



CHETNA's Recommendations for the Formulation of the National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene

Submitted to: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government

CHETNA has been working on health and nutrition issues since last four decades. Several educational activities have been undertaken for awareness and action regarding menstruation, the most recent being the #Red Accha Hai Campaign. Please visit www.chetnaindia.org for details.

CHETNA welcomes the Ministry's initiative for developing a policy for Menstrual Hygiene. Based on our observation and experiences, we would like to recommend the following:

1. A comprehensive approach must be adopted or improving menstrual hygiene and so the policy needs to be formed for "Menstrual Education and Hygiene" and named as such.
2. The urban and rural context will require different measures and these need to be considered in the policy
3. Special contexts such as the deserts, forests, hilly, wet areas etc. need to be considered while formulating the policy as different strategies for both the contexts will differ.
4. Given the social construct of menstruation and the discrimination of women and girls during their periods, there is a need for change in attitude and mindset towards menstruation which has implication on self esteem and self confidence of women and girls. The policy must therefore include addressing the discriminatory practices through educational measures using a multipronged strategy
5. Health Education must be expanded to include body literacy, scientific information about menstruation, fertility and personal hygiene.

6. Community must be considered as a key actor in social change. The role of ASHAs, Self Help Groups and Gram Panchayats need to be strengthened to reach out to communities and provide comprehensive education to families. This would require development of a training curriculum and include in their induction and orientation trainings.
7. A basket of choice needs to be adopted regarding menstrual absorbents. Given the environmental challenges, washable, reusable and environment friendly absorbents need to be focussed instead of disposable absorbents.
8. The entire supply- use-disposal chain needs to be put in place with adequate management measures
9. Absorbents need to be available at low cost at public places/institutions as well as private places.
10. For school going girls, absorbents need to be made available at low cost in public as well as private schools
11. Girl Friendly spaces need to be made available in schools for their rest, education etc.
12. Teachers need to be trained for support and education to girls.
13. School curriculum need to be reviewed and revised to include gender sensitive comprehensive menstrual health education to boys and girls.
14. For women who work outside home, absorbents need to be made available at low cost in organised as well as unorganised sectors.
15. Facilities need to be ensured for women and girls at home which includes sanitation, stopping discrimination etc.
16. A media strategy needs to be in place with extensive use of Mass Media and social media to bring about a social change.
17. Adequate budget and a realistic plan should be allocated for training of various cadres-trainers, managers, educators etc,



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For Women Young people Children

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