

WOMEN HYGIENE DRIVE

WHAC/33 & 34 /2019-2020

33- Molarband Resettlement

**34- V.P singh camp Slum,
December 18th, 2019**

When it comes to India, the scenario of menstrual hygiene is pretty bad. Even today, when there are economical options of staying clean during that time of the month, many women from the lower strata of the society are still forced to turn to unhygienic means such as using rags made from clothes, leaves, sand, husk, among others to manage their menstrual cycle.

Aware of the primitive methods used by poor women, Oxygen & Sahyog Foundation organise menstrual Hygiene awareness session on weekly basis in underprivileged communities to create awareness about the importance of maintaining hygiene during the monthly cycle and distribute sanitary napkins through their CSR initiative, Women Hygiene awareness .



On December 18th, 2019 Oxygen CSR team reached Badarpur and organized two awareness sessions one in Molarband resettlement in the first half and second in V.P singh camp in Tughlakabad post lunch. To get an understanding into the mindset of the women we are dealing with in the first session , I spoke to few women there and found that some of them use old cloth to manage their menstruation. I was appalled and told them about the ill-effects of resorting to such methods. I cite old wives tales and myths about menstruation as a major reason for lack of awareness. The session emphasized on the importance of following personal hygiene practices especially during the menstrual periods. More than 80 women participated in the session. “unhygienic practices in personal hygiene especially during menstrual periods can result into severe health problems ranging from internal allergies and infections to infertility and cervical cancer in extreme cases” Was emphasized all through the discussion by CSR activist.

Second session had many girls participant’s in the age of 13-19 years so I told the girls about the importance of grooming and general cleanliness along with MHM The students, listened attentively as I gave them tips on disposing off the pads and benefits of clean diet during the cycle. I admit, that many girls were aware of their options, there are still those who need guidance. “They all said yes when we asked them if they use pads, but many were using one pad for 12 hours. Reasons vary that the flow wasn’t enough or they want the pads to last for their entire cycle.



They don't know that they are opening themselves up to a raft of infections and to toxic shock," The girls were informed about the female reproductive organs through the help of Model .And their queries ranging from irregularity of periods to hormonal changes were addressed. Some of the girls complained of severe back and stomach pain. At times, the pain is so severe that they abstain from attending school. They were advised not to self medicate themselves in such cases as medicines like Aspirin might be very harmful as they accelerate blood loss. They should also maintain their regular physical routine as unnecessary resting is generally not helpful in pain management.



There were talks on how and why the females menstruate. Girls and Women shared the kind of problems they face during periods and also the kind of myths and practices that are prevalent in their communities. There are beliefs like menstruating women should not get involved in 'Puja' or related activities and should not go to temple otherwise they will be cursed. They shared that the elder women in the family do not allow them to work in the kitchen, some said they are not supposed to touch pickles, water pitcher etc. Some even have the practice of abstaining from bathing and will have proper bath including washing of their hair after third day of the periods are over. They also told that in their villages the women have to stay in a separate room during that period.

Although we cannot totally reject the practices these families are following for last so many generations, still we tried to discuss few facts to make them understand that most of these were either followed out of ignorance or in some cases it was a way to provide rest to women for a few days from their routine of household chores. Another telling fact that came forward was the crude ways of managing menstrual blood flow.

They were told about the importance of using undergarments made of cotton fabric, drying them in sunlight and changing sanitary napkins regularly during periods. Some of the myths like not eating rice, milk etc. during the periods were also discussed.

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