



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

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

Rural Women’s Network Nepal (RUWON Nepal) had organized an event on “Menstrual Hygiene Education and Awareness” with the adolescent girls at Bal Uddhar Secondary School, Kapan Kathmandu on 8th March 2024 on the occasion of International Women’s Day.

Menstrual health and hygiene are a 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 community activities during menstruation. Evidence-based research addressing menstrual health and hygiene in Nepal is insufficient.

In certain areas, our Water and Pads Project has a good track record of improving menstrual hygiene management facilities, increasing access to affordable and hygienic sanitary materials, delivering creative awareness campaigns and developing the capacity of schools and adolescent girls to promote and follow the menstrual hygiene management. Nevertheless, the operations and maintenance of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools still remain challenging.

The objective of the workshop is to provide the knowledge and make 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 a challenge for Nepali women. These challenges have negative implications on women and girls’ reproductive as well as mental health and school attendance among adolescent girls. There are gaps in the

evidence for high quality involvements to improve menstrual health and hygiene in Nepal.

During the event, 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 of the school were provided with stationery and booklets. We are very proud of the meaningful work done for girls and women.

RUWON also included the boys in the project with the thinking that if the boys will be aware about the girls and women problems, it will 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 awareness among the boys all together with the girls. It could also be a helpful information for girls and women living in the homes of the boy-students.

They would understand that menstruation is just a natural process, and we all should help the girls to be neat and clean during the periods. We also should give them 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 time of the event, I have talked with the school management committee chair, head teacher/teachers and the students in the school. The school family is very happy and thankful towards RUWON Nepal and IAW for this wonderful project. According to them they want the continuation of the projects in upcoming years too.

Thank you!

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Report by Goma Devi Bastola, President of RUWON