

WOMEN HYGIENE DRIVE

WHAC/34/2019-2020

JJ Cluster, Meera Bagh slum

December 12th, 2019

A lot of us believe that the menstrual products are limited to sanitary pads. But there a lot of other options such as tampons, menstrual cups etc. These products are accessible in the market but the awareness about them is still lacking, and then there is another factor of mass unaffordability and attached social norms. For the Women and girls who belong to the marginalized sections, menstrual products are hardly accessible. Due to lack of awareness, a lot of them, end up using rags, dried grass, or cotton rags and untidy cloth pieces during the time of menstruation which exposes them to serious health risks. This leads to poor MHM, which, in turn, leads to spreading of diseases. *Women* in slums who work in factories or work as maid servants have reported that due to the cost of sanitary products for menstruation which they could not afford, they have resorted to using factory-floor rags in place of pads and tampons, leading to dangerous infections and missed work. To make these Women and girls understands the importance of MHM we organized an awareness session at JJ cluster on 12th December afternoon at 2.30 pm. Happy to share that our hard work worked and more than 100 women 7 girls from the JJ cluster assembled to attendant the session.



We started the session with a question “Did you know that not having access to proper washing facilities during menstruation can lead to many other diseases?” It also leads to young girls



missing their schools because of lack of appropriate facilities, lack of privacy and the fear of being stigmatized. This applies mainly to adolescent schoolgirls from low-income families, since disposable hygiene products are a month-on-month expense that many females just cannot afford. We could understand during the discussion that availability of menstrual products is one thing, knowledge about body positivity and period positivity, another. In a review by it was found that mothers are the main source of menstrual hygiene information and only about 10% get information

from teachers. We also observed that there is a need to talk about this issue openly, and it should be done right now. We at Oxigen & Sahyog foundation try to make a session very interactive, use the A.V aids to represent 5 days of menstruation and discuss with adolescent girls and women the importance of hygiene, nutrition, and the normalization of the periods using such art to break taboos.

We try to educate Women & girls who do not have as much resources and a platform to further discuss regarding menstruation, the importance of menstrual hygiene and how to manage themselves during the periods.

We need to ensure that all girls get their 'menstruation rights' (yes, you read that right!) and live their life freely without any stigma associated with it. Menstruation is a natural process and let us make sure that it is considered one, and not treat it like a calamity. Let us go deeper into the issues that are faced by a girl in an urban slum, just due to the fact that we have not been able to bring this issue into the mainstream and not just find innovative ways to ignore it.

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