

Campaign for Social Change

#REDઅચ્છાહેઅભિયાન

Campaign on breaking the silence of menstrual taboos and crossing the border

A step ahead

About 52% of the total population of women in India are in the reproductive age, and most of them experience menstruation. Since centuries people across societies have felt uncomfortable about discussing menstruation.

A study done in 2017 by CHETNA in 5 districts of Gujarat, revealed that women and girls want a change in the social norms of discrimination during menstruation. In February 2020, an incident in Bhuj, Kutch district of Gujarat, girls were reportedly forced to strip to “prove” that they were not menstruating. CHETNA understood that the time has come



to promote—loudly— the breaking of menstrual taboos and beliefs and take some concrete steps for this. Keeping this in view **#REDઅચ્છાહેઅભિયાન Campaign on breaking the silence of menstrual taboos and crossing the border... A step ahead**” was planned.

The Campaign started on 5th March and ended on 8th March which is International Women's Day the concept of a 4 day campaign signified the norm that all the DOs and DON'Ts, including the taboos are practised in the first three days of menstruation, and from 4th day, daily routine is allowed.

CHETNA along with partner organisations conducted the village-level campaign in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Through this campaign, CHETNA reached out to 5000 women, men, adolescent girls and boys from 142 villages of 24 blocks of 15 districts and 2 urban slums.

After discussing the challenges faced during menstruation, the women shared the changes they would like to bring in this situation. They were eager to break the silence and were ready to reform the social norms; however many of them do not have courage, as yet, to enter a temple during menstruation. Some of them mentioned that they would eventually like to bring change in such religious norms too.

More than 850 women were willing to get their photographs clicked with a placard showcasing what change they would like to initiate, and gave permission to share these on social media.