



**WHAC/ 9/2019-20**

GGSSC, Village Bandwari

May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Every May 28, Menstrual Hygiene Day (MH Day) raises awareness and combats taboos associated with menstrual hygiene with the goal of enabling women and girls to achieve their full potential. The theme of Menstrual Hygiene Day 2019—It's Time for Action—not only emphasizes on the urgency of this public health issue, but also highlights the transformative power of improved menstrual hygiene to unlock economic and educational opportunities for women and girls.

To mark the Day Oxigen & Sahyog CSR team with all the pre planning's and prior permission from the School reached Govt Girls Sr.sec School on 28th May 2019. Participants at the event were 130 School girls along with 45 SHG women's and school teaching staff.

During our prior visit to the School we observed that adolescent girls were missing school at an alarming rate due to their periods. So keeping that in our mind we started interacting with the girls, what disturbed us was fact that young girls had to miss school and sometimes even drop-out due to the shame and stigma attached to menstruation along with unawareness and unavailability of proper menstrual protection. We were deeply perturbed by the fact that something as basic as sanitation was impacting something as important as education. Girls reported that Women resort to household techniques of managing periods ranging from using old rags to locally available material. This method of poor management clubbed with misinformation does not only affect girls' school attendance but women also lose days of work, productivity and wages. With time interacting with them we realized that the correct product was not available and accessible in rural areas. The existing products were either unaffordable or extremely difficult to access. Another major unaddressed issue was the disposal of menstrual waste since most commercial menstrual products are non-biodegradable and rural women have too often burnt and buried their menstrual absorbents. This causes a lot of humiliation and frequent harassment.”

To help them with the correct product, Oxigen & Sahyog Foundation identified an Entrepreneur from the community





who showed her willingness to make these pads available to the village women at their door step. To begin, sanitary Napkin samples were distributed to all the attendees. Oxigen believe in the importance of menstrual awareness and education to counter stigma around menstruation and uproot the issue completely. Group President Dr Meher Sarid on this day said “We firmly believe that the solution is not just the sanitary pad. Our answer is the education module along with the easy availability of sanitary pad. Just giving the product is solving the

problem for just one day but educating them is demystifying generations of misinformation.”

The following activities were carried out while celebrating MH day at School Were

1. Interaction meeting was conducted among School girls in between the age 12-17 years by head teachers from secondary School, SHG Women from Bandwari village and Volunteers from Local NGO participated in the interaction sessions. In the meeting, discussion was also held on the status of MHM facilities in the schools and to ensure the minimum facilities for Menstrual Hygiene Management at schools and Community. There are many taboos/myths related to menstruation, and this particular day aims to break all taboos and raise awareness among the participants so that people could understand menstruation is not a curse, rather it is a gift and proper hygiene is important. Proper hand washing method was also demonstrated. Altogether people were directly benefited through this interaction meeting.
2. Dialogue session on "Taboos related to menstruation in families and further  
The session also included sharing of ideas to make menstruation hygiene friendly. Various ideas were shared such as having a fixed sanitary pad station at School or in Community, skill of making reusable sanitary pad and Pad disposal facility.
3. A quiz on MHM was also organized where girls got beauty product for their reply.
4. As a Behavioral Change activity an Oath Ceremony was organized -a banner was also displayed stating the promises and girls Sign the oath.

“Myths and misinformation need to be combated through comprehensive, accurate and accessible information to improve menstrual literacy. States, who have international human rights obligations to eliminate discrimination against women, should take transformative measures. Particular attention should be paid to women and girls in disadvantageous positions, such as women living in poverty, in situations of crisis and conflict, in precarious housing or absence of housing”, recommended the team.



**Seema Khurana**  
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