

ICA NEPAL ON

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

Let's Talk Periods



INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL
AFFAIRS(ICA) NEPAL

Menstruation Hygiene Management?

UNICEF and WHO has defined Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) as the use of clean menstrual management material to absorb and collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy whenever required, girls and women have access to convenient place to dispose used materials, they are able to maintain cleanliness with the use of soap and water (UNICEF, 2019).



INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (ICA) NEPAL

Dedicated to human capacity building, **Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal** is an autonomous, non-governmental organization working since last 22 years in Nepal. ICA Nepal believes in sustainable participatory development.

ICA Nepal follows ideology of lifelong learning. It crosses sectors, cultures, and promote learning beyond traditional format and structures.

We believe in developing creativity, initiative and responsiveness in people thereby enabling them to adapt uncertain changes, and sub-cultures and negotiate conflicts

Menstrual Hygiene Management is one of the pressing issues of Nepal where the lack of proper hygiene management, lack of access to sanitary material and severe social restrictions to perform healthy practices have kept women of Nepal constantly at health risks.

Women in Nepal during menstruation are not accessed to sanitary napkin easily, are not equipped well with proper water and sanitation materials such as clean water, soap, etc. There is still a practice of using old cloth rags which makes them prone to infections. In rural area, 53 percent of girls are compelled to miss school during periods. Even in urban areas, the toilets are not female friendly and there exists immense problem of proper water and sanitation facilities.

The problem is even more serious in Far and Mid-Western parts of Nepal where women are banished in the shed outside the home known as Menstrual Huts (Chhau Ghoth) during their entire period. Every girl is prone to cold, snake bites, infections and even worse rapes and sexual abuses. Such practices have enhanced the impacts of reproductive health of women and limited women's social and cultural growth.

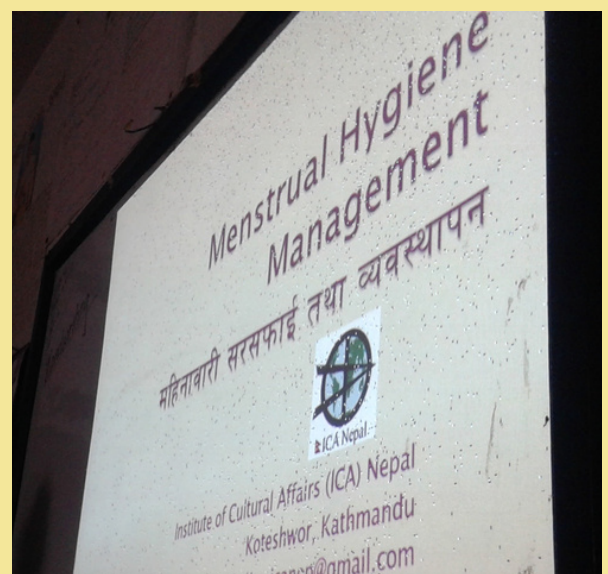
Since last several years, ICA Nepal has initiated integrative approach in responding Menstrual Hygiene Management in Nepal.

ICA Nepal missions to promote social innovation through participation and community building. ICA Nepal visions to enlarge opportunities enhancing individual and organizational capacity throughout the country through training, facilitation and setting up community development activities.

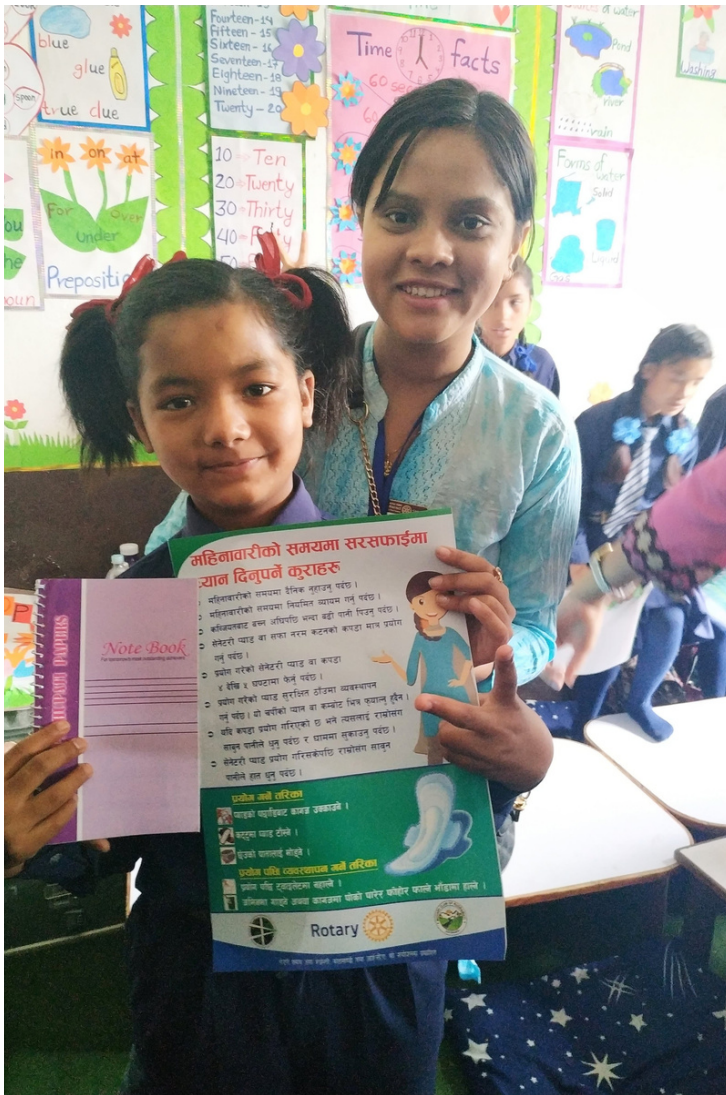
Reproductive Health & Sanitation Unit of ICA Nepal

Reproductive and Health Sanitation Unit of ICA Nepal aims at generating resources to undertake activities in relation to women reproductive health and menstrual hygiene sanitation. Some major tasks carried out are as follows:

- Conduct menstrual hygiene management awareness raising workshops in schools;
- Conduct menstrual hygiene management awareness among women groups, cooperatives and local clubs in different parts of Nepal;
- Design and publish Information Education Materials (IEC) for women reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management
- Organize talk shows and interaction program on women reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management
- Maintain Blog about menstruation: Let's Talk Periods
- Establish low cost sanitary napkin production unit
- Coordinate and collaborate with likeminded organizations, group, agencies and individuals
- Distribute sanitary napkins to local women



Menstruation Hygiene Management (MHM) Awareness Raising in Schools

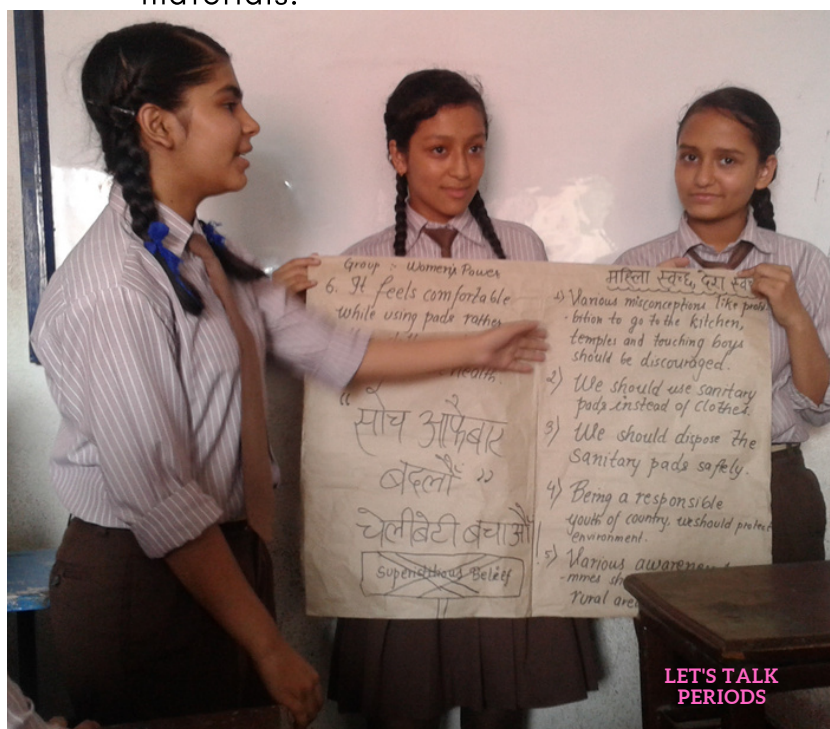


The major objective of this activity is to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene management among school girls and facilitate schools with better and safer facilities for MHM. Series of interrelated tasks are carried out:

- Preparatory Meeting: A preparatory meeting with school.
- Workshop at the school: During the workshop, students are oriented on MHM, puberty, adolescents, hygiene during periods, hygiene and non-hygiene materials materials to use, sanitation facilities in schools, myths and prejudices.
- Formation of Surkshya Club: A committee of 5-6 member club will be formed. The club will work closely with School Management Committee to improve the school facilities for effective menstrual hygiene management.
- Distribution of MHM Kit: MHM Kit consists of sanitary napkin, degradable envelop, soap, towel, IEC materials.

So far, we have been able to reach more than 2000 girls through MHM awareness raising workshops.

ICA Nepal is generating the resources through its own. We also receive from support from ICA Japan, Rotary Club of Rudramati and Global Giving.



Interaction with Women's Group on Need of Effective Menstrual Hygiene Management

ICA Nepal regularly interacts and works closely with local women's group in raising awareness in effective menstrual hygiene management practices and addressing issues of Chhaupadi. Currently, ICA Nepal is working with Progressive Women Society in Changuanaryan Bhaktapur district, Kalilamaya Micro Enterprise Cooperative Women Group in Phalbebas Municipality in Parbat district, Janjagaran Women's Society in Chautara Sangachowkgadi Municipality in Sindhupalchowk district in setting up low cost sanitary napkin production unit.

ICA Nepal mobilizes local women's groups in disseminating information and educate local community on menstrual sanitation, reproductive health, myths and stigma associated with menstruation.



Low Cost Sanitary Napkin Production Unit Establishment

As a part of integrative approach to address MHM in Nepal, ICA Nepal introduced "Low Cost Sanitary Production Unit" in Changunarayan, Bhaktapur in 2015-16. Considering the low level hygiene awareness and practice among rural women, the program aims to bring significant change in menstruation practices as well as help women generate income through selling these low-cost sanitary napkin. Local women were trained by experts from India. The napkins are produced and marketed by the community women which help to make the group self-sustainable. They are also trained on Promotion, Brand and Marketing for the proper strategic marketing of the napkins. ICA Nepal supported to establish this enterprise machineries, and raw materials required for the production. ICA Nepal received funding from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Japan through ICA Japan.



सुरक्षा नेपकिन

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आफ्नै गाँउ ठाँउ र आफ्नै दिदि बहिनीहरुले बनाएको सुरक्षा नेपकिन प्रयोग गरौं ।

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आई.सी.ए. नेपालको सहयोगमा

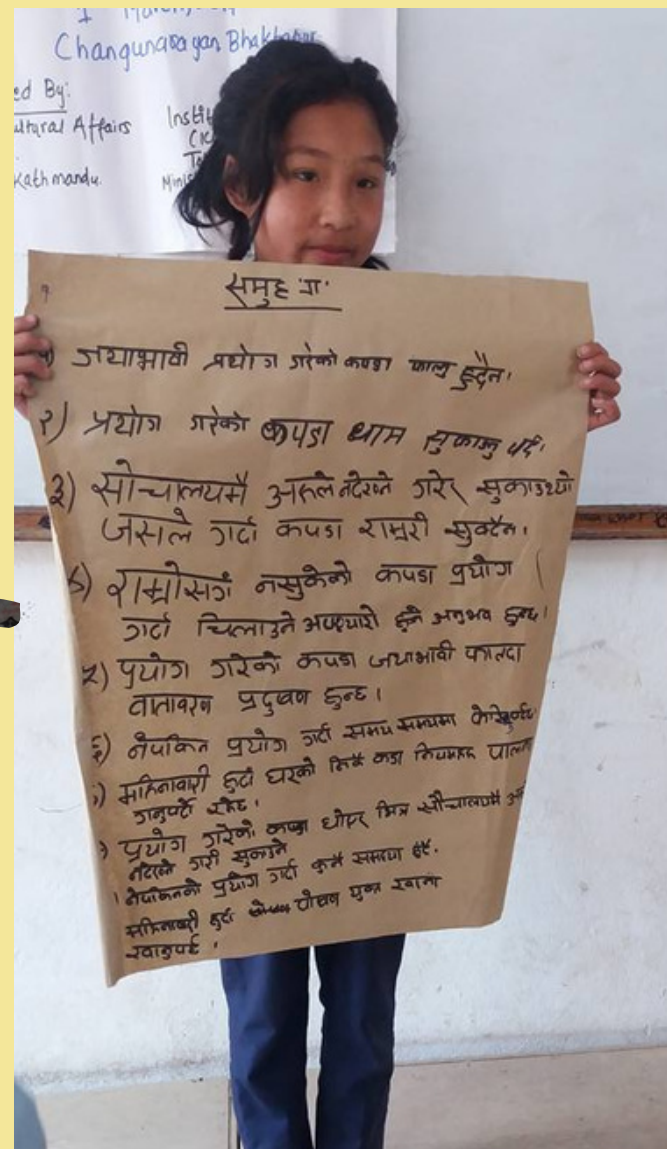
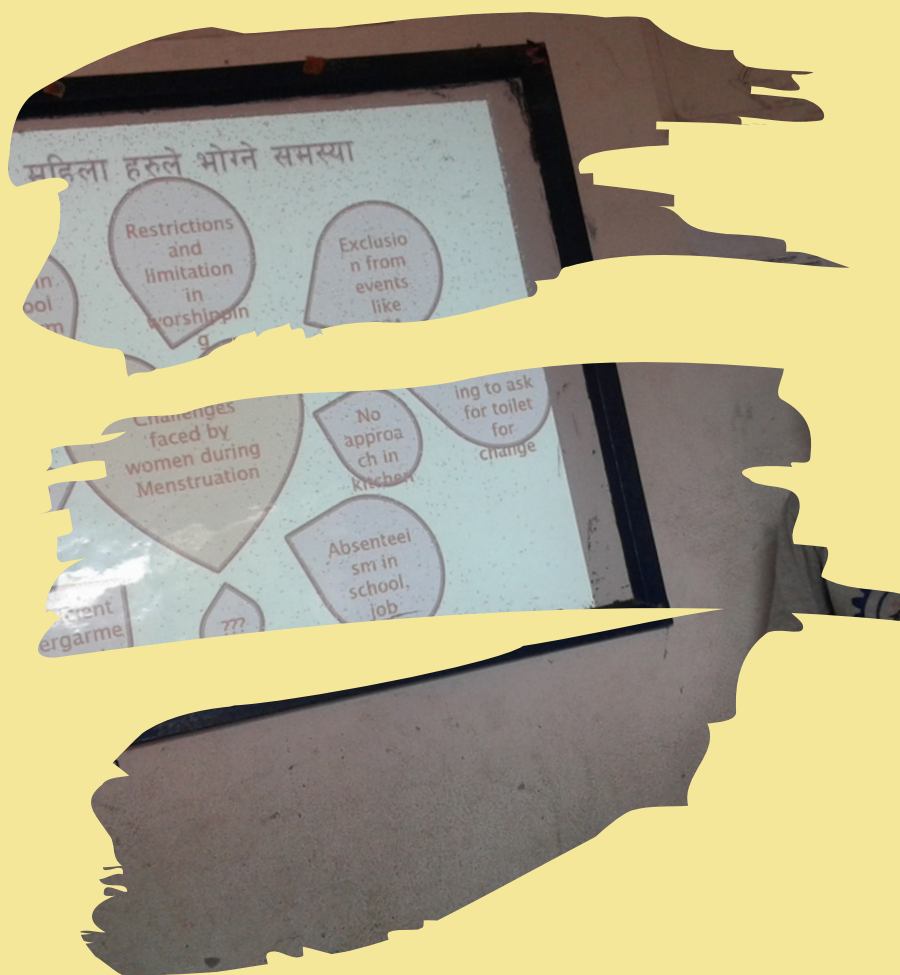
Low cost sanitary napkin project was initiated by ICA in Nepal and Japan with the support of MOFA, Japan in 2016.

ICA Nepal promotes both disposable and reusable cloth napkin. ICA Nepal in coordination with local organization and local women group provides training on making disposable and reusable sanitary napkin.



Let's Talk Periods- Blog for Menstruation Hygiene Management

ICA Nepal runs a blog entitled "Let's Talk Periods": a blog dedicated entirely for menstrual hygiene. Although menstruation is an integral and normal part of human life, indeed of human existence, the subject is however too often a taboo and has met many negative cultural hindrances and attitudes due to the perceptions among especially men and boys, including the idea that menstruating women and girls are contaminated "dirty and impure". Blog is a platform to share ideas, opinion, activities and experience related to menstruation hygiene.



ICA Nepal Responding against Chhaupadi



Chhaupadi is a common "tradition" practiced in regions like far and mid-western region of Nepal. In this tradition, a woman during her menstruation days is forced to live like an animal away from home in a hut or a shed for nearly 4 to 5 days every month.

The main reason why this tradition is practice is due to lack of awareness. ICA Nepal in collaboration with several locally based organization conducts awareness raising program against Chhaupadi.

In 2015, using social artistry tools in collaboration with Saipal Cultural Art Centre conducted a series of awareness raising programs in Hildam, Humla.

Similarly, in Dailekh and Kalikot ICA local mobilizers are conducting social mobilization.

Over the years, ICA Nepal has observed that though the Chhaupadi is not practiced in urban centres, but there is a different form of Chhaupadi. Though, there is no separate hut for a girl/a woman to stay during menstrual days, but she is not allowed to go to Kitchen or cook food especially for male members in the family. Similarly, in many instances, women/girls are encouraged to take medicine to delay their periods so that she can attend some festivals, family functions, rites and rituals.

ICA Nepal raises voices in all these issues. We encourage women and girls to freely talk about menstrual issues, reproductive health, challenges and Chhaupadi.

Moving Forward

ICA Nepal is committed to continue its effort on Menstrual Hygiene Management in Nepal. ICA Nepal is seeking collaboration, partners, supporters in this.

- Developing Menstrual Hygiene Management Training Manual
- ToT on Menstrual Hygiene Management
- Awareness Raising to school, community, parents group, health workers
- Establishment of low cost sanitary napkin production unit in several locations
- Support Schools on constructing a separate toilets for girl students
- Support on installing incinerator for effective disposable at schools
- Massive awareness raising against Chhaupadi practices
- Coordinate with local government and like minded organizations



Integrating MHM in ICA Projects

In early 2010, Founding Chairperson of ICA Nepal, Prof. Dr. Tatwa P. Timsina introduced the concept of safe and responsible MHM in ICA run projects. While working in the Far Western part of Nepal, he and his team were aware of this problem and later started exploring the development of appropriate measures regarding safer menstrual health and hygiene. With the support of international colleagues, he initiated the production of low cost sanitary napkins in Nepal. Today, ICA is focusing on MHM activities as one of the major working areas in Nepal.

**Education
about
menstruation
changes
everything.**



Reproductive Health and Sanitation Unit of ICA Nepal

LET'S TALK PERIODS

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