

## Water and Pads for School-Girls –Empowerment for Life



Rural Women's Network Nepal  
(RUWON Nepal)  
a project in collaboration with  
International Alliance of Women  
IAW



**A report by Goma Devi Bastola, President of RUWON**

Rural Women's Network Nepal (RUWON Nepal) has organized a workshop on "Menstrual Hygiene Education and Awareness" with the adolescent girls at Bal Uddhar Secondary School, Kapan Kathmandu on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Menstrual health and hygiene are major public health and social issues in Nepal. Due to insufficient infrastructure to provide education, healthcare, and communication as well as religious teachings, women and girls are excluded from participation in many activities of daily livings and within in community during menstruation.

The objective of the workshop is to get some knowledge and awareness on menstrual health and hygiene in Nepal through a socio-ecological perspective:

Lack of awareness regarding menstrual health and hygiene, insufficient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, no sex education and culturally restrictive practices makes menstruation - all this poses huge problems for Nepali women. These challenges have negative implications on women and girls' reproductive and mental health, plus on school attendance of adolescent girls. There are gaps of evidence for an improvement of the menstrual health and hygiene in Nepal.

During the workshop the female students who have reached the age of menstruation were provided with an Eco-friendly sanitary kit and an educational booklet. The rest of the students received stationery and also the IAW-booklets. We are very proud of the meaningful work done for girls and women.

RUWON also included the boys in the project thinking that the boys will get aware of the girls and women problems, and this might be helpful to make the change. The boys of the higher grade (8-10) also received the booklets, because we thought that we could raise the awareness among the boys and the girls. It could also be a helpful information for girls and women living together in the homes of boys.

They all could understand that menstruation is just a natural process. We all should help the girls to be neat and clean during their periods. We also should provide them with nutritious food, let them go to school and to live within their family. One should also prevent the girls of doing hard work in the fields.

During the workshop, I have talked with the school management committee chair, head teacher/teachers and the students in the school. The school community is very happy and thankful with RUWON Nepal and IAW for this wonderful project. According to them they want the continuation of the WP-project in upcoming years too.

Thank you!