Menstrual Health: Bharat Darshan – Summary

Speakers from:
Arunachal Pradesh
Assam
Delhi
Gujarat
Jharkhand
Karnataka
Kerala
Madhya Pradesh
Maharashtra
Nagaland
Odisha
Rajasthan
Sikkim
Tamil Nadu
West Bengal
Menstrual Health: Bharat Darshan – Summary

1. Webinar Series: Menstrual Health Bharat Darshan
   Episode 1: Voices from Arunachal Pradesh and Rajasthan
   Voices from the ground sharing menstrual health experiences, challenges and successful practices
   Speakers: Doreca Dashak, Jatan Sansthan, Borduma Mahila Mandal, Jirap Women Development Self Help Group, North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP)

   26th September, 2020
   Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm
   uger@jatansansthan.org
   www.jatansansthan.org

2. Webinar Series: Menstrual Health Bharat Darshan
   Episode 2: Voices from Assam, Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Delhi
   Voices from the ground sharing menstrual health experiences, challenges and successful practices
   Speakers: Ajeet Khan Foundation (Delhi), Sakhibhara (Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka), Oor Moli (Assam), NITRIP Project (Nagaland) and Jatan Sansthan (Jatan)

   3 October, 2020
   Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm
   uger@jatansansthan.org
   www.jatansansthan.org

3. Webinar Series: Menstrual Health Bharat Darshan
   Episode 3: Voices from Odisha, West Bengal, Gujarat and Rajasthan
   Voices from the ground sharing menstrual health experiences, challenges and successful practices
   Speakers: Bodo Odia (Odisha), Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell (CSFPC) (Gujarat), SEWA Rural (Gujarat), DHR Prena (West Bengal), Rangapur Shidh Foundation (West Bengal) and Jatan Sansthan (Jatan)

   10 October, 2020
   Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm
   uger@jatansansthan.org
   www.jatansansthan.org

4. Webinar Series: Menstrual Health Bharat Darshan
   Episode 4: Voices from Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Kerala and Rajasthan
   Voices from the ground sharing Menstrual Health Experiences, Challenges and Successful Practices
   Speakers: Abhiyukt Media for Development (Maharashtra), Ekjot (Jharkhand), Centre for Microfinance (Rajasthan), Ecotome (Tamil Nadu) and Activists from Kerala and Sikkim

   24 October, 2020
   Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm
   uger@jatansansthan.org
   www.jatansansthan.org

Hosted by Jatan Sansthan

माहवारी स्वास्थ्य भारत दर्शन – सारांश
Myths/Taboos/Practices /Challenges

- Silence/taboos round menstruation across castes/religions/groups and states
- OBC, General – women not allowed to work
- ST/SC – they are allowed to work, not allowed to take a bath, wash hair
- Nagaland/Arunachal Pradesh – lesser restrictions but silence, lack of awareness
- Even in matriarchal society – there is unease about menstruation
- Girls and mothers don’t discuss menstruation with each other
- Men are kept away, excluded, or do not want to participate across states
- Arunachal Pradesh/ West Bengal - not allowed to pluck/water vegetables/ go to fields
- Rajasthan/Jharkhand/MP/Assam – Men will fall sick if they touch/talk to menstruating women
- Assam – Period pain causes problems in pregnancy
- Orissa – Menstrual huts still active
- Celebration at menarche – Assam, Karnataka
- Not entering house during menstruation
- Not wearing any flowers in the hair
- Restrictions on eating: no sweet or non-veg
- Menstruation considered *impure* – needs penance: In Rajasthan women/menstruating adolescents fast to seek forgiveness for all that they would have touched during their menstruation.
Product and Management

- Disposable pads are the aspiration
- Younger menstruators prefer disposable pads
- Women hide cloth outside/inside homes, change only when full.
- Both reusable and disposable are used – local material used for reusable
- Disposal of any product largely in open, few burn
- Free flow is practiced and visible in many states – very tricky for an NGO to address
Product and Management

Reusable pads produced by organizations who featured in the webinar

- **Uger, Rajasthan**
- **Pyo, Arunchal Pradesh**
- **EcoFemme, Tamil Nadu**
- **Eco Hub, Assam**
- **Ramroo, Sikkim**
Product and Management

*Hybrid pad, MITU, Karnataka*
*Core disposable, holder reusable*

*Disposable pads, Eco Hub Assam*
Best practices

Core principals and delivery models
• Majority follow Inclusive model – Awareness + product + research, with varied priorities
• Menstruation intervention focused on livelihood alone – hard to sustain, misses long term agenda
• Multiple product information and options for informed choice – organizations to align
• Communities when targeted collectively – not based on caste/religion/gender groups have improved impact.
• Partnering with teachers, parents and local leaders – improves outcomes.
• Youth Volunteering is a popular method of intervention. Low cost and effective.
• Learning centers/physical spaces for women and girls to come together and share at a panchayat/village level is a popular model.
• Menstruation communication is more acceptable when the community has come together over other simpler topics with the organization and trusts them.
Best practices

Products and marketing

• Marketing methods – most popular through schools, local shops especially in areas with very limited connectivity
• Diversification of product for success of a production unit
• Reusable cloth pads have acceptance, eco friendly products are carving a space.
• Innovative kits including soaps, clips, washing soap, pads etc. are a popular distribution method – not all are eco-friendly
• Menstrual cups are being experimented with married women in rural communities in Gujarat, Assam and West Bengal. However most are conservative about it.
• A passionate SHG – active groups identified for production can make all the difference
Best practices

Agents of change

• Local government support crucial for sustaining and scaling efforts
• Helplines for connecting to doctors and counselors – a promising way forward
• Webinars and other online/offline platforms – motivational for frontline workers and community workers.
• Communication on kites, match boxes and daily use items is a promising way forward
• Common understanding on the subject, more collaboration between organizations – a proposed way forward
Impact

- Youth leaders (boys) understand the importance of MHM now – Not all but some boys have started helping girls during MHM
- A friend broke restrictions and had to face violence at home with her mother beating her
- First we would hide cloth and underwear. Now we don’t hide
- A girl broke tradition and entered the house during periods
- After association with NGO - do not impose these practices on her own daughters.
- Her husband is supportive of her during menstruations. He listens to her, discusses, makes juice, comforts me, helps with her daily chores at house during her periods.
माहवारी स्वास्थ्य भारत दर्शन – सारांश

वेबिनार श्रृंखला : एपिसोड 4  
माहवारी स्वास्थ्य : भारत दर्शन  
विकास के लिए संवाद :  
प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य सम्प्रेषण  

वक्ता  
अमिताभ पांडे, नवीन बागलकोट,  
लक्ष्मी मूर्ती  

Webinar Series : Episode 4  
Menstrual Health : Bharat Darshan  
Development Discourse:  
Communication for Reproductive Health  
Speakers  
Amitabh Pande, Naveen Bagalkot,  
Lakshmi Murthy  

17 October, 2020  
Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm  

www.jatansansthanchg.org  
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जतन संस्थान की ओर से परियोजना द्वारा आयोजित  
By Project Uger of Jatan Sansthan  

Hosted by Jatan Sansthan  
द्वारा- जतन संस्थान  
माहवारी स्वास्थ्य भारत दर्शन - सारांश  
Menstrual Health: Bharat Darshan - Summary
Planning a family
A couple’s responsibility

1968
1976
1982

2020
Development Discourse: Communication for Reproductive Health

Understanding peoples Visual Grammar
Developing Visuals Collaboratively

Application
Communication Aid for Abortion Laws in India
(Developed for Population Council – 2005
Still used at training programs)
Development Discourse: Communication for Reproductive Health

प्रजनन स्वास्थ्य पर सामग्री बनाते हुए

Developing products for reproductive health
Development Discourse: Communication for Reproductive Health

प्रशिक्षण के दौरान कावड़ का उपयोग
*Kawad* used at training

परिवर्तित कावड़ – शारीरिक विकास के चरण
*Modified* - communicating stages of growth
Development Discourse: Communication for Reproductive Health

Jess Judge
2019 exchange student, at NID, Glasgow School of Art

Myna - Device for washing menstrual cloth pads
Best practices

- Unintentionally, artists and designers reinforce stereotypes (Sita is cooking/Ram is reading)
- Language and pictures have always been a challenge
- Visual literacy and visual perception form critical components
- Design is not just about “looking good” it is deeper, it must communicate effectively and accurately
- Collaborative design exercise when introduced at a student level, builds up a robust understanding of needs of the community
- Field testing and feedback are important elements of design