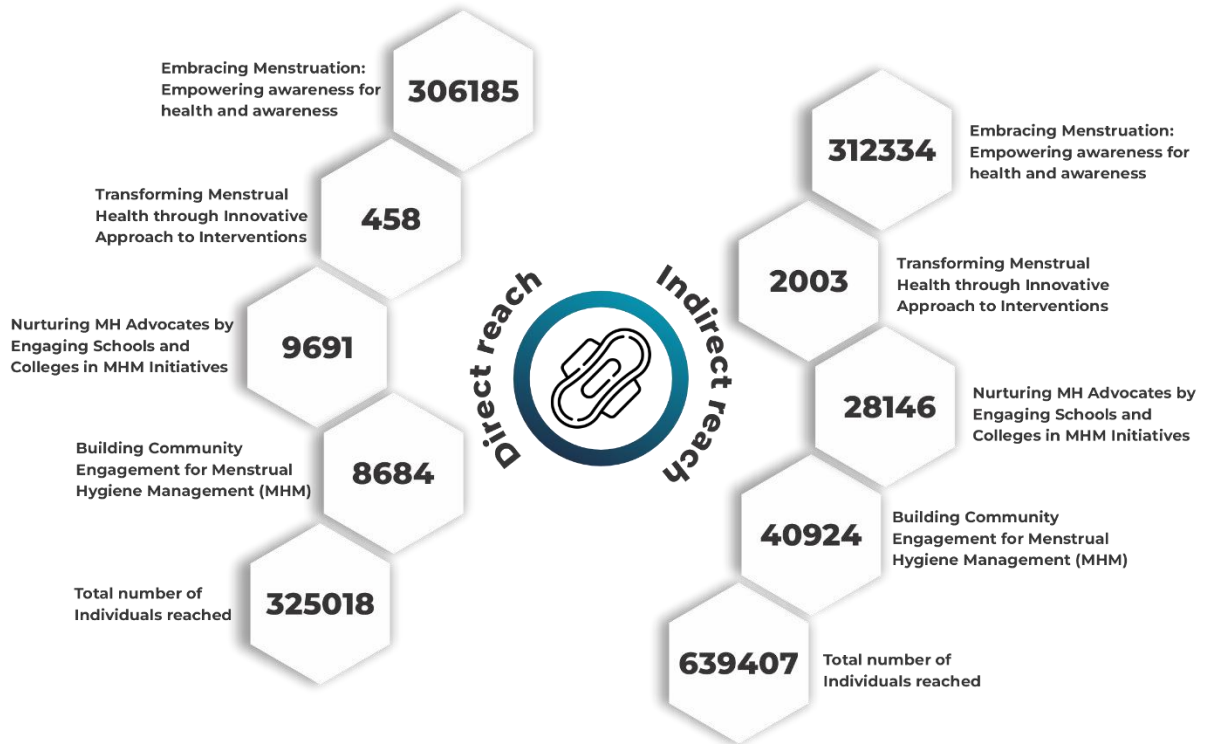
Maharashtra. The partners are committed to aiming for a better future where menstruation is treated as a separate subject and not as a component in health.

## Timeline of Activities



# MH Reach

Through Partners of Maharashtra Urban WASH and ES Coalition and MahaPECONet







**Embracing Menstruation:  
Empowering Awareness for  
Health and Equality**



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### 3. Embracing Menstruation: Enhancing Awareness for Health and Equality

Menstruation is a critical and distinct subject that has a considerable impact on the lives of individuals and society as a whole. It is an important part of human growth and necessitates an empowering approach via focused awareness sessions. Addressing menstrual hygiene issues demands a thorough and empowering approach that prioritizes awareness workshops/sessions. We can break the taboos around menstruation and move towards a society that welcomes menstrual health and equality for all by spreading correct information, fostering open discourse, and providing necessary tools and treating it as a separate topic and not a sub-topic in development context.

#### 3.1 Persuading Change through Workshops, Trainings and Mentoring Sessions

Our workshops, trainings, and mentorship sessions acted as change agents, establishing a comprehensive awareness of menstruation health and equity among all beneficiaries. The activities by Maha-UWES-C partners inspired individuals to challenge conventional standards, shatter taboos, and create good attitudes around menstruation through participatory and engaging sessions. Maha-UWES-C drove the MH Week with support from MahaPECONet, together with their partner organizations to create a future in which menstruation health is prioritized and embraced for its critical role in human development.

On 11th May 2023, a consultation meet was organized by the Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Sanitation Coalition, in collaboration with MahaPECONet, State Government Departments, Development Partners, and other stakeholders, in preparation for the Global Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023 celebrations. The purpose of the meet was to discuss and plan activities for the week-long celebration of Menstrual Hygiene Day. The consultation meeting began with an overview of the celebration

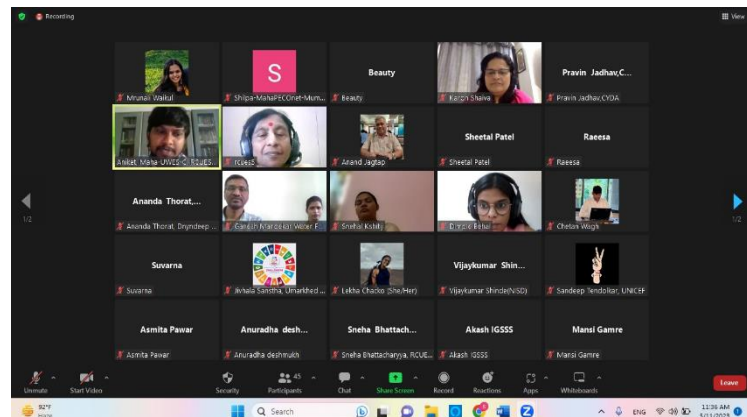


Figure 3 Online consultation meet for MH week with partners

and briefing on the themes for Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023. Various themes were discussed, and it was suggested that activities be formulated based on these themes. Presentations were made by representatives like Mr. Sandeep Tendolkar from UNICEF, Ms. Karon Shaiva from Rise Infinity Foundation, Mr. Pravin Jadhav from CYDA, sharing their initiatives and planned activities.

The MahaPECONet partners such as Dnyandeep Samajik Sanstha, WFP, KMCT, Kshitij Foundation, NISD, CACR also shared their experiences and initiatives related to menstrual hygiene. Documentation formats for recording activities were introduced and discussed. All participants expressed their support and willingness to conduct awareness sessions and activities in their respective locations. The consultation meet provided a platform for development partners to align their efforts and contribute to the Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023 celebrations. It reflected the collective determination to create awareness, address taboos, and promote menstrual hygiene management. The discussions and

sharing of initiatives helped in contributing to the success of the Menstrual Hygiene Day, fostering a positive impact on menstrual health and hygiene in Maharashtra.

### 3.1.1 Secretariat Empowering through Capacity Building for Sustainable Menstrual Hygiene Management

#### 3.1.1.1 Interactive session on Menstrual Products Usage and Best Practices



Figure 4 Workshop on Menstrual Products and its Usage



Figure 5 Introduction to Eco-friendly menstrual products in the workshop

As part of the week-long activities, the Secretariat of Maha-UWES-C at RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai conducted an Internal Capacity Building session on "Products and Practices to achieve Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management (MHHM)." The Capacity Building session benefitted from the valuable expertise of guest speaker Ms. Rajasi Kulkarni Diwakar. With her extensive experience as a Menstrual Health and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRHR) educator, Ms. Diwakar played a crucial role in enhancing the team's knowledge and skills in promoting Menstrual Hygiene (MH) practices, educating individuals about menstrual health, and

advocating for supportive legislation. In addition, she introduced participants to new and sustainable menstrual products, highlighting their benefits for both health and the environment. Moreover, her engaging myth-buster game challenged misconceptions and provided valuable insights, fostering an interactive and enlightening learning experience for all involved. Ms. Diwakar's contributions greatly enriched the session, empowering the Secretariat to further their commitment to advancing menstrual health and well-being.

### DIRECT REACH 50 and INDIRECT REACH 200+

#### 3.1.1.2 Maha-UWES-C's Last Year's MHM Workshop Impact on Self Help Groups

This is the impact of workshop training provided to SHGs last year by Maharashtra Urban WASH & ES Coalition with partnership of DAY-NULM, UNICEF Maharashtra. The aim of the workshop last year was to equip the SHGs on Menstrual Hygiene and Management and further strengthen the local stakeholders through them. This has resulted in a successful case study. Jejuri Nagar Parishad Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana National Urban Livelihood Mission on the occasion of World Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28 during blood screening and guidance through Rural Hospital Jejuri. Jejuri Nagar

Parishad community organizer Amar Ranaware, CLF President Rani Shinde, Secretary Mumtaz Pathan organized the program. Rural hospital Surekha Kakade counselor, Sonali Pawar superintendent, Monali Kadam, Prajakta Mhetre laboratory technician told the importance of menstrual hygiene day to women and girls.



Figure 6 Blood screening and guidance through Rural Hospital Jejuri



Figure 7 SHG involvement in sharing importance of menstrual hygiene day to women and girl

### 3.1.2 Kshitij Foundation leading the Flag of Menstrual Hygiene

#### 3.1.2.1 Seminar on Menstrual Hygiene

In an effort to address menstrual hygiene challenges in poor and needy areas of villages, Snehal Kadam conducted informative seminars on menstrual cycle awareness and encouraged the use of cloth pads. The seminars were organized as part of Stree Shakti Sadanshan Camps held across all talukas in Nanded District in collaboration with Zilla Parishad Nanded. The primary objective was to empower teachers, young girls, and women with knowledge and skills related to sustainable menstruation. By providing essential information and promoting the use of cloth pads, the initiative aimed to improve menstrual hygiene practices and promote a more environmentally friendly approach to menstruation.

These seminars played a vital role in spreading awareness and fostering positive attitudes towards menstrual health in the Nanded district with a reach of more than 3 lakh participants.

### 3.1.2.2 Bleed the Silence: Empowering Menstrual Health Awareness Online



The Bleed the Silence Talk Series, an online initiative organized by the foundation, made a significant impact by providing guidance sessions and expert talks on various topics. With a remarkable participation of 1560 individuals, the series served as a platform for learning and engaging in discussions surrounding menstrual health. This year, an online guidance session was conducted by Dr. Madhavi Javare, adding to the extensive library of knowledge that was covered throughout the series. A total of 37 subjects were addressed, empowering individuals with valuable information and support on their journey towards menstrual health and well-being. The Bleed the Silence Talk Series successfully broke the barriers of silence, fostering awareness and understanding among participants. Activities were carried out in Buldhana, Washim, Jalgaon, Solapur and Vidarbha districts across Maharashtra.

Figure 8 Bleed the silence initiative by Kshitij foundation

### 3.1.2.3 Caption: Empowering Menstrual Health: Snehal Chaudhary Kadam's Expert Seminar Contribution

Through the support of the Secretariat of Maha-UWES-C, Snehal Chaudhary Kadam, Founder and President of Kshitij Foundation, actively participated as an expert speaker in a seminar organized by Teacher for Change (IDOBRO) that focused on menstrual health program and awareness. The online seminar provided a valuable platform for sharing insights and knowledge on the importance of menstrual health and effective strategies for creating awareness and promoting menstrual hygiene. This collaboration highlighted the commitment of Kshitij Foundation towards fostering educational excellence and creating a transformative impact in the community, particularly in the realm of menstrual health.

Empowering Educators on sustainable Menstruation and enabling safer hygiene practices for young girls and women

**Teachers For Change**

**Dr. Tarulata Sunil Dhanke**  
Taluka Health officer and Nodal officer  
Menstrual Hygiene Management

**Sivranjani Ganapathy**  
Director - Amato  
Women Health Coach - Wellness with Siv

**Snehal Chaudhari - Kadam**  
Founder & President  
Kshitij Foundation

For Registration Scan QR code

Duration: 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM  
Date: 27 May 2023

#MenstrualHygieneDay  
#unicefindia

Figure 9 EXPERT SESSION BY Snehal Chaudhary Kadam, Founder and President of Kshitij Foundation

## DIRECT REACH 1800+ and INDIRECT REACH 10800+

### 3.1.3 Idobro Bringing Change in Menstrual Hygiene Education

#### 3.1.3.1 Teachers for Sustainable Menstrual Hygiene

The Workshop on Sustainable Menstrual Hygiene Program conducted online was a remarkable initiative aimed at raising awareness and empowering teachers regarding sustainable menstrual

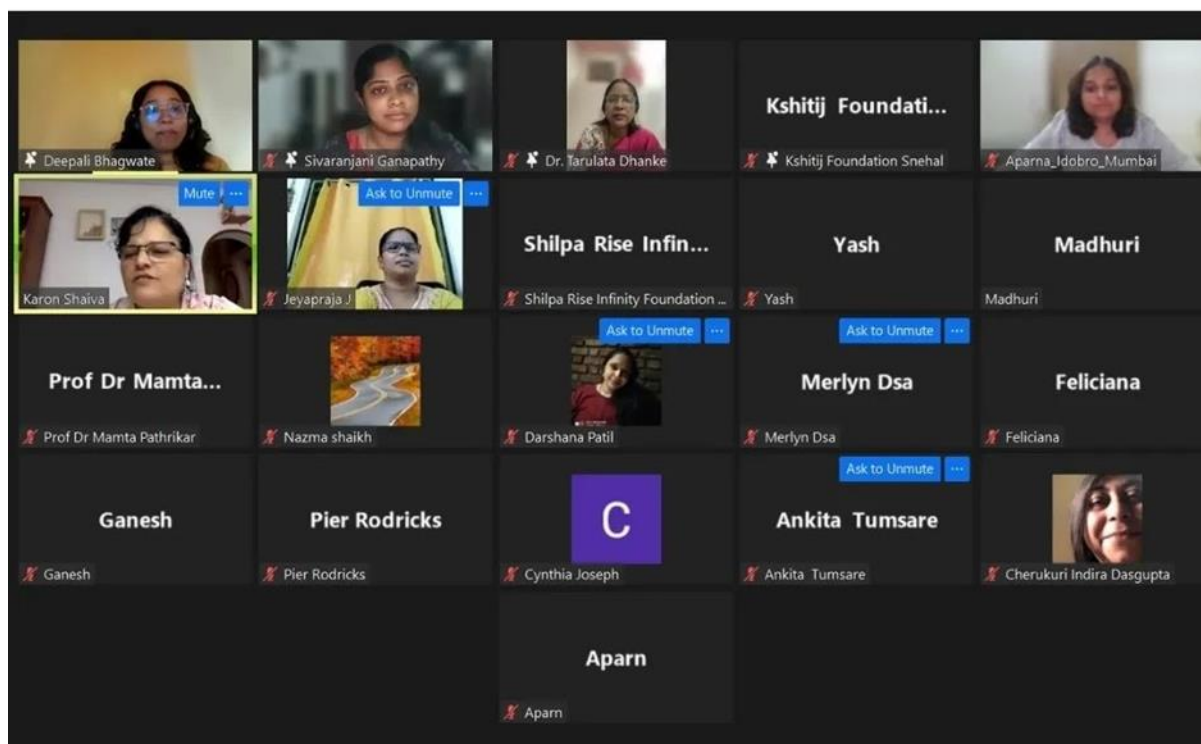


Figure 10 Menstrual hygiene education to teachers

hygiene practices. Through interactive sessions, workshops, and the provision of educational materials, teachers were enlightened about the significance of eco-friendly menstrual products, waste management, and menstrual health. The program played a pivotal role in equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to educate their students on menstrual hygiene. Comprehensive training sessions were conducted to familiarize teachers with effective teaching methodologies, communication techniques, and strategies to address the social stigma surrounding menstruation. The program placed special emphasis on promoting eco-friendly practices by encouraging the adoption of reusable pads, menstrual cups, and organic products. This not only reduced the environmental impact but also offered cost-effective and hygienic solutions for menstruating individuals. The impact of the program extended beyond the participating teachers, as they became advocates for menstrual hygiene education in their schools and communities. This created a ripple effect, reaching a wider audience and generating a more significant impact. The workshop was successfully conducted in multiple locations, including Nashik, Buldhana, Mumbai, Mahur, Latur, Thane, Bangalore, Coimbatore, Pune, and Rishikesh, further expanding the reach and influence of the program. Overall, the workshop made significant strides in promoting sustainable menstrual hygiene practices and empowering teachers to bring about positive change in the lives of young individuals.

## DIRECT REACH 30 and INDIRECT REACH 325+

### 3.1.4 Uniting for Change on Menstrual Hygiene Management Day

#### 3.1.4.1 Fostering Women’s Dignity by Making Menstruation Priority in GramSabhas



Pramod Zinjade, President of the Mahatma Phule Samaj Seva Mandal, has led an initiative to empower women via effective leadership, with the goal of fostering acceptance and dignity surrounding menstruation. As part of the Menstruation Day celebrations on May 28th, he suggested holding a Gramme Sabha to address the issues that women encounter during this natural process. Zinjade emphasised the importance of overcoming social conventions and customs that prolong menstrual suffering. Zinjade emphasized the importance of understanding and accepting menstruation as a natural occurrence that indicates a woman's reproductive viability in his appeal. He asked Sarpanchs to pass Gramme Sabha resolutions focussing on complete menstrual hygiene management.

Figure 11 Pramod Zinjade’s efforts in Fostering Women’s Dignity by Making Menstruation Priority in GramSabhas

Implementing instructional programmes in local schools, community centres, and health facilities, promoting awareness through workshops and seminars, and assuring the availability of affordable menstruation products in village panchayats are all part of this effort. Zinjade emphasised the need of having adequate and sanitary facilities, such as separate restrooms for women and girls in schools,

public areas, and community centres. He also recommended proper sanitary waste disposal by installing incinerators and separate garbage containers. With the help of organisations such as UNICEF, the appeal emphasised the need for clean water, soap, counselling, and assistance. Zinjade's call to action is encapsulated in this study, which urges sarpanches to take important steps towards menstrual hygiene management, eventually boosting women's dignity and well-being.

### 3.1.4.2 GP Herwad Sets a Bold Example of Dignity and Empowerment on MHM

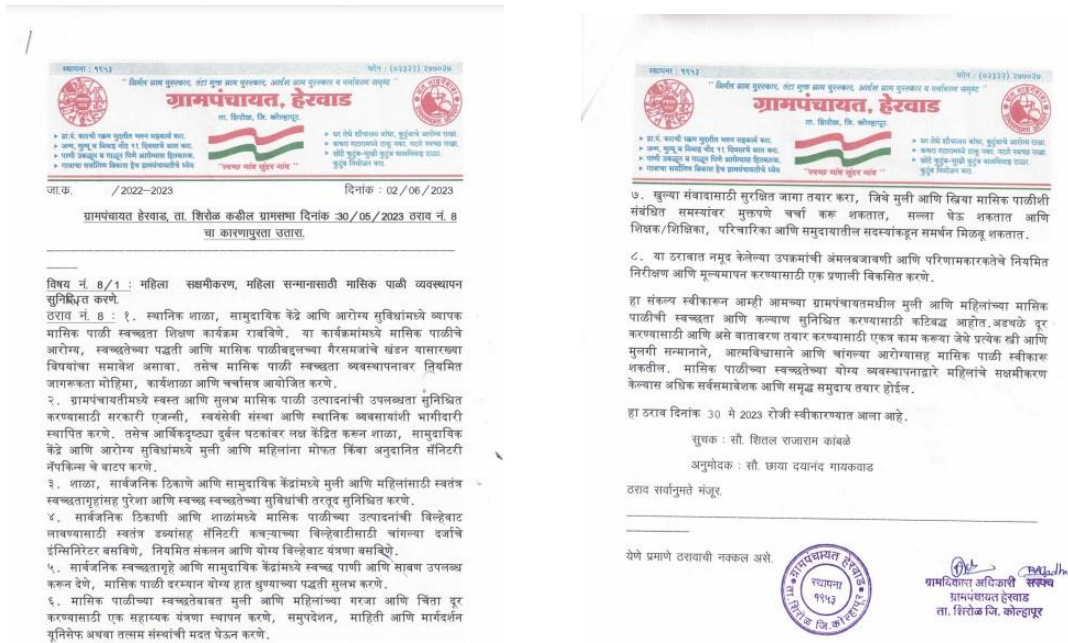


Figure 12 GP Herwad Sets a Bold Example of Dignity and Empowerment on MHM

The Gramsabha of GP Herwad in Kolhapur took a significant step towards ensuring women's dignity and promoting menstrual hygiene by passing a resolution on the occasion of Menstrual Hygiene Day. This remarkable achievement makes Herwad the first Gram Panchayat to prioritize and make arrangements for effective menstrual hygiene management. The resolution reflects the commitment of the gram panchayat members to address the needs of women and create an environment that supports their well-being and empowerment. This progressive move sets an inspiring example for other Gram Panchayats to follow suit and prioritize menstrual hygiene as a crucial aspect of women's health and dignity.



### 3.1.4.3 YASHADA's Impactful Online Training Sessions and Engagement with Medical Officers on Menstrual Hygiene and Health

Menstruation Management Day was celebrated globally on June 2, 2023, with the aim of raising public awareness and dispelling ignorance, superstitions, and misconceptions surrounding menstruation. YASHADA organized an online state level workshop for Sarapanch, Gramsevaks, and training coordinators across the state on MH day. SDGs and MHM, breaking the taboos around menstruation, infrastructure availability for MHM and role of PRI were the key messages delivered during the workshop by DDG, YASHADA Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti, Dr. Anita Mahiras, Associates Professor Vina Supekar and UNICEF state consultant, Sandeep Tendolkar. Around 200 participants participated

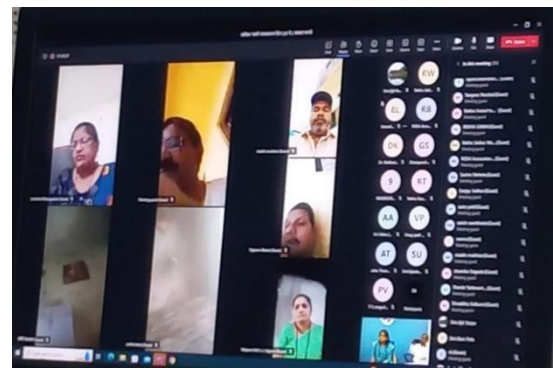


Figure 13 Online state level workshop for Sarapanch, Gramsevaks, and training coordinators across the state on MH day.



Figure 14 Workshop by DDG, YASHADA Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti, Dr. Anita Mahiras, Associates Professor Vina Supekar and UNICEF state consultant, Sandeep Tendolkar

**DIRECT REACH 250 and INDIRECT REACH 100+**

## Empowering Medical Officers for Menstrual Hygiene Management through their Commitment to Societal Health



Figure 15 Scan this to see the related videos

Nearly 225 Medical officers of government Primary Health Centers (PHCs) are oriented on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) by UNICEF during their ongoing foundation course, conducted by YASHADA. Myths and facts about menstrual hygiene, role of medical officers and their commitment towards society were the topics covered during the session. MOs prepared their road map to reach out every menstruator as part of commitment. It covers problem mapping, resource mapping, convergence, activity mapping, IEC activities and capacity buildings. MOs committed that they will further strengthen the road map, when they actual join the duty station after foundation course. YASHADA has planned to train 1000 MOs in the current year

and MHM is undividable part of the foundation course. UNICEF has advocated for the institutionalization of MH



Figure 16 Group Activity by Medical Officers on Menstrual Hygiene and Health Management

### 3.1.4.4 Rural Development Department and Water Supply and Sanitation Department of Government of Maharashtra District-wise celebration of MH week.

The Rural Development Department (RDD) and Water Supply and Sanitation Department (WSSD) of Government of Maharashtra (GoM) issued circulars to all district authorities in Maharashtra to celebrate the Menstrual Hygiene Week by involving women and adolescent girls. With adherence to the circular issued by respective departments the districts undertook various activities catering to maximum involvement of women and children. The activities were letter writing, photography, social media posts, newspaper articles, capacity building, meetings, rallies and various competitions.

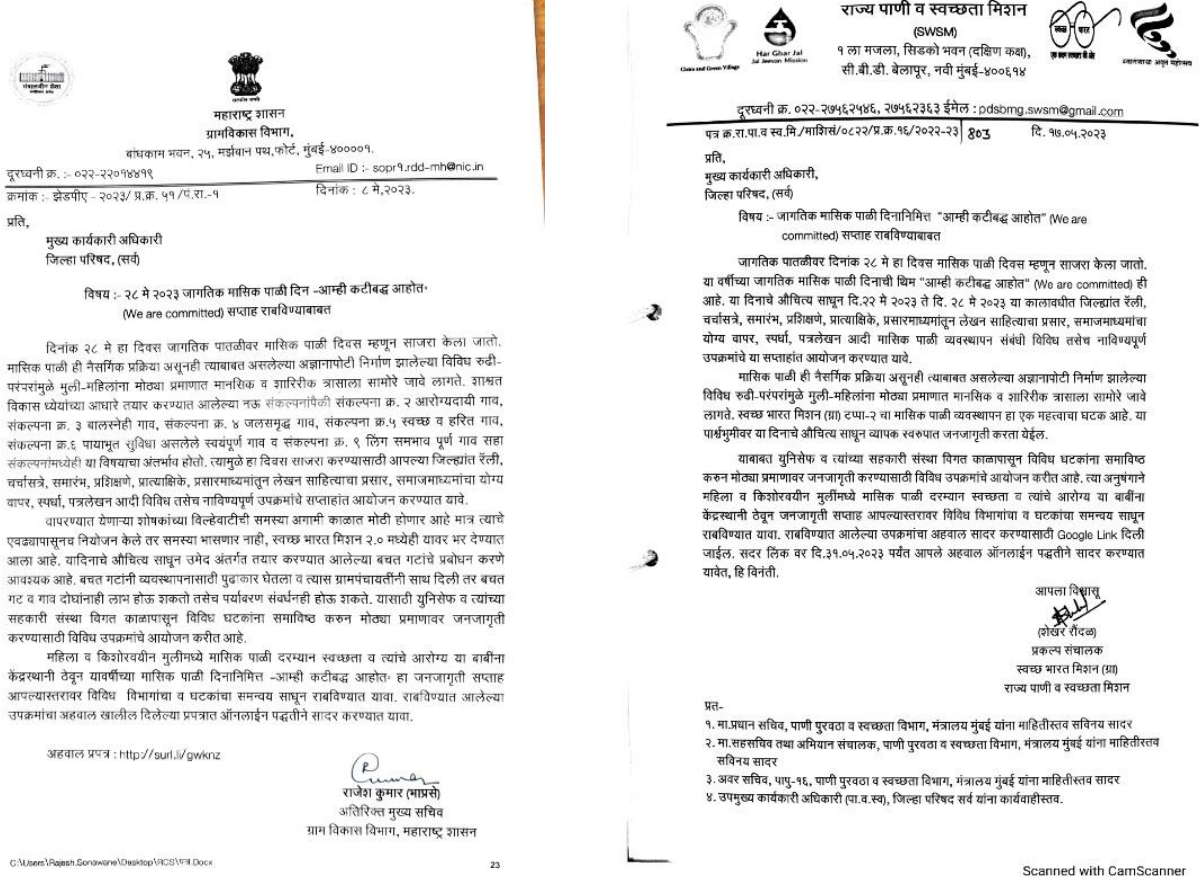


Figure 17 Circulars issued by RDD and WSSD departments of Government of Maharashtra (GoM)

This year's MH Week received active participation from Ahmednagar, Amravati, Chandrapur, Dhule, Gadchiroli, Kolhapur, Nagpur, Nashik, Usmanabad and Vardha districts of Maharashtra.

**DIRECT REACH 3830 and INDIRECT REACH 300909+**

### 3.1.4.5 District efforts in raising awareness for MH promotion



*Figure 18 Awareness Session on Menstrual Hygiene*



*Figure 19 Health Department, Education Department, Women and Child Welfare Department, and Women's Self-Help Groups, participated*

Zilla Parishad Nanded, CEO Smt. Varsha Thakur-Ghuge IAS, Zilla Parishad Jalna, CEO Smt. Varsha Meena IAS, Zilla Parishad Latur, CEO Shri. Abhinav Goyal IAS, Zilla Parishad Akola, CEO Shri. Saurabh Katiyar IAS, Zilla Parishad Raigad, CEO Dr. Kiran Patil, IAS, Zilla Parishad Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, CEO Shri. Vikas Meena IAS stressed the need of encouraging women's menstrual health and hygiene. They launched the "We Are Committed" campaign on World Menstruation Day to get everyone in society to help young women and girls recognise the value of cleanliness and health. Various departments and organizations, including the Health Department, Education Department, Women and Child Welfare Department, and Women's Self-Help Groups, participated in awareness weeks that were implemented at the district and state levels. The campaign's objectives were to refute myths, educate girls through debates and essay contests, and capitalize on social media. Both CEOs supported the implementation of events from May 22 to May 28 that highlighted the normal menstrual cycle, the importance of good cleanliness, and assistance for women during this time.



Figure 20 Zilla Parishad Nanded on MH Day 2023

### 3.1.4.6 Fostering Menstrual Hygiene Management through Public Healthcare Centres



Figure 19 IEC on Safe Disposal of Sanitary Napkin

From May 22nd to May 28th, 2023, the Public Healthcare Centre in Khairgaon, Runza, and Karanji of Yavatmal districts came together to celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM). The event focused on educating and engaging adolescent girls and mothers on the importance of proper menstrual hygiene practices. Various activities and discussions were organized to address the challenges and misconceptions surrounding menstruation. The aim was to empower

women with knowledge and resources for managing their menstrual health effectively. The initiative played a crucial role in promoting awareness, breaking taboos, and ensuring the well-being of girls and women in the community.

On May 25, 2023, an awareness session on menstrual hygiene management was conducted in the village of Wangani, located in the Kalyan taluka of Ambernath district. The session was organized as part of the Global Menstrual Hygiene Week. Various officials and representatives were present, including Information and Education Communication Consultant, School Health and Sanitation Consultant, Water Inspector, Sarpanch, Deputy Sarpanch, members of the Gram Panchayat, Gram Vikas Adhikari, CRP, Jal Suraksha Kendra representative, Asha worker, and women from the community. The aim of the session was to provide guidance on managing menstrual hygiene and facilitate a discussion among women in the Gram Sabha of Wangani.

### **3.1.4.7 Majhyavar Aleli Pali! (The Phase That Visited Me!) authored article by UNICEF Consultant**

Mr. Sandeep Tendolkar, a State Consultant at UNICEF, penned an article titled Majhyavar Aleli Pali! (The Phase That Visited Me!). The article sheds light on his personal experiences and insights regarding menstrual hygiene and health management. With his expertise, Mr. Tendolkar, UNICEF Consultant shares valuable knowledge and understanding on this crucial subject, aiming to raise awareness and promote better menstrual health practices. His article serves as a valuable resource to empower individuals and contribute to the overall well-being of women and girls. Read the article - [https://punhastreeuvach.blogspot.com/2023/05/blog-post\\_29.html](https://punhastreeuvach.blogspot.com/2023/05/blog-post_29.html)

### **3.1.4.8 URMEE's Empowerment Initiative: Transforming Communities through Menstrual Awareness and Education in Rural Pune**

*Figure 20 Sandeep Tendolkar's experience while travelling*

URMEE (Urban Rural Management Empowerment Establishment) conducted a pre-test to assess the needs and beliefs of students, parents, and Anganvadi Sevikas in villages of Mulshi, Pune, regarding menstruation. The purpose of this pre-test was to generate effective awareness sessions on menstrual reproductive organs, the menstrual cycle, health and hygiene, and menstrual rights. The target group for these sessions included girl students and their mothers, along with Anganvadi Sevikas. The potential reach of this initiative was 80 individuals.

The awareness sessions conducted by URMEE had a significant impact on the target group. Through comprehensive discussions and interactive sessions, students, parents, and Anganvadi Sevikas gained valuable knowledge about menstruation and related topics. The sessions helped dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation while empowering the participants with accurate information.

By focusing on menstrual reproductive organs, the menstrual cycle, health and hygiene practices, and menstrual rights, URMEE contributed to enhancing the overall understanding and awareness of menstruation among the participants. This knowledge is essential for promoting menstrual hygiene, breaking taboos, and fostering a positive attitude towards menstruation. Moreover, URMEE's initiative aimed to create lasting impact and transform attitudes and behaviors surrounding menstruation. By engaging both students and their mothers, the sessions encouraged open dialogue within families and communities, leading to improved support systems for menstrual health and well-being.

The potential reach of 80 individuals demonstrates the localized impact URMEE was able to achieve through targeted awareness sessions. By reaching out to specific communities and individuals in rural areas, URMEE has taken crucial steps towards addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalized populations regarding menstrual health.

Overall, URMEE's efforts have made a significant contribution to breaking the silence around menstruation, promoting menstrual hygiene practices, and empowering individuals with knowledge and awareness. By targeting students, parents, and Anganvadi Sevikas in Mulshi, Pune, URMEE has played a vital role in fostering a supportive environment for menstrual health and hygiene in rural communities.

### **3.1.4.9 SACRED's Empowering Journey: Catalyzing Change through Engaging Lady School Teachers and Tribal Women in Palghar District**

Society for Action in Creative Education and Development (SACRED) embarked on an inspiring initiative, engaging with lady school teachers in Palghar District to promote menstrual health and education. With a potential reach of 300 teachers, SACRED conducted impactful sessions aimed at equipping these educators with essential knowledge and skills to create a positive impact on their students' lives. By empowering teachers, SACRED ensures a ripple effect of transformative change within the community.

In addition to their work with lady school teachers, SACRED extended their efforts to uplift the lives of tribal women and adolescent girls in the Vasai block of Palghar. With a targeted group of 400 individuals, SACRED conducted three-hour sessions that addressed crucial topics related to menstrual health and education.. These sessions served as a platform for inspiring discussions, enabling women and girls to acquire knowledge, develop self-confidence, and challenge societal barriers.

The impact created by SACRED's interventions is profound. By empowering lady school teachers, SACRED helps nurture a generation of informed and motivated students who have access to quality education and holistic development. The transformative sessions conducted with community women, particularly from tribal backgrounds, empower them to overcome challenges, broaden their horizons, and take control of their own destinies. SACRED's work instills a sense of agency and self-belief, fostering a community where every individual's potential is recognized and nurtured.

Through their initiatives, SACRED has paved the way for social upliftment, bridging educational and gender disparities in Palghar District. By amplifying the voices and capabilities of teachers, women, and girls, SACRED propels a positive transformation that permeates through every aspect of the community's fabric.

### **3.1.4.10 CASA's Empowering Campaign: Revolutionizing Perspectives on Menstruation across India**

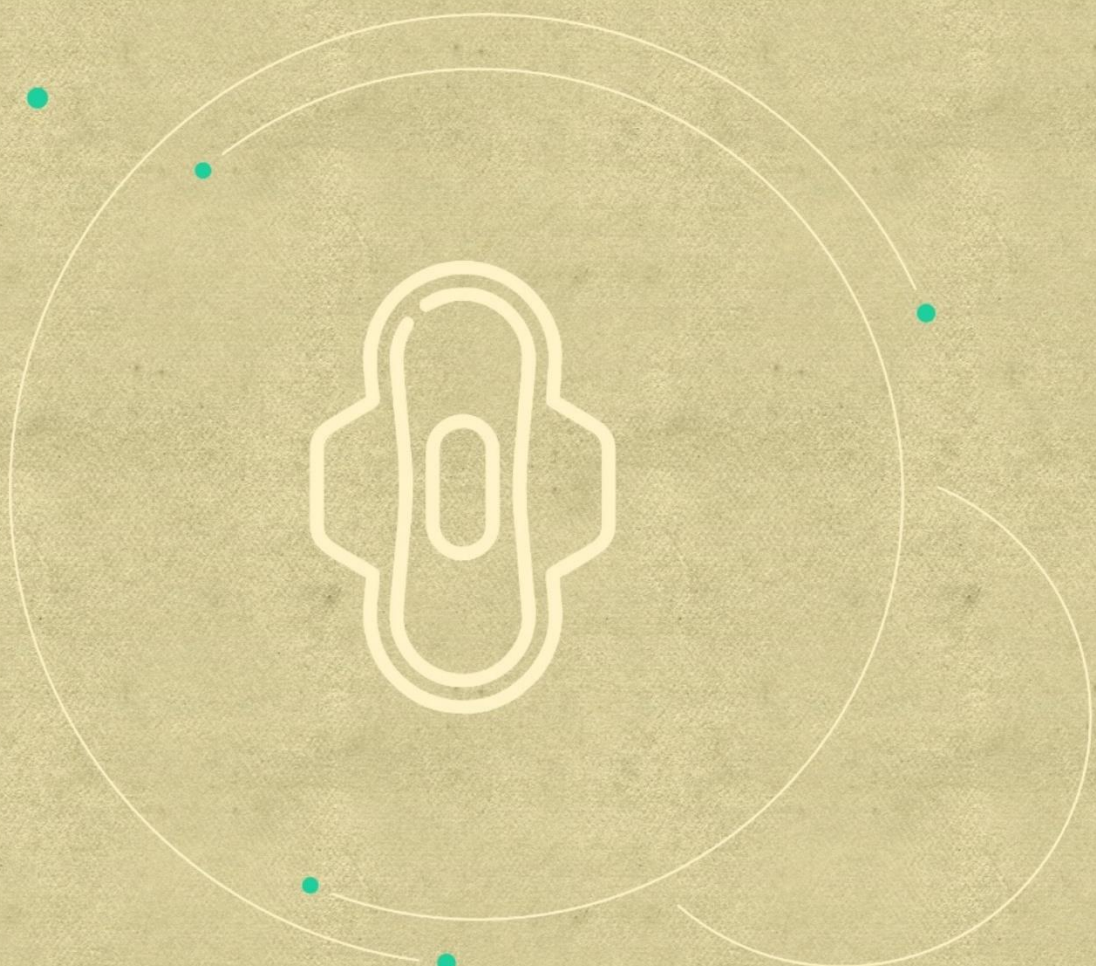
CASA, a trailblazing organization, undertook a nationwide awareness campaign aimed at destigmatizing menstruation and making it a normalized topic of conversation. With a keen focus on target groups including Employees-Seniors, mid-level managers, and grassroots coordinators, CASA successfully reached out to a diverse audience of over 100 individuals across the country.

CASA conducted a webinar for Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) staff to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene challenges and promote the goal of normalizing menstruation by 2030.

The webinar aimed to address issues such as access to menstrual products, comprehensive education, and period-friendly sanitation facilities. The session was initiated by one of the Governing Council members of Social Protection Thematic - MahaPECOnet Ms. Joycia Thorat. The objective was to contribute to a world where menstruation no longer leads to discrimination and all individuals have their menstrual hygiene needs met. By challenging age-old taboos and fostering an environment of open dialogue, CASA's campaign sparked a profound impact on the perception of menstruation. Through engaging workshops, insightful discussions, and interactive sessions, CASA empowered employees at various levels of organizations to embrace menstrual health as a natural and essential part of life. By disseminating accurate information and dispelling myths, CASA facilitated a transformative shift in attitudes towards menstruation.

The impact created by CASA's efforts is far-reaching. By educating and sensitizing Employees-Seniors, mid-level managers, and grassroots coordinators, CASA has laid the foundation for a culture of understanding and support within workplaces and communities. This normalization of menstruation not only promotes gender equality but also ensures that women feel valued, respected, and empowered in their personal and professional lives.





# **Transforming Menstrual Health through Innovative Approach to Intervention**



## 4 Transforming Menstrual Health through Innovative Approach to Interventions

Menstrual health is a complex issue that is influenced by both the physical and social surroundings. Women and girls require information, education, access to sanitation supplies, infrastructure for changing and washing, and personal hygiene facilities to ensure hygienic practices and pleasant experiences. As a result, developing interventions that match with these practices and attempt to eradicate misconceptions through creative and engaging approaches is critical. Interactive interventions with feedback systems resulted in significant outcomes by creating forums for debate and active engagement, thereby empowering individuals to make informed decisions. Creative interventions can establish discourse, modify attitudes, and promote open dialogue about menstruation by confronting social stigmas.<sup>5</sup> Public speaking on MHM is an effective way to raise awareness, educate communities, and empower individuals to make informed decisions. It can challenge stigmas, promote open dialogue, and advocate for improved access to resources and facilities.

### 4.1 Public Speaking on Menstrual Hygiene

Public speaking on menstrual hygiene plays a vital role in promoting and raising awareness about this essential aspect of women's health. Through effective communication, individuals can educate others, break down misconceptions, and address social stigmas surrounding menstruation. By promoting open dialogue, products we can create a supportive environment that encourages positive menstrual hygiene practices and fosters overall well-being.

#### 4.1.1 KSHAMATA to Uplift Women from Vulnerable Areas 4.1.1.2 Break the Bloody Silence Campaign

KSHAMATA launched its public campaign to mark the occasion of The World Menstrual Hygiene Day on 28th May. A simple biological act brings out pitchforks and knives. Menstruation builds barriers between girls/women and the rest of the world. It's not enough just to bleed once a month, tackle cramps and the functionality of daily being, but women and girls also become social pariahs, forced to give up education, income and respect. World Menstrual Hygiene Day serves as a reminder to be warriors for the better all-year round: Break stigmas and raise awareness about challenges faced in terms of menstrual hygiene and health, menstrual product and education. Take action with Kshamata, help fight for a future by buying our products and spreading the word. The proceeds from the sales will be used to train more women in shelter homes and red light/vulnerable communities.



Figure 20 Break the Bloody Silence Campaign

<sup>5</sup> Interventions to Improve Menstrual Health in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, Julie Hennegan. July 25, 2020.

## 4.1.2 Reassuring Women on Eliminating Menstrual Misconceptions: Indo-Global Service Society's Impact

### 4.1.1.2 Suposhan Project for empowerment through Menstrual Management in Rural Maharashtra



Figure 21 Interaction with women from villages on MH

menstruation by engaging Poshan Sakhi at the village level.

In rural communities, women often feel uncomfortable discussing menstrual issues, which hinders the spread of knowledge and the understanding of associated side effects among teenage girls. Additionally, women's participation in such programs can be challenging due to various barriers. The Menstruation Day program, therefore, involved Asha health workers and Anganwadi Sevika from the villages as key dignitaries, with Poshan Sakhi playing a crucial role in the program's organization. The Suposhan Project's intervention helped raise awareness about menstrual hygiene, debunk myths, and



Figure 22 Discussion with women on challenges and barriers in Menstruation

provide much-needed support to women and girls. By engaging with the community, the project aimed to break the silence surrounding menstruation and empower women to address their menstrual health needs confidently. The initiative contributed to promoting menstrual hygiene management and ensuring the well-being of women and girls in the Satara District's Karad and Patan Tahsil areas.

### 4.1.1.3 Suposhan Project Entrusting Girls and Women to Break Taboos in Urban Maharashtra



Figure 23 Session with Adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene

The Suposhan Project in Maharashtra organized a series of engaging activities aimed at empowering girls and women. One of the activities involved a drawing competition where young girls expressed their thoughts on menstruation-related taboos. In another session, girls were provided with crucial information on menstrual hygiene practices and the proper disposal of sanitary napkins.

The workshop also addressed the physical and mental changes women experience during menopause, fostering a better understanding among participants. A girl shared her realization that her mother's challenges were due to menopause, highlighting the impact of knowledge sharing. The program received positive feedback from Community-Based Organization (CBO) members and girls, emphasizing the importance of such initiatives. This successful endeavor under the Suposhan Project reinforces the significance of breaking taboos and promoting menstrual hygiene awareness among girls and women in Nagpur Slums.



Figure 24 Activities on Menstrual Hygiene awareness among girls

## DIRECT REACH 204 and INDIRECT REACH 89

### 4.1.3 CYDA's Menstrual Hygiene Revolution through impactful interventions

During the Menstrual Hygiene Week celebrated from May 24th to June 2nd, 2023, across Maharashtra, the Centre for Youth Development and Activities (CYDA) collaborated with partners like UNICEF, Atlas Copco, Mahindra CIE, Persistent Foundation, and Aurangabad Electrical to raise awareness and break the stigma surrounding menstruation.

#### 4.1.1.2 Breaking Taboos, Empowering Change through product launch

CYDA's Menstrual Hygiene Week featured a powerful panel discussion held at Patrakar Bhavan, Pune, bringing together experts and advocates in menstrual health. Esteemed speakers like Mr. Sandeep Tendolkar, Dr. Dipti Khambote, Shri Neeraj Kumar, Shrimati Surekha Lembhe, and Kumarika Ruchi Pandit shared insights, personal experiences, and strategies to promote menstrual hygiene practices




Figure 25 Panel discussion at Patrakar Bhavan in Pune on MH Day

and debunk myths. The discussion fostered important conversations and created a supportive community environment. Additionally, CYDA organized a significant Menstrual Hygiene Product Launch, introducing affordable and eco-friendly products made by women of 10 STITCH STUDIO, aiming to ensure comfort, safety, and sustainability.



Figure 26 Launch of a Menstrual Product by 10 Stitch Studio

**DIRECT REACH 105 and INDIRECT REACH 245+**



**Nurturing MH Advocates by  
Engaging Schools and Colleges  
in MHM Initiatives**

## 5. Nurturing MH Advocates by Engaging Schools and Colleges in MHM Initiatives

Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) efforts in schools and colleges are essential for fostering MH champions. By including thorough MHM instruction into the curriculum, children gain information and understanding about menstrual health, helping to eliminate the stigma associated with menstruation. Through this involvement, a supportive environment is fostered, encouraging young people to advocate for menstrual hygiene and contribute to a more informed and inclusive society.

### 5.1 Fostering Menstrual Hygiene Ambassadors from Schools and Colleges in MHM Campaigns

It has been successful to raise awareness and promote menstrual hygiene by including schools and colleges in MHM campaigns through a variety of activities such as rallies, essay/poetry/slogan writing competitions, debates, and painting competitions. These interactions give students a stage on which to share their ideas, creativity, and expertise on the subject, promoting a welcoming environment. Students who actively participate in these programmes become menstrual hygiene ambassadors, helping to remove taboos and advance a positive view of menstruation.

#### 5.1.1 Citizens Association for Child Rights efforts on Breaking Stigma and Promoting Menstrual Hygiene

##### 5.1.1.1 Expression through Art, Empowering Girls and Women to Break Menstrual Stigma



Figure 27 Expression through Art, Empowering Girls and Women

In an effort to normalize conversations around menstruation and empower girls and women, the activity "Expression through Art" was organized in Malad, Mumbai, and Wada, Palghar. With a total of 80 participants, including adolescent girls and tribal women, the activity involved poster competitions where participants expressed their thoughts and feelings about menstruation through creative drawings. By providing a platform for artistic expression, this initiative aimed to break the

silence and stigma surrounding menstruation, encouraging open dialogue and fostering a positive and supportive environment for girls and women to embrace their menstrual health.

**DIRECT REACH 80 and INDIRECT REACH 120+**

## 5.1.2 Vacha Trusts Engaging Activities for Menstrual Health, Hygiene, and Rights

### 5.1.2.1 Breaking Taboos and Empowering Girls through Film Screenings on Menstruation

Vacha Trusts organized the "Film Screening" activity in Mumbai and Thane (Kalyan-Dombivali) to eliminate taboos and deliver factual information about menstruation to girls. The showing of films such as 'Hello Periods' and 'Menstrupedia' established a safe and open platform for girls to explore their menstrual concerns, misconceptions, and experiences. Despite a decline in participant numbers owing to school vacations and space restrictions, the girls enjoyed the programme. Testimonials highlighted how the programme helped to debunk misunderstandings, clear up questions, and emphasize the significance of menstrual hygiene and nutrition.



Figure 28 Film Screening for Children on Eliminating Taboos related to MH



Figure 29 Discussing misunderstandings among young girls related to MH

## DIRECT REACH 273 and INDIRECT REACH 1638+

### 5.1.3 Competitions promoting Menstrual Hygiene in Schools

#### 5.1.3.1 Supported School Competitions on Menstrual Hygiene Management

With the support of UNICEF India, a competition was organized in schools to educate students about Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management (MHHM) and equip them with knowledge about the menstruation process. The competition included a range of activities such as essay writing, poster making, and quiz competitions, aimed at dispelling myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation. Through these engaging competitions, students not only gained a deeper understanding of MHHM but also developed the skills to challenge stereotypes, promote menstrual health, and create a supportive environment for all.



## 5.1.4 Annapurna Sevabhavi Sanstha's sessions on MH and Sanitary pads distribution

### 5.1.4.1 Supported School Competitions on Menstrual Hygiene Management

With the collaboration of Annapurna Sevabhavi Sanstha and WinsS Alliance, informative sessions on menstrual hygiene were conducted for adolescent girls, providing guidance on menstrual cycles and introducing sanitary pads.



Figure 30 Sanitary pad distribution and awareness among adolescent girls

**DIRECT REACH 5000 INDIRECT REACH 300**

## 5.1.5 Tech Mahindra Foundation driving the change in MHM

### 5.1.5.1 TMF Healthcare Academies: Breaking Taboos and Promoting Menstrual Health for Thousands of Beneficiaries

TMF Healthcare Academies recognize the importance of menstrual hygiene and are taking actions to break the taboos and raise awareness about menstrual health. So far, TMF have reached 6,766



Figure 31 Distribution of Sanitary Pads by TMF

beneficiaries, and have added over 1,000 more beneficiaries in MH week as part of the Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023 theme - "To make menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030" The activities were implemented in TechEdu Mumbai, Tingre Nagar, Wadgaon Sheri, Kasba Peth of Pune district, Bhiwandi, Turbhe and Mankhurd of Mumbai district.



Figure 32 Interaction with Students from TechEdu Mumbai.

## DIRECT REACH 441 and INDIRECT REACH 2646+

### 5.1.6 Kshitij Foundation promoting MHM through Writing Competitions

#### 5.1.6.1 Special Writing Competitions on MH Empowerment

**मासिक पाळी विशेष लेखन स्पर्धा**  
विषय:

- मासिक पाळी साठी मी केलेली मदत
- पालक म्हणून मासिक पाळी दिवसानिमित्त माझ्या मुलीसाठी लिहिलेले पत्र..
- माझ्या मुलीच्या मासिक पाळी अनुभवावरून, मी समाजासाठी उचललेले सकारात्मक पाऊल
- शिक्षक म्हणून विद्यार्थिनीच्या मासिक पाळी काळात माझे कर्तव्य

**लेख पाठवण्याची अंतिम तारीख : 23 मे 2023**

या स्पर्धेमध्ये स्त्री, पुरुष दोघेही भाग घेऊ शकता. सर्व वयोगटासाठी प्रवेश नि:शुल्क आहे.  
लेखनासाठी शब्दाचे बंधन नाही. भाषा : मराठी/हिंदी/इंग्रजी  
सर्व विजेत्यांना आणि सहभागी स्पर्धकांना प्रमाणपत्र देण्यात येईल.

संपर्क:  
सुप्रिया ताकभाते : 8806656870  
साक्षी जाधव : 7057619265

**मासिक पाळी विशेष ब्रेसलेट बनवणे स्पर्धा**

**फोटो पाठवण्याची अंतिम तारीख: 24 मे 2023**

सर्व वयोगटासाठी प्रवेश नि:शुल्क आहे.  
सर्व विजेत्यांना आणि सहभागी स्पर्धकांना इ प्रमाणपत्र देण्यात येईल.

संपर्क:  
अंकिता (कार्यक्रम प्रमुख): 8407916048  
राधा (समन्वयक) : 88888 16752

Figure 33 Activity IEC by Kshitij Foundation



Figure 34 Children performing skit on Menstrual Hygiene

essay about their responsibilities during menstruation. The tournament attracted both online and physical participation, including a total of 4,250 people in this inspiring project. Additionally, the foundation conducted a bracelet making competition, where participants showcased their creativity by crafting unique bracelets symbolizing menstrual health and empowerment.

On Menstrual Hygiene Day, the Kshitij Foundation hosted a one-of-a-kind writing competition in which participants were encouraged to share their opinions and experiences about menstruation. The competition attempted to shatter the silence and create open talks about menstruation by featuring a varied variety of subjects such as expressing support for menstruation, a parent's letter to a girl, good societal activities, and a teacher-student



Figure 35 Children explaining MH poster to women from communities

**DIRECT REACH 4250 INDIRECT REACH 25500+**

## 5.1.7 Dnyandeep Rashtriya Samajik V ShaikshaniK Vikas Sanstha empowering through MH sessions

### 5.1.7.1 Fostering Menstrual Health in Girls' Hostels through Awareness Session

As part of the Girls Menstruation Week, an impactful activity took place at Yashwantrao Chavan Girls' Hostel in Karad. The Gyandeep National Institute of Social and Educational Development distributed



Figure 36 Awareness session on MH in Yashwantrao Chavan Girls Hostel in Karad

sanitary pads, emphasizing the importance of menstrual hygiene. This initiative aimed to promote menstrual health and well-being among the girls residing in the hostel.



Figure 37 Hostel girls participated in Red Dot Challenge

**DIRECT REACH 450 INDIRECT REACH 2700+**



# **Building Community Engagement for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)**

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## 6. Building Community Engagement for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)

Engaging communities for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) involves involving local stakeholders and officials to improve MHM practices. By raising awareness and providing resources, communities can address challenges and create a supportive environment for menstruating individuals, promoting better menstrual health and hygiene. Menstrual hygiene encompasses the access, affordability, and availability of menstrual health products within communities. It involves ensuring that menstruating individuals have convenient access to a range of safe and affordable menstrual products such as sanitary pads, tampons, or menstrual cups.

### 6.1 Collaborating with Local Stakeholders and Officials to Foster Positive Change in MHM Practices

Collaboration with stakeholders and authorities is critical to effecting meaningful change in MHM practices. We increase awareness, address taboos, enhance product access, and promote proper MHM for all by working together.

#### 6.1.1 Kshitij Foundation moving forward in Menstrual Equity and Rights

##### 6.1.1.1 Empowering Adolescent Girls: Inauguration of Anandi Rooms for Menstrual Comfort



Figure 38 Inauguration of Anandi rooms at Salunkabai Raut College in Washim

In a significant initiative, the Kshitij Foundation organized the opening ceremony of Anandi Rooms at Salunkabai Raut College in Washim District, Maharashtra. These specially designed rooms aim to provide comfort and support to adolescent girls during menstruation. With a participation of 1000 individuals, the event marked the inauguration of dedicated spaces equipped with essential

facilities like clean drinking water, motivational slogans, napkin vending machines, pad disposal machines, first aid kits, soap, and handwash. These Anandi Rooms strive to create an environment where girls can manage their menstruation with ease and dignity, ensuring their overall well-being and empowerment.



Figure 39 Empowering adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene

### 6.1.1.2 A Collaborative Effort to Distribute Sanitary Napkins to Women



Figure 40 Sanitary pad distribution to disabled women and girls

In a meaningful collaboration with Viklang Seva Sansthan Chandrapur, our foundation successfully distributed sanitary pads to 500 participants, particularly focusing on disabled women and girls. This initiative aimed to highlight the significance of sanitary pads and promote menstrual hygiene among women, ensuring that they have access to the necessary resources for their well-being.

### 6.1.1.3 Promoting Menstrual Hygiene by Sanitary Pad Distribution in Rural and Tribal Areas

With a focus on enhancing menstrual hygiene, the foundation organized a remarkable activity in Pimpri village, Washim district. By providing free sanitary pads to 1000 women and girls in rural and



*Figure 41 Sanitary pad distribution and Awareness in Tribal areas of Pimpri village, Washim district*

tribal areas, it aimed to create awareness about menstrual hygiene and ensure access to necessary resources. This initiative aimed to empower women and girls by prioritizing their well-being and fostering positive change in these communities.

### 6.1.1.4 Period Tracker for Menstrual Health in Rural and Tribal Areas Empowering Women

A commitment to encourage better menstrual health, Kshitij Foundation created a period tracker to help people monitor and forecast their menstrual cycles. This activity intends to equip women in Maharashtra's rural and tribal communities with a useful tool for efficiently planning and managing their menstrual cycles. The tracker, which is accessible in English, Hindi, Marathi, and indigenous languages, would empower women by allowing them to take control of their menstrual health and make educated daily decisions.

**DIRECT REACH 2500 INDIRECT REACH 15000+**



## 6.1.2 Dnyandeep Rashtriya Samajik V ShaikshaniK Vikas Sanstha on strengthening MHM

### 6.1.2.1 Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Session to Anganwadi Workers



Figure 42 IEC on Menstrual Hygiene

during their periods, promoting better menstrual health.

In Karad, Dnyandeep Rashtriya Samajik V ShaikshaniK Vikas Sanstha organized an enlightening awareness session for Anganwadi workers, helper nurses, and other related professionals. Led by Dr. Smita Desai, the session shed light on the menstrual cycle, dispelling misunderstandings and misconceptions surrounding menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls. The aim was to equip these workers with the knowledge to address the challenges faced by girls



Figure 43 MH Awareness session with Anganwadi workers, Nurses by Dr Smita Desai

**DIRECT REACH 350 INDIRECT REACH 150**

### 6.1.3 Citizens Association for Child Rights Engaging Stakeholders in MH Empowerment

#### 6.1.3.1 Empowering Men through Bracelet Making activity, Abacus and Menstruation



Figure 44 Abacus and Menstruation activity by CACR in office and Tribal areas of Palghar

CACR organized a unique activity called "Abacus and Menstruation" at their office. Participants, including men, actively engaged in making bracelets with 28 white beads and 5 red beads, symbolizing the importance of May 28th. Similar activities were also conducted in urban areas of Mumbai and tribal areas of Palghar. Though initial hesitancy was observed among men, their participation gradually increased, promoting inclusivity and breaking the stigma surrounding menstruation.

#### 6.1.3.2 Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Sessions by Bridging the Gap

A series of awareness seminars conducted by CACR in Maharashtra's urban and rural regions to address the lack of awareness and information regarding menstruation hygiene. The physiology of menstruation, myths and taboos, cleanliness practices, and dietary suggestions were all discussed in these seminars. Slum dwellers, Anganwadi workers, sanitation workers, and teenage females were among those who attended the seminars. Sanitary pads were also donated as part of the seminars to promote good menstrual hygiene management.



Figure 45 Seminar with Anganwadi workers



Figure 46 Seminar with Sanitation workers and Teenage females



Figure 47 Sanitary pad distribution to slum dwellers

### 6.1.3.3 Streetplays Breaking Down Barriers related to Menstruation



Figure 48 Street play on Menstrual Hygiene in Mumbai eliminating taboos and myths

Street plays were performed in various areas around Mumbai in an effort to foster inclusive discussion and break down taboos surrounding menstruation. The plays emphasized the necessity of men's involvement in supporting and beginning dialogues about menstruation, with a focus on involving men in the conversation. The plays attempted to question societal

conventions and stimulate positive audience interaction through powerful performances and the use of placards.

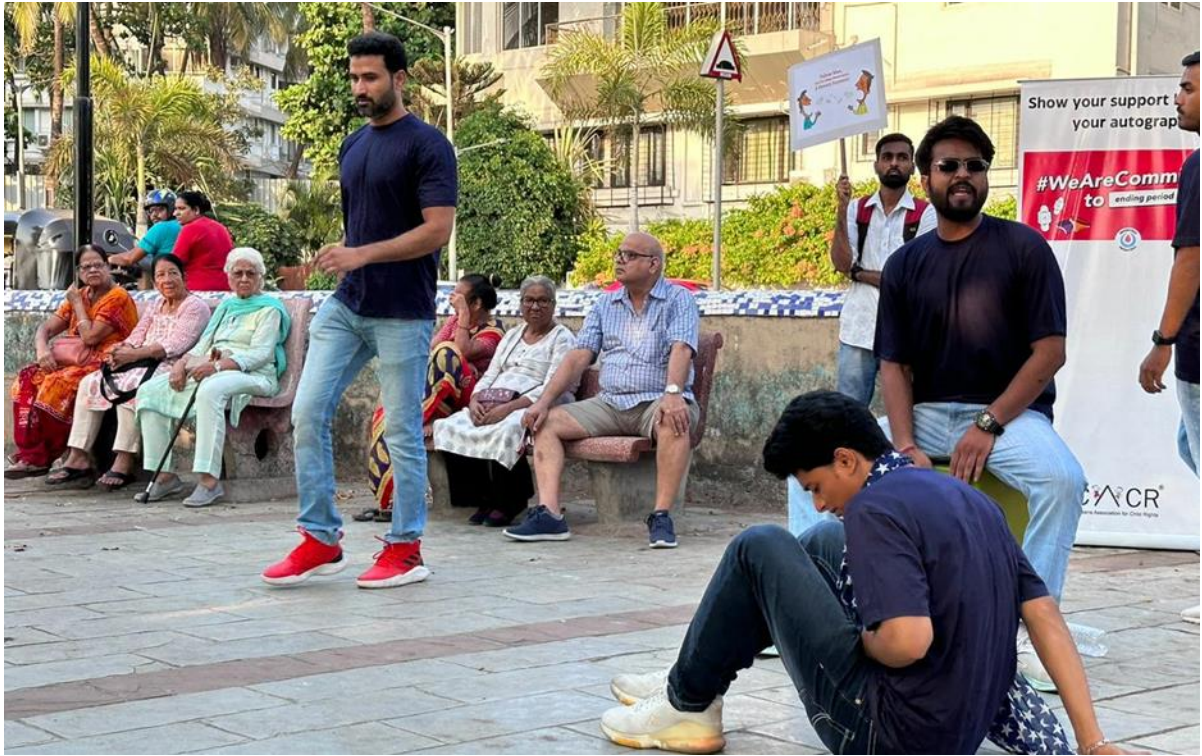


Figure 49 Breaking the taboos with positive audience interaction through street play

#### 6.1.3.4 Unite for Change Signature Campaign for Menstrual Support



Figure 50 MH Signature Campaign at public locations in Mumbai along with street play

CACR organized a signature campaign in public locations in Mumbai to raise awareness about period poverty and stimulate discussion about menstruation. Mobilizers met with the general public, including men, to address menstruation difficulties and collect signatures as a show of support. The program aimed to promote menstrual health and well-being by fighting cultural stigma and encouraging menstrual equality.



Figure 51 Youths and college students sharing thoughts on menstruation/periods

### 6.1.3.5 Building the Capacity of Social Mobilizers to Empower Change Agents

CACR held a capacity-building workshop for social mobilizers active in ongoing programmes, with an emphasis on menstrual hygiene management. The training covered common



Figure 52 Capacity building workshop for social mobilizers from Thane, Bhiwandi and Mumbra

misconceptions, myths, and taboos around menstruation, as well as logical explanations and activity-based sessions to give mobilizers with appropriate knowledge. The mobilizers are better qualified to advocate healthy menstruation practices in their communities in Thane, Bhiwandi, and Mumbra since they have increased their knowledge and abilities.

DIRECT REACH 990 INDIRECT REACH 5940+

#### 6.1.4 Vacha Trusts: Creating Meaningful MHM Touchpoints for Empowerment

##### 6.1.4.1 Unleashing Creativity: Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Poster Making



Figure 53 MH Poster making and crafts by communities in Mumbai and Thane areas

The poster-making exercise allowed females to express themselves creatively and expressively via visually attractive artwork on MHM. The exercise, which was preceded by an



*Figure 54 MH drawing activity among children to spread awareness*

instructive lecture to reinforce their understanding, allowed girls to raise awareness about menstruation hygiene in innovative and creative ways. The session got great feedback, with mothers expressing excitement at learning about reusable cloth pads and girls appreciating early menstrual education. This exercise was done in Mumbai and Thane (Kalyan-Dombivali), bringing to a greater community understanding of menstruation health.

#### **6.1.4.2 Empowering People through Resource Creation for Promoting MHM**

Vacha Trusts created resources to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene management (MHM). A total of 1,050 MHM booklets were meticulously made and delivered, each one including useful information and instruction. With addition, a cloth-based body mapping tool was created to aid with talks about menstruation health. Moreover, during the MH week, 50 colourful posters were made, effectively disseminating awareness about MHM across Mumbai and Thane, particularly in the Kalyan-Dombivali area. These materials are critical for encouraging menstrual hygiene and empowering members of the community.



Figure 55 Various MHM Activities with Women and Children from Mumbai, Thane, Kalyan-Dombivali



### 6.1.4.3 Encouraging Sanitary Pad Making for Menstrual Hygiene and Health

Vacha Trusts organized a transformative activity of sanitary pad making to raise awareness about safe and sustainable menstrual hygiene practices. Mothers and daughters came together in Mumbai and Thane (Kalyan-Dombivali), creating a supportive environment where they could openly share their experiences and overcome barriers to communication surrounding menstruation. This activity not only provided an opportunity for skill-building but also fostered empowerment and strengthened the bond between generations. By actively engaging in the process of sanitary pad making, participants were equipped with knowledge and resources to prioritize their menstrual health and well-being.



Figure 56 Sanitary pad making activity among mothers and daughters in Mumbai and Thane

**DIRECT REACH 228 INDIRECT REACH 1138+**

## 6.1.5 Grameen First Strengthening Menstrual Hygiene in Remotest Locations

### 6.1.5.1 Menstrual Hygiene Awareness and Pad Distribution in Rural Communities



Figure 57 Sanitary pad distribution in Tribal areas



Figure 58 Discussions on health and hygiene among women from villages

Grameen First conducted offline sessions in multiple villages of Mokhada, including Warghadpada, Ghosali, Ghatkarpada, Ghosali, Ghatkarpada, Dharechpada, Ambepana, Tribal Threads Mokhada staff, Talyachivadi, Ghomghar, Vashind, Saprevadi, Dudhgaon, Vahyachi vadi. The goal was to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene and promote the use of sanitary pads among women. During the sessions, Grameen First discussed the importance of health and hygiene during periods, educated women on

proper pad usage and disposal, and provided information on nutrition and care during menstruation. It also emphasized the significance of handwashing with soap after changing pads to prevent the spread of illness. Each woman received one packet of sanitary pads and two bars of soap to support their hygiene practices. The community, including the Anganwadi Sevika, Local women, and Tribal Threads Mokhada staff, showed great support and attendance. The women expressed gratitude for the session, especially for learning about proper pad disposal. Through this activity, It was aimed to empower women with knowledge and resources to improve their menstrual hygiene practices and overall well-being.

## 6.1.6 Centre for Youth Development and Activities Encouraging Stakeholders on prioritizing Menstrual Hygiene and Management

### 6.1.6.1 Unleashing Creative Engagements on MHM and Inspire Awareness

CYDA organized a range of engaging competitions to promote awareness and understanding about menstrual health. One such campaign was a red dot, where participants showcased their painted red dot on hand that captured the essence of menstrual hygiene management. They also organized a quiz competition- "Chalta Bolta", testing participants' knowledge about menstrual health, hygiene practices, and related facts. The YRC youths creatively crafted a street play on menstrual hygiene. It was applauded by the participants.

### 6.1.6.2 Celebrating Menstrual Hygiene Management in Rural Maharashtra



Figure 59 MH Day Celebrations at Hanuman Basti



Figure 60 MH Day celebration in Marunji taluka

MHM Day was celebrated at Hanuman Basti (Gram Panchayat Walhe) and Marunji village in Mulshi taluka on May 30, 2023. Honorable Shri Anil Chachar highlighted the significance of the day and acknowledged that menstruation was a taboo subject. A total of 40 participants, including parents, adolescent girls, and men, attended the event. Rekha Buchade, a volunteer, guided the attendees with valuable information on menstrual hygiene. The sarpanch made a remarkable announcement during the event, introducing eco-friendly sanitary disposal machines and vending machines in the village.

### 6.1.6.3 Celebrating Menstrual Hygiene Management in Urban

The Tadiwala Centre CRC celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Day with two distinguished guests, Dr. Jagtap and Mrs. Kanchan from 10stitch. Dr. Jagtap conducted an insightful question and answer session with women, adolescent girls, and boys, emphasizing the importance of maintaining proper hygiene and following a healthy diet during this time. Mrs. Kanchan introduced the concept of 'cotton pads' to the audience, shedding light on their significance for menstrual hygiene. The Red Dot Campaign was a meaningful way to engage the participants and remind them of

the significance of this day. Youth4Change organized a #CrimsonWeek in Pune with the youths, spreading awareness and encouraging open conversations.



Figure 61 Session by Dr Jagtap and Mrs Kanchan on Menstrual Hygiene and introducing cotton pads

**DIRECT REACH 5616 INDIRECT REACH 33696+**

### **6.1.7 Maharashtra Promoting Safe Menstruation Through MHM Incultation**

#### **6.1.7.1 Empowering Change: UNICEF Maharashtra's MHM Initiatives for Safe Menstruation**

Partner organizations of UNICEF Maharashtra carried out a variety of events across Maharashtra to encourage important behavioral changes, raise awareness about period poverty, menstrual hygiene, sustainable products and disposal and period-friendly toilets. Rallies, panel discussions, melawas (gatherings), training, demonstrations, essay writing, letter writing, and print media pieces were among the events. These initiatives collectively lead to significant behavioral changes among recipients by raising awareness, breaking taboos, and establishing good attitudes towards menstruation health. These activities, which aligned with the theme of MH Day 2023, "We Are Committed," seek to foster a culture of empathy, support, and action towards menstrual hygiene, period-friendly infrastructure, and tackling period poverty. It also promotes the accessibility and availability of Menstrual knowledge and products to the last mile with health concerned disposal arrangements.



**दिन विशेष**  
- संदीप तेंडोल्कर

२०१४ पासून जागतिक पातळीवर २८ मे हा मासिक पाळी दिन म्हणून साजरा केला जातो. त्यानिमित्त...

आजच्या पाटीवर स्कॉटलंड हा एकमेव देश आहे ज्याने मासिक पाळीच्या व्यवस्थापनासाठी लागणाऱ्या शोषकांना (सॅनिटरी पॅड, टॉयम) कायदेशीर मजदारीत व व्याजां आवश्यक असलेल्या त्यांनी शोषक मोकळ्या होतील असा कायदा केला. २०१७ पासून मोनिका लेनॉन यांनी मासिक पाळी गरिबी मुक्ती (पॅडिंग थिअरिअल पॉलंडी) हे बील आणले व त्याचा विधेने पाठपुरावा केला. २०२० मध्ये



शेवटी हे बील मंजूर झाले व पाळी वेगळ्याच महिला, टुन्सजॅन्स, एलजीबीटी यांच्यासाठी मोकळ्या शोषक उपलब्ध होण्याचा मार्ग मोकळा झाला. ती आता शासनाची जबाबदारी बनली आहे. जगातील बहुतांश देशांत मासिक पाळीच्या शोषकांना 'शौक' मानले जात आहे व त्यावर टॅक्स लावले जात आहेत. अमेरिकेत १० टक्के टॅक्स आहे तर हंगेरीत २० टक्के, बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पदाओचा नारा देणारा व महिलांच्या समानाच्या बाता मागणारा आपला भारताही १२ टक्के जीएसटी लावत आहे. जगभरात याला 'मासिक पाळी टॅक्स' म्हटले जात आहे. त्रानकरकर संस्थानात मागास समाजातील वयात आलेल्या महिलांना १९२५ पर्यंत स्तनकर (ब्रेस्ट टॅक्स) द्यावा लागायचा,

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त्याचीच आडवण हा 'मासिक पाळी टॅक्स' करून देतो. मासिक पाळी आरोग्यीय चार बाबीत होण्याचा विषय बनलेला नसला तरी जगातील बहुतांश देश याद्वारेच पैसा कमवत आहेत, पण पाळीच्या जावानून महिलांची मुक्ता करण्यासाठी काही ठोस कसतापा दिसत नाहीत. अर्थात 'मासिक पाळी गरिबी' ही केवळ आर्थिक बाब नसून ती वैचारिक दिसाळखोरी आहे, किंबहुना वैचारिक दिसाळखोरीच मोठ्या प्रमाणात आहे! २०१४ पासून जागतिक पातळीवर २८ मे हा मासिक पाळी दिन म्हणून साजरा केला जातो, पण त्याही अगोदर सातशे वर्षांपूर्वी म्हणजे चौदाव्या शतकात महाभारत संत सोपराबाई यांनी पाळीबाबत जनजागृती केली. अर्थातून त्यांनी देहाच्या

विटाळासा व मानवी जन्माचा कसा संबंध आहे हे वैज्ञानिक सत्य सांगितले. आपण २१ व्या शतकात आहोत, पण अजूनही पाळीचा कास महिलांच्या मळामुळात गुंडाळून ठेवत आहोत. १४ व्या शतकात ज्याच उद्देख 'सोपराबाई विटाळ' असा करतात, आज २१ व्या शतकात विकलेला समाज त्याला 'प्रॉब्लेम' म्हणतो पण उद्देख काय तो फक्त झाला आहे, बाकी मानसिकता तीच आहे. समाज म्हणून आपण किती दूर आहोत याचा हा पुरावा आपण दर महिन्यालाच देतो! केवळ भारतातच नव्हे तर जगभरात महिला व पाळी यांचा संबंध लावून महिलांना दुर्दम दर्जाची व अपमानास्पद वागवणूक दिली जाते. पाळीमुळे महिलांना अपवित्र न मानण्याबाबत काही धर्मग्रंथांनी सूचना केली

आहे, पण बहुतांश धर्माच्या कर्मठ धर्मगुरूंनी पाळीच्या काळात महिलांना धार्मिक कार्यापासून दूर ठेवून त्या अपवित्र असल्याचे दाखवून दिले. जगभरात धर्माचा जो पगडा आहे, तो पाहला जगातील पातळीकरून मासिक पाळीच्या रक्षणात महिलांची कोडी का होवे हे लक्षात घेते. विवेकाशील विनवदी कोणातही धर्म आणत असे म्हणत नाही, महिलांच्या दर्जाची कोणीही लक्षात घेत अनेक धर्मांचा आदर्शचि विचार उचलून घेतले. अशावेळी मासिक पाळी ही नैसर्गिक प्रक्रिया आहे, ती न आडवण सध्या उद्भवताना, पण ती आडवणानेही महिलांना मानाक समस्थाना समोरे जावे लागते. कोणत्याही शोषकाबाबत अज्ञान अनेक संस्कारांना जन्म देते. पाळीबाबत तसंच आहे. जेव्हा पाळीची संविधान विटाळाच्या परंपरा जुनू झाल्या असतील तेव्हा कोणतेच धर्माबाबत अज्ञान असेल, आज तर विटाळातून सर्व कोडे उदासून घेतले जावे. तरीही आपण सध्या रूढी परंपरांचे पडक होणार असून तर खरंच आपण सुधारतो आहोत का, हे ज्याचे त्याने तपासून घेतले पाहिजे. आधुनिकता नव्हे तर काही समाज असेही आहेत ती मुलीला पाळी आली की तो दिवस साजरा करतात.

(पान ८ वर)

(पान ७ वरून)

पहिली पाळी आचाराने मुलीला साठी भेट देण्याची परंपराही काही समाजांत आहे. मग आम्हांचे आधुनिकीय बांधणे, हे समाज सारस प्रगतीशील नाहीत का? त्याचे यत्न हे त्यांच्या परंपरेचा भाग आहे. याबाबत अर्थ की त्यांच्या पूर्वजांनी वैज्ञानिक दृष्टीकोन अंगिकारला होत नाही. आज शिक्षणाच्या प्रवाहात नांदत असलेला समाजही जेव्हा पाळीची संविधान रूढी परंपरेचा आहे, त्या स्वरूपात किंवा बदलत्या स्वरूपात रूढीकरण करून अंगिकार करताना दिसतो, तेव्हा वैचारिक दिसाळखोरीची चिन्हात येते! आज महिला सक्षमतेचा दिवस आहे. त्यांना कान- बंधनातून धरून घराघर घराघर पाहतां लागले. पण पाळीच्या व्यवस्थापनाची न्याय्यतेची याच व पाळीची संविधान असलेल्या रूढी-परंपरा यांमुळे पाळी आली की त्यांचा थरकाप उठतो. त्यातून पाळीचे 'प्रॉब्लेम' म्हणूनच पाहिले जाते. गुजरातमधील एका धार्मिक संस्थेकडून चालविल्या जाणाऱ्या कॉलेजमध्ये पाळी आलेल्या मुलींना जेवणासाठी बाजूला बसविले जाते. एवढेच नव्हे एका धार्मिक कार्यक्रमाप्रसंगी पाळी कर

# पाळी: थरकाप आणि सन्मान !

आलेली नाही ना याची खात्री करण्यासाठी त्यांची अंतर्मुख करून विचारवणी केली गेली. त्यांची निवृत्ती झाली होती व कायदेशीर कायदाही. पण त्या मुलींना जो मासिक कास भोगावा लागतो तो मासिक कास महिलांना सर्वत्र भोगावा लागतो. हे आपण समाज म्हणून लक्षात घ्यायला हवे. कामगार ठिकाणी महिलांची पाळी व्यवस्थापनाची कोणतीही व्यवस्था नसते. एवढेच नव्हे, शाळांमधील नसते. गुड गव्हर्नन्सच्या गण्य कल्याणा संस्थेची कार्यालयातही सुविधांचा दुष्काळ दिसतो. सुनिश्चिती एक अडवलेला असा सांगतो की, या काळात शाळेन न जाणाऱ्या मुलींची संख्या ६० ते ७० टक्के आहे. कायल ८० टक्के शाळांमध्ये पाळीच्या

व्यवस्थापनासाठी लागणाऱ्या सुविधा उपलब्ध नाहीत. अशा शाळांमधील महिला शिक्षकांची बाबी कुठेच नसताना समाजाची जागरूकता नाही. महाभारत विद्याना समान देण्याची मोहीम सोपरापुरतील ज्ञानेश्वर विद्यालयातून पुन्हा सुरू केली. त्याचा प्रतिकार देऊन कोसळणारील हेरवध नाचण्याचा पण सांगण्याबाबत प्रामाणिक तसा आडवण केली. पुढे महाभारत शासनाची त्याबाबत एक परिषदही काढले. पुढे महाभारत शासनाची महिलांचे तिच्या इच्छेविरोधात कुणू पुन्हा सुरू. बांगळा फोडू नयेत. मंगळसूर काढू नये वरी बाबी यात आहेत. अर्थात सुधारते महिलांचा व पुरुषांचा असाही एक नर्

आहे की, या नवऱ्याच्या म्हणजे मालकाच्या नावाने घेतल्या जाणाऱ्या या शोषका समाजजनक मानत नाही. ही मुलांनीची असा मानतो, कुलीतरी मालक आहे याचा अर्थ कुलीतरी मुलम आहे असा धारणाही पाहिले. यांचा सार्वजनिक माझ्या दृष्टीने तिच्या दृष्टेचा विचार केला जावा हा एवढाच मुद्दा महत्त्वाचा आहे. योग्य राज्याने तर विधानसभेत याची चर्चा कायबाबत कायदा करण्याचे पाऊल टाकते. त्यामुळे विधवा समानासाठी अशा प्रकारे कायदा करणारे ते पाहिलेच राज्य बनणार आहे. पण काय सन्मान मिळविण्यासाठी महिलांना विद्या होण्याची वाट पाहिली लागणार आहे? क्वीला जन्मापासून निरपेक्ष म्हणजे पाळी वेगळ्या व पाळी वेगळ्यातही कोणे पाळी वेगळ्यात देवून आणणित कलवारी व्यवस्था केले आहे तेव्हा हे असले प्रयोग म्हणजे केवळ पुढेकळ विद्या देखावण्या म्हणजे लागतील. जर समाजाचा खरंच महिलांचा समाज कायबाबत असेल तर त्यांना समजून घ्यायला हवं. पाळीच्या काळात त्यांची होणारी कुठेच पाळी जन्मून त्यावर उपाय करायला हवेत, पाळीच्या काळात त्यांच्यात होणाऱ्या हार्मोनल बदलांमुळे त्यांच्या वर्तनात होणारा बदल लक्षात

घ्यायला हवा. त्यांना मानसिक आधार घ्यायला हवा. त्यांच्या पाळीची संविधान आजारवार केलीच उपाय करायला हवेत. त्यांना सध्या-आजवर कोणत्याही स्वरूपात अर्थीय मानले पाहिजे. त्यांचा अपमान होतले. त्यांच्या मनात लक्षात उठवून होतले अशी टीका टीकाणी धांवण्यातही आणि म्हणजे महिलांच्यासाठी लागणाऱ्या सुविधा उपलब्ध व्हायला हव्यात. या सर्वांसाठी मासिक पाळी हा विषय समजून घेतला पाहिजे. रूढी-पुरुष संवादीच हा संविधान विषय आहे. याबाबत मोकळ्याने बोलणे घेतले पाहिजे, मासिक पाळीचा विषय शाळांमूळ व मुली या दोघांनाही कळविण्याची धोरणिकाय घेता पाहिजे. मासिक पाळीचे मानवी दृष्टिकोनातून पाहिले पाहिजे. कोणत्याही महिलांच्या पाळी वेगळ्याच्या दुख्खा कल्पनेने धरक्या उरत असेल तर त्यांचा समाज होणार नाही व आणगी समाज म्हणून मानात वरू आहोत हे लक्षात घ्यायला हवं. स्कॉटलंडमधील किता निरवयला देतात मानवीय संस्कार असायला पाहिजे.

Figure 62 Sharing experiences related to MH by Mr. Sandeep Tendolkar

## 6.1.8 Abhinav Bahuddeshiya Kala Manch Seeding Positive Menstruation Change

### 6.1.8.1 Promoting Menstrual Hygiene in Adivasi Areas of Gadchiroli to Empower Tribal Women

On the occasion of International Menstrual Hygiene Day, Abhinav Bahuddeshiya Kala Manch and Srujna organized an informative session on menstrual hygiene for tribal women in the Adivasi areas of Mouza-Dawandi and Mouza-Jambhali (Patil Tola) in Armori taluka, Gadchiroli district. The session



Figure 63 Informative session on menstrual hygiene among tribal women in Adivasi areas



Figure 64 Informative session on menstrual hygiene and sanitary pad distribution

focused on providing guidance on menstruation, cleanliness, diet, and related information, along with the distribution of sanitary pads. The event was attended by Ms. Jumanake, Ms. Pada, Ms. Kirange (Sarpanch), ASHA worker, Mr. Akil Sheikh (Secretary of Abhinav Bahuddeshiya Kala Manch Gadchiroli), and Ms. Mandira Kirange and Ms. Premila Kumoti (organizers).

### 6.1.9 Initiatives by National Institute for Sustainable Development (NISD)

#### 6.1.9.1 Promoting Menstrual Hygiene in Junnar and Sangamner Blocks



Figure 65 Empowering tribal women of Junnar and Sangamner on Menstrual Hygiene

The National Institute for Sustainable Development (NISD) organized impactful programs in the tribal villages of Junnar block and Sangamner block to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene and provide support to women. These initiatives included informative sessions, distribution of sanitary pads, and



Figure 66 Sanitary pad distribution among adolescent girls

engaging programs tailored specifically for the tribal communities. By addressing the crucial issue of menstrual hygiene and providing necessary resources, NISD aimed to empower women in these marginalized communities and contribute to their overall well-being.

### 6.1.10 Rise Infinity Foundation Empowering Tribal Women on MHM

#### 6.1.10.1 Empowering Women and Girls: Menstrual Health Awareness Sessions in Vasai

Awareness sessions were held in Vasai at Adivasi Pada, Rangaon, and Ambedkar Nagar for women and adolescent girls. The aim was to educate about menstrual health, hygiene, and rights. Over 50 participants attended, many attending such a session for the first time. Initially shy, the women gradually opened up and asked questions. The girls remained quiet, likely due to the presence of women. After the session, women sought further information and were advised to consult a gynecologist. The girls expressed interest in a separate session and were willing to invite their friends. These sessions successfully raised awareness and addressed knowledge gaps in menstrual health and hygiene.



Figure 67 Awareness sessions in Vasai Adivasi pada and Ambedkar Nagar with women and adolescent girls

### 6.1.11 Savitrichi Leki Mahila Vikas Sanstha from Menstruation to Health

#### 6.1.11.1 HB testing and Menstruation Awareness in Kolhapur

Savitrichi Leki Mahila Vikas Sanstha, Sadoli Kha, Kolhapur provided Information about menstrual cycles and nutrition for women, as well as conducting HB tests. The discussions about menstrual cycles were done with girls from the age of 12, and information has been shared.



Figure 68 Discussions with teenage girls and HB Tests along with information on MH and Nutrition in Sadoli Kha of Kolhapur



## 6.1.12 CPSF Sustainable initiatives in Palghar District

### 6.1.12.1 Raising awareness on MHM and Nutrition to distribution of consumables

Common People Social Foundation (CPSFNGO) took a sustainable initiative to promote menstrual hygiene and cleanliness among women of various age groups in the tribal area of Palghar district. Volunteers distributed 50 reusable pads to girls and women, addressing disposal issues. Additionally, the organization provided food distribution to supplement nutrition for the villagers.



Figure 69 Menstrual Hygiene and Cleanliness discussion in tribal areas of Palghar district and sanitary pads distribution



**Amplifying Impact  
Through Social and Print  
Platforms**





# मासिक पाळीतील गैरसमज दूर करा

जि.प.चे 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' अभियान

स्वच्छ भारत मिशन कार्यक्रमा अंतर्गत दि. २८ मे हा दिवस जागतिक मासिक पाळी दिवस म्हणून साजरा करण्यात येतो. महाराष्ट्रात 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' ही संकेतवाचक चेरुन विज्ञान दि. २२ ते २८ मे दरम्यान विविध कार्यक्रमांचे माध्यमरूप हा स्वच्छ भारत कार्यक्रमाचे सर्वोच्च पाळीतील गैरसमजाबाबत जागरूक करण्याचे आव्हान ठरविले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई.

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मासिक पाळी जागृत राहणे... या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई.

# जागतिक मासिक पाळी दिनानिमित्त 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' ही थीम

२२ मे ते २८ मे या कालावधीत जनजागृती सप्ताह राबविणार - मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी अभिनव गोयल

देशोन्नती युवसंस्थान...

स्वरूप - जागतिक पाळी दिवस २८ मे हा दिवस मासिक पाळी दिवस म्हणून साजरा केला जातो. जागतिक मासिक पाळी दिवसात 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' ही या दिवसाची थीम असणार आहे. या दिवसाचे जागतिक स्वरूप दि. २२ ते २८ मे या कालावधीत विज्ञान मासिक पाळी दिवस म्हणून साजरा केला जातो. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई.

आत्मपेटी निर्माण झालेला शरीर ही पर्यायाने मुली-पुरुषांना मजबूत प्रमाणित करतो. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई.

## मासिक पाळी व्यवस्थापनाविषयी स्नेहल चौधरी यांचे आज व्याख्यान

नांदेड (प्रतिनिधी) - व्यवस्थापन याविषयी जागतिक मासिक पाळी व्याख्यान ठेवण्यात आले दिनामितीत आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहे. ही थीम घेऊन राज्यात २२ ते २८ मे दरम्यान जनजागृती सप्ताह राबवल्या जात आहे. त्या आचित्याने आज गृहकार्य दिनांक २५ पद्धतीने त्या महिलांशी संवाद साधणार आहोत, अशी माहिती जिल्हा ग्रामीण विकास यंत्रणेचे प्रकल्प संचालक डॉ. संजय तुलाके, जिल्हा पाणी व स्वच्छता मिशनचे अधिकारी तथा प्रकल्प संचालक तथा उपमुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी नारायण मिसाळ व जिल्हा फाउंडेशनच्या संस्थापक स्नेहल चौधरी यांचे मासिक पाळी



## जागतिक मासिक पाळी दिनानिमित्त 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' ही थीम

स्वरूप (प. वेदा) ..... जागतिक पाळी दिवस २८ मे हा दिवस मासिक पाळी दिवस म्हणून साजरा केला जातो. जागतिक मासिक पाळी दिवसात 'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' ही या दिवसाची थीम असणार आहे. या दिवसाचे जागतिक स्वरूप दि. २२ ते २८ मे या कालावधीत विज्ञान मासिक पाळी दिवस म्हणून साजरा केला जातो. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई. या दिवसात अनेक कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन केले जाई.

## मातृभूमि

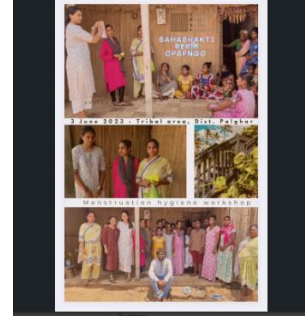
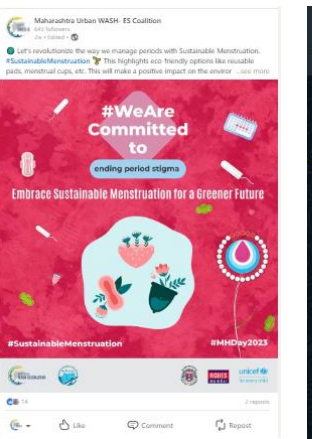
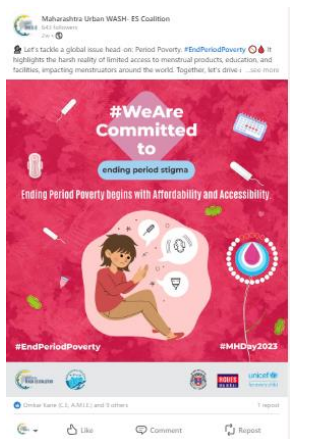
### मासिक पाळी जनजागृती सप्ताहाचे आयोजन

'आम्ही कटिबद्ध आहोत' नवी थीम - सीईओ कटियार

मातृभूमि वृत्तपत्र

१. अकोला, दि. २५

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देशोन्नती सुपोषण प्रकल्पांतर्गत गावागावात मासिक पाळी व स्वच्छता दिनाचे आयोजन

इंदो कोळ सोशल सर्विस सोसायटी संस्थापक अक्षय देसायने शुभारंभ...

देशोन्नती सुपोषण प्रकल्पांतर्गत गावागावात मासिक पाळी व स्वच्छता दिनाचे आयोजन



## In Media

### Kshitij Foundation

<https://nandednewslive.com/2023/05/24/lecture-by-snehal-chaudhary-on-thursday-on-menstrual-cycle-management/>

### Nanded Zilla Parishd

<https://nandednewslive.com/2023/05/22/every-element-of-the-society-should-come-forward-to-convince-adolescent-girls-and-women-about-hygiene-health-and-its-importance-during-menstruation/>

### Mr. Sandeep Tendolkar, UNICEF Maharashtra

[https://punhastreeuvach.blogspot.com/2023/05/blog-post\\_29.html](https://punhastreeuvach.blogspot.com/2023/05/blog-post_29.html)

### Aurangabad Zilla Parishad

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid0mLWTWAar7U8JhZNhXz38f6pm6mG3LZC675uRR88EojSrr2jpzPCUmAy7rjkwH6VLI&id=100090196280672&mibextid=Nif5oz](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0mLWTWAar7U8JhZNhXz38f6pm6mG3LZC675uRR88EojSrr2jpzPCUmAy7rjkwH6VLI&id=100090196280672&mibextid=Nif5oz)

## Way forward

- Based on the collaborative efforts and activities carried out during Menstrual Hygiene Week 2023, several key recommendations and a way forward can be outlined to ensure sustained progress in improving menstrual hygiene and health in Maharashtra:
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Building upon the successful partnerships formed during Menstrual Hygiene Week, it is essential to foster and strengthen collaborations between government agencies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and community groups. This will create a comprehensive network that can collectively address menstrual hygiene challenges and drive sustainable change.
- **Advocacy and Policy Support:** To institutionalize menstrual hygiene as a priority, there is a need for sustained advocacy efforts. Partner organizations, along with Maha-UWES-C, can continue engaging with decision-makers at the state and local levels to promote policies that prioritize menstrual hygiene education, infrastructure, and access to affordable menstrual products.
- **Continued Capacity Building:** Capacity building initiatives should be an ongoing effort, targeting women's groups, community leaders, healthcare professionals, and educators. By equipping these stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to address menstrual hygiene effectively, they can serve as advocates and disseminate information within their respective communities.
- **Sustainable Menstrual Product Distribution:** Access to affordable and sustainable menstrual products is crucial. Partner organizations should explore innovative solutions such as establishing local production units, promoting eco-friendly options, and advocating for subsidies or tax exemptions on menstrual products to ensure their affordability and availability to all.

- **Education and Awareness:** Comprehensive menstrual hygiene education should be integrated into school curricula to address the knowledge gap and dispel myths and taboos surrounding menstruation. Additionally, awareness campaigns targeting both urban and rural areas should be continued to foster a supportive and inclusive environment for menstrual health.
- **Research and Data Collection:** To better understand the existing challenges and measure the impact of interventions, it is essential to invest in research and data collection related to menstrual hygiene. This will provide evidence-based insights that can inform policy decisions and further strengthen the initiatives undertaken.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework will help track progress, identify gaps, and ensure accountability. Regular assessments and feedback mechanisms should be established to measure the effectiveness of interventions and make informed adjustments as needed.
- **Engaging Men and Boys:** Recognizing the importance of engaging men and boys in conversations about menstrual hygiene, partner organizations should develop targeted programs that promote gender equality, empathy, and inclusivity. By involving men and boys as allies and advocates, the stigma surrounding menstruation can be further challenged.
- **Scaling Up and Replicating Best Practices:** Successful initiatives and best practices identified during Menstrual Hygiene Week should be scaled up and replicated in other regions of Maharashtra. This will help ensure broader coverage and impact, benefiting a larger population of women and girls.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Adequate financial resources are crucial for sustaining and expanding menstrual hygiene initiatives. Partner organizations should explore diverse funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and international grants, to secure the necessary resources for program implementation.
- By following these recommendations and the identified way forward, the partner organizations, supported by Maha-UWES-C, can continue their journey towards achieving improved menstrual hygiene and health in Maharashtra. With sustained commitment, collaboration, and a multi-faceted approach, we can create a society where menstrual hygiene is normalized, and every woman and girl can manage their menstruation with dignity, safety, and confidence.

