INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE RURAL POOR-TRUST
NO.48, 18TH CROSS ST, KAKILANCHAVADI, TAMBARAM SANATORIUM, CHENNAI

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

AUG 2020- AUG 2021

SUBMITTED BY
IRDRP TRUST
NO.48,18 CROSS ST, KAKILANCHAVADI, TAMBARAM SANATORIUM,
CHENNAI. TN

A. LAUNCH OF THE PROJECT:

We launched the project on 12th Aug 2020 by organizing Training of Trainers through virtual training. We collaborated with ***Habitat for Humanity India and UNICEF, Delhi*** for the program. Mr.Rajan Samuel, Managing Director, Habitat for Humanity India inaugurated the training program and spoke on importance of Menstrual Health and WASH programs in Tribal communities. ***Ms.Jenifer, National Consultant, UNICEF*** , Delhi was key Resource Person and shared her 14years experience in working with Tribal communities on menstrual Hygiene project. She also focussed on various strategies to overcome the problem.

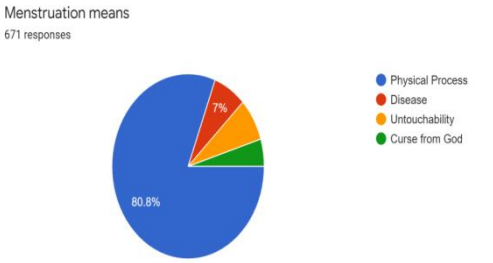
Ms.Sophia Joseph, Additional Director for Training, Habitat for Humanity India spoke on Behavioural Change Communication session. Finally Dr.Irudayasamy explained about the Menstrual Hygiene Management project in Tamilnadu, and how NGOs could collaborate with IRDRP to implement the project in their respective Districts. More than 286 NGOs from Tamilnadu and UNICEF state Chapters also participated in the program.

B. SURVEY IN 7 DISTRICTS AMONG TRIBAL COMMUNITIES:

Once the Training over we started doing Pre-Test study in 7 districts with Tribal communities, Migrant communities about the existing practice of Menstrual Hygiene and management. The study revealed the following facts.

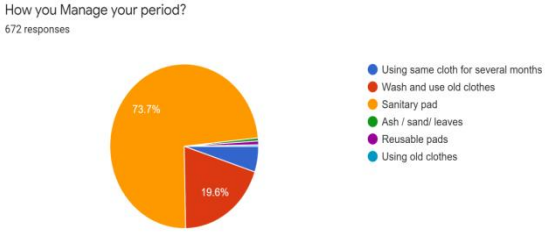
What is Menstruation? (Total Responses 671)

- 542 Selected Physical Process (80.8%)
- 47 Selected Disease (7%)
- 50 Selected Untouchability (7.5%)
- 32 Selected Curse From God (4.8%)



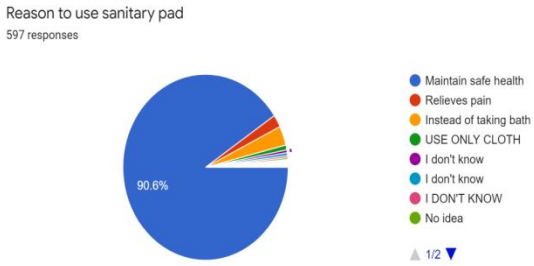
How do they Manage their Period's (**Total Responses 672)**

- 34 Selected Using Same old Cloth For Several Months (5.1%)
- 132 Selected Wash and Use Old Clothes (19.6%)
- 495 Selected Sanitary Pad (73.7%)
- 4 Selected Ash/Sand/Leaves (0.6%)
- 5 Selected Reusable Pads (0.7%)
- 2 Selected Using Old Clothes (0.3%)

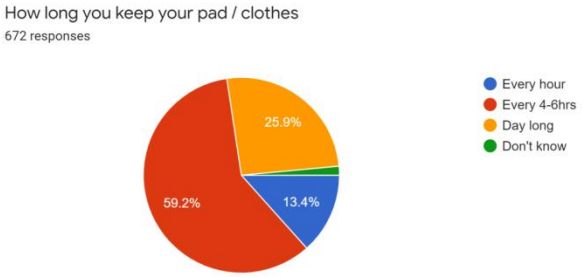


3. Reason To Use Sanitary Pad (Total responses 597)

- 541 Selected Maintain Safe Health (90.6)
- 13 Selected Relieves Pain (2.2%)
- 20 Selected Instead of Taking Bath (3.4%)
- 5 Selected Use Only Cloth (0.8%)
- 3 Selected I don't Know (0.5%)
- 3 Selected i don't Know (0.5%)
- 2 Selected i don't Know (0.3%)
- 2 Selected No Idea (0.3%)
- 1 Selected Easy (0.2%)
- 1 Selected Use Clothes Only (0.2%)
- 1 Selected Stain (0.2%)
- 1 Selected Its Absorbs(0.2%)



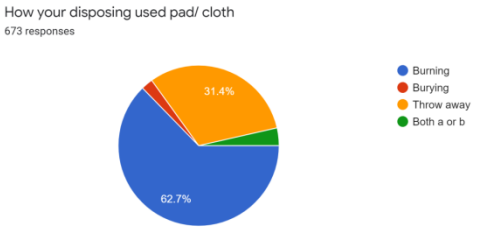
4. How Long You Keep Your pad/Clothes (Total Responses 672)



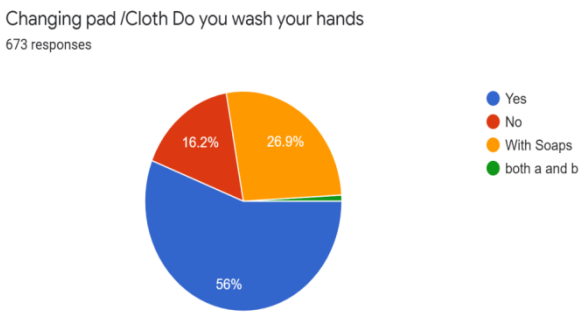
- 90 Selected Every Hour(13.4%)
- 398 Selected Every 4-6 Hours(59.2%)
- 174 Selected Day Long(25.9%)
- 10 Selected Don't Know(1.5%)

5. How are they Disposing Used Pad/Cloth (Total Responses 673)

- 422 Selected Burning (62.7%)
- 16 Selected Burying(2.4%)
- 211 Selected Throw Away (31.4%)
- 24 Selected Both A and B (3.6%)

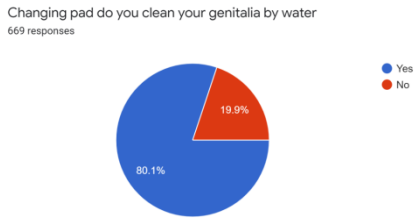


6. Changing Pad/Cloth Do You Wash Your Hands (Total Responses 673)



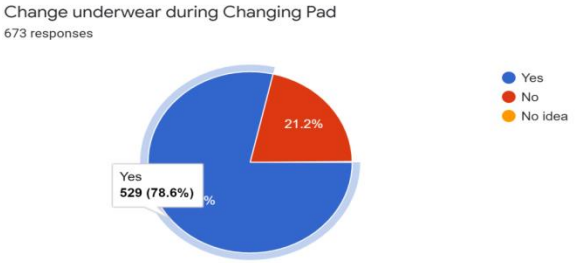
- 337 Selected Yes (56%)
- 109 Selected No (16.2%)
- 181 Selected With Soaps (26.9%)
- 6 Selected Both A and B (0.9%)

7. Changing Pad Do You Clean Your Genitalia By Water (Total Responses 669)



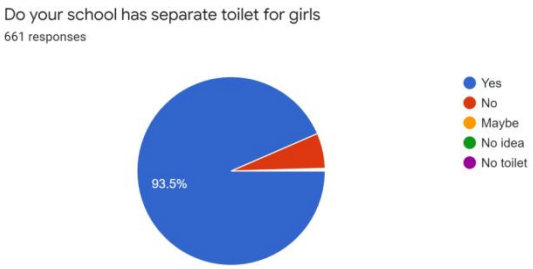
- 536 Selected Yes (80.1%)
- 133 Selected No (19.9%)

8. Changing Underwear During Changing pad (Total Responses 673)



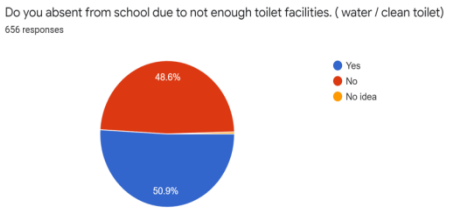
- 529 Selected Yes (78.6%)
- 143 Selected No (21.2%)
- 1 Selected No Idea (0.1%)

9. Do Your School Has Separate Toilet For Girls (Total Responses 661)



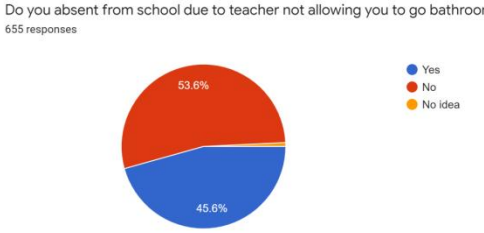
- 618 Selected Yes (93.5%)
- 40 Selected No (6.1%)
- 1 Selected May be (0.2%)
- 1 Selected No Idea (0.2%)
- 1 Selected No Toilet (0.2%)

10. Do You Absent From School Due to Not Enough Toilet Facilities (Total Responses 656)



- 334 Selected Yes (50.9%)
- 319 Selected No (48.6%)
- 3 Selected No idea (0.5%)

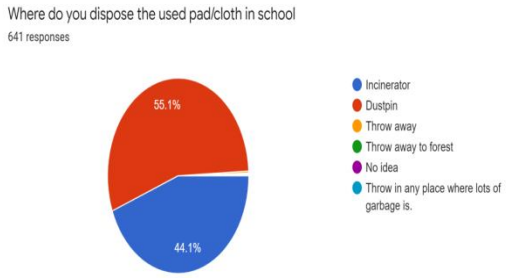
11. Do You Absent From School Due To Teacher Not Allowing You To Go Bathroom To Change Your Pads (Total Responses 655)



299 Selected Yes (45.6%)

- 351 Selected No (53.6%)
- 5 Selected No Idea (0.8%)

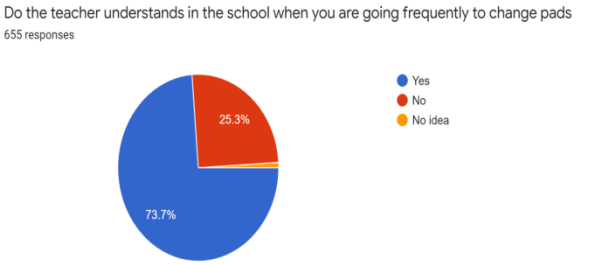
12. Where Do You Dispose The Used Pad/Cloth In School (Total Responses 641)



- 283 Selected Incinerator (44.1%)
- 353 Selected Dustbin (55.1%)
- 2 Selected Throw Away (0.3%)
- 1 Selected Throw Away To Forest (0.2%)
- 1 Selected No Idea (0.2%)
- 1 Selected Throw In Any Place Where Lots Of Garbage (0.2%)

13. Do the teacher understands in the school when you are going frequently to change pads ? (Total Responses 655)

- 483 Selected Yes (73.7%)
- 166 Selected No (25.35)
- 6 Selected No idea (0.9%)



Survey helped to us to plan out the project properly to design the content to reach out these people, and gave idea to focus on reusable pads and single disposal pads with menstrual hygiene education to the people.

It also helped us to plan a IEC effectively to reach out the community.

C. ACTIVITIES TO GIVE RIGHT INFORMATION TO SELECTED TARGET GROUPS:

C.1 CHENGLEPATTU DISTRICT:

Followed to that Training and survey we short listed interested NGOs to carry out the program. We started first training program in Periayar Tribal village in Chenglepet district with collaboration of Malar Trust on 11th Sept 2020. Ms.Kouselya and Mrs.Malathy Village Health Nurse was resource person for the program. Both of them shared the physical process of Menstruation and management, problems and complications related to Menstrual Hygiene. She emphasised the importance of using menstrual pad instead of old clothes. Dr.Irudayasamy also spoke on various complications of Menstrual Hygiene. We distributed free Napkins to all participants.

Tribal Communities we organised training program in Chenglpettu Taluk various villages:

Panjatheerthi	-	28	3/10/2020
Thiruporur	-	30	10/10/2020
Kovalam	-	20	17/10/2020
Total	**-**	**108**	

Village Health Nurse was resource person for the program. Both of them shared the physical process of Menstruation and management, problems and complications related to Menstrual Hygiene. She emphasised the importance of using menstrual pad instead of old clothes.

Migrant Workers in Chenglepet District:

We organised 2 training program in Migrant workers in stone quarries with the collaboration of Mass Empowerment for Growth Alternatives. On 17th Sept and 24th Sept these programs were organised in Tiruneermalai and Trisulam quarry areas. Dr.Regina Managing Trustee was Resource person and spoke on Menstrual Hygiene Management. We distributed free Napkins to all participants. These communities were migrated from Salem, Namakkal districts for 15000 cash amount paid to them without any interest and stay with Chennai Stone quarries with less wages. Company gives a small hut with thatched leaves with mud walls. They stay here for longer period as semi bonded labours.

Migrant Workers in Chenglepet District: We organised 2 training program in Migrant workers in stone quarries with the collaboration of Mass Empowerment for Growth Alternatives. On **10th Oct and 11th Oct 2020** these programs were organised in Tiruneermalai and Trisulam quarry areas. Dr.Regina Managing Trustee was Resource person and spoke on Menstrual Hygiene Management. We distributed free Napkins to all participants.

We organised programs with Tribes in Oragdam and Pazaveli Villages on 2/10/2020 and 03/10/2020 Mrs.Santhakumari was Resource Person for both programs. More than 30 Tribal girls participated in the programs.

Training programs were organised to stone quarry Workers. IRDRP Director Dr.Irudayasamy participated as resource person and Health Nurse Mrs.Varalakshmi also invited as resource persons. On 19th December 2020 we organised in Pallavaram 32 young girls participated in the program. On 20th December we organised Kamarajapuram stone quarry units Health staff Ms.Jenifer came as Resource person. We used the new Training module on Menstrual

Health Management guide and gave copies to all participants. We distributed free Napkins to all participants. 34 participants and 30 participants participated in the programs.

We organised two training in Chithamur Block. Frist program we organised in Mampakkam village on 21st December 2020 Health Nurse Ms.Hemamalini came as resource person and talked about Menstrual health and its complications. She focused on use of hygienic pad compulsory. Second program we organised in Periakalakadi village Health Nurse Ms.Hemamalni came as resource person. 30 participants attended in both programs.

On 24th March 2021 Patrician College Social Work students organised Menstrual Health program in Pazaveli village Tribal Communities. Counselor Ms.Jenifer came as Resource

Person and talked about Menstrual Health and HIV/AIDS infections. Students used Peppetry as one of tool to communicate the message to the tribal community.

On 26th March 2021 we organised program in Oragadam village with tribal communities. Mrs.Santha kumari was resource person.

C.2 TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT:

Jawathu tribal communities: We organised 2 programs in collaboration with Poverty Alleviatory Fraternity Jawathu Hilly tribes on 16th and 17th Sept 2020. Mrs.Selvi Village Health Nurse, Govt came as Resource person and spoke on Menstrual Hygiene and present practice of Menstrual period. Few participants shared that still they use the old clothes for the period. About 35 young girls participated in the program. Here no toilets available. People go open defecation only. We distributed free Napkins to all participants.

Jawathu tribal communities: We organised 2 programs in collaboration with Rural Women Development in Jawadhu Hilly tribes on 26th Sept 2020 in Malapattu and 26th Sept 2020 at Chinnakalpattu Villages Village Health Nurse, Govt came as Resource person and spoke on Menstrual Hygiene and present practice of Menstrual period. Few participants shared that still they use the old clothes for the period. We distributed free Napkins to all participants.

On 23rd March 2021 we organised program in Tiruvannamalai Gandhi Nagar with Tribal communities. Mrs,.Devi came as Resource Person and discussed about the menstrual issues with women. She handled the session with Question and Answer.

Lots of doubts were clarified.

C.3 TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT:

Programs in Tiruvallur : We organised Menstrual Health Management program in Tiruvallur district on **7th Oct 2020 and 8th Oct 2020** at Vengatur Tribal communities. Many of them still using old clothes to manage their periods. We distributed pads to the girls.

C.4 NAMAKKAL DISTRICT:

Program in Namakkal District : We organised Menstrual Awareness programs in Hilly tribes in Nathchayarpalaym, Kowdanpalayam areas on 16/10/2020 and 17/10/2020 . Mrs. Radha and Ms.Dhanalakshmi Village Health Nurses came as Resource Persons. 35 Young girls participated in the programs. Menstrual problems explained clearly to the girls.

On 22nd March 2021, We organised program in Namakkal with SHG members. Mrs.Lakshmi, PHC invited as Resource person. 32 women leaders participated in the program.

C.5. NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT:

Program with Gypsy: We organised training program to Gypsy communities in Mozhaiyur village , Myladuthurai District on 30th Sept with the collaboration of Peace Foundation.

Program with Gypsy: We organised training program to Gypsy communities in Managudi , Myladuthurai District on **30th Sept** with the collaboration of Peace Foundation. **01/10/2020 at Manapanthankal and 02/10/2020** Vallalakam villages.

C.6 SALEM DISTRICT:

Programs In Rasipuram: We organised two programs in Rasipuram Taluk, Salem District. **9th Oct** in Rasipuram Mrs.Radha Village Health Nurse came as resource persons. **11th Oct 2020** in Ammanpedu, Mrs.Dhanalakshmi came as Reource persons.

11th Oct : Ammanpedu village 30 women participated.

On 13th March in Rasipuram area with SHG leaders.

C.7 VELLORE DISTRICT:

On 19th March 2021 we organised a public awareness campaign in Katpadi, Vellore as to reach out many people. Dr.Radha Krishsnan inaugurated the program. 35 young girls and 15 women participated in the program.

On 10th March 2021 program organised in Vellore with the collaboration of district Social welfare board. 32 women participated in the program

Muslim Communities a unique program organised with Muslim communities in Vellore Gandhi Nagar on 15th March 2021. 40 women participated in the program. These women also had lot of problems on Menstrual Health, but they are not revealing it to anyone. They go treatment without the knowledge of husband. We emphasised partner treatment and full course treatment.

On16th March 2021 we organised program with tribal communities in Malaimedu, Vellore. We invited the local PHC Dr.Manju and Nurse. 22 women participated in the program.

We organised Menstrual Day observation in Vellore on 26th June 2021. Due to Corona we couldn't organise in a big way. We invited Joint Director of Public Health Dr.Saravanan. He spoke on importance of menstrual Health to avoid many uterus related diseases. In Indian 50% of the women has one or another way vaginal complaints due to unhealthy practice of Menstrual Hygiene. Women and girl need to give more importance to their periods management. Mr.Govidan expressed thanks to the director and women participants. 35 women participated in the program.

C.8 KARUR DISTRICT:

We organised menstrual Hygiene Management awareness program in Karur with the collaboration of Lions Club of Karur on 26th November 2020 and 9th December 2020. Sr. Shanthy and Sr.Roseline Mary came as Resource person and spoke on Menstrual Hygiene and present practice of Menstrual period. Few participants shared that still they use the old clothes for the period. We distributed free Napkins to all participants.

We organised two training in Thogmalai block 2 programs. Mr.Ramachandran and Ms.Prathiba invited as Resource person to talk about Menstrual health. This is with People living with AIDS. We discussed about the issues of women with HIV/AIDs and Girls with HIV/AIDs about the safe disposal of used disposable napkins. There is little chance of spread of through bloods to people collecting the waste in the streets and municipal sanitary workers. We advised to put in polythene covers and tie it up and dispose safely. It is advisable to use reusable sanitary pads.

D. NGOS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

NGOs Advocacy Program: We organised Chennai, Tiruvallur District NGOs meeting on 21st Oct 2020. 21 NGOs participated and gave suggestions to improve the program. Initially Dr.Irudayasamy , Director IRDRP spoke about the menstrual health problems among young girls specially tribal communities and survey results confirms that Tribes still not using menstrual pads. They use only old clothes. Hence the project aiming to promote Menstrual pad among the girls to avoid infections. NGOs said to organise more programs in the districts to change the attitudes of girls.

E. MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT MODULE

We published a training module on **Menstrual Hygiene Management** to help the NGOs to give right information to communities and communities also will use as reference to view when they have any doubts. The module contains what is puberty? How it occurs –physical process, Changes happening after puberty in the body, cultural importance of Puberty, Menstrual Management and hygiene and finally diseases related to mismanagement of menstrual hygiene – white discharge, Polycystic ovary Syndrome (PCOS),Overian cyst, cyst, Endometriosis, Menorrhagia, Hyper and Poly Menorrhagia and Menopause symptoms and management.

F. CONCLUSION: We reached 8 districts with different target groups to raise awareness on Menstrual Health Management. We covered Tribal, migrant, Landless labours, and interestingly with Muslim communities. Though there was COVID 19 situation, and lockdowns we tried our best to complete the programs successfully with the co-operation of NGOs, Government health Departments. We thank People progress in India for supporting wonderful programs. We could able to provide single disposal sanitary napkins to the people to use it. We also launched reusable cloth pads now and providing them as choices. Monthly 3000 pads are sold out for cheap prices. 250 reusable pads are sold out.

Date 9th Aug 2021

Place: Chennai-47

Managing Trustee