



Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Project Background**
- 3. About Project**
- 4. Inaugral Event**
- 5. About Events**
- 6. Felicitation Event**
- 7. Outcome**

1-Introduction:- Stand for Kashmiri Youth (SKY) TRUST is a non-governmental organization established in 2017. The organization is purely based on social work, capacity building of people in general and youth in particular.

Our aim is to bring positive change in society through capacity building of people in general and youth in particular, advancement of education, women empowerment, promotion of health hygiene practices, protection conservation and regeneration of natural environment, social awareness, income generation activities, child protection and relief and rehabilitation.

SKY TRUST is currently working in District Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam and Ganderbal to develop under privileged communities. Organization carried out different projects in collaboration with national and international organizations in the fields of education, women empowerment, health and hygiene and environment.

2-Project Background:- Menstruation and menstrual practices still face many social, cultural and religious restrictions which are a big barrier in the path of menstrual hygiene management. In rural areas women are not prepared and aware about menstruation so they face many difficulties and challenges at home, schools and work places. According to the survey reports conducted by SKY TRUST in 9 rural villages of districts Baramulla and Bandipora women have very less knowledge about reproductive tract infections caused due to the ignorance of personal hygiene during menstruation time. Women do not have access to sanitary products or they know very little about the types and methods of using them. Majority of women have painful periods. There exists social stigma related to menstruation in society. Women are ashamed of talking about periods and related problems. **75%** women face burning sensation while urinating. Menstrual hygiene practices are affected by cultural norms, economic status and socioeconomic pressures. Menstrual beliefs refers to misconceptions and attitudes towards menstruation within a given culture and religion. Menstruating women are also not allowed to bath and wash hair, as it is believed to be dangerous for health. Menstrual flow is seen as dirty, polluting, and shameful, so women hide menstrual clothes for fear of being cursed. Cooking is prohibited by menstruating women and taking of certain food is also prohibited. Majority of women pretend to fast during Ramadan while on periods. Awareness and support is needed to end period poverty.

3-About project:- Menstrual Hygiene Management “let us talk about it” was launched to create a society with informed youth and citizens with sensitivity towards sustainability and gender equity. We reached out to 1000 girls and women in 20 villages in Baramulla and Bandipora districts with awareness camps on menstrual hygiene management and reusable sanitary napkins distribution.

Shashi Kiran Charitable Trust provided 1000 reusable sanitary napkins under their Mooncatcher project. The sanitary napkins are eco-friendly and user friendly. The napkins were given to all 1000 participants during the programs free of cost.

4-Inaugural Event: Menstrual Hygiene Management-“Let Us Talk About It” was kicked off by Stand For Kashmiri Youth (SKY) Trsust and Human Welfare Voluntary Organisation in Baramulla and Bandipora districts in presence of Mahila Shakti Kendra-women welfare officer and district coordinator of Baramulla and Bandipora district from Baitul Fallah Child Care Institute, Singhpora Baramulla. in the inaugural session about 50 representatives of different villages of both districts participated in the three hour session on MHM and participants assured their support in the compaign by making people aware about the programs and MHM. The resource person Ms. Zahida Ahanger delivered the training session on MHM, the myths associated with menstruation and need to talk about the issues of menstruation to safeguard the health of women and girls.



Picture from inaugural session

Women welfare officer-Baramulla MS Arjumand and district coordinator –Bandipora MS Aisha shared about the schemes and programs under MSK with participants and also stressed upon the need to report any kind of violence to women help line 181, which is functional across the districts.

5-About Events: We reached out to 1000 women in 20 villages of district Baramulla and Bandipora. Every event included 5 major sessions. We started workshops with icebreaking activities to get the participants comfortable followed by the session where participants get to know more about their bodies and menstrual management. 3rd session about the normal and abnormal symptoms in periods, 4th session about the importance of proper nutrition, maintaining hygiene and about hygiene measures. 5th session, a myth breaking session where we talked about menstrual myths and how they affect a girl or a women.



“When I had my first period I was so shocked and ashamed of talking about it, somehow I gathered confidence and asked my sister about it. She told me to use a cloth piece as absorbent and nothing. Today I came to know more about my body and periods. I feel so glad to be part of this event.”

(Participant’s feedback)

The initiative enabled community members to learn more about menstrual hygiene management and supported school-aged girls in developing personal Menstrual Hygiene Management methods that will keep them engaged in school. Bust the myths session was also a part of awareness camps where discussions were held to bust the age old myths associated with menstruation. women do not want to be teased or subject to restrictions and taboos while menstruating. Peer groups were made where girls will talk and exchange experiences which will provide support to help break down barriers. Re- usable sanitary napkins were distributed among poor menstruating school girls and women
20 community village volunteers (Young passionate females) were capacitated to conduct awareness sessions monthly at community level. They played a great role in making this program successful by doing ground work.

6-Felicitation Event:- Ain recognition of active participation of activities in the month long campaign to educate and aware people about the menstrual hygiene management.

SDM Sumbal Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone and Women Welfare Officer Bandipora Baseer Rafiqi was present on the occasion.

28 representatives of different villages Baramulla and Bandipora participated wherein 20 village volunteers besides MSK Bandipora were felicitated with the certificate of recognition and all the participants pledged to raise voice against all kinds of discrimination against women.

SDM Sumbal while addressing the participants said "women are more important and there is need to aware more and more people about the menstrual hygiene. He congratulated the organisers for having reached to 1000 women.

MS Zahida Ahnager, Program Felicitator, shared different examples which they came across during the awareness sessions "many girls don't attend schools during period days, and it becomes a reason for drop out too, as our schools lack the proper facilities of disposal of pads in washrooms". She shared about the enthusiasm shown by the mothers and adolescents in knowing about their bodies and overcoming the social taboos by first talking about the same. Organisers thanked Shashi Kiran Charitable Trust for providing 1000 reusable sanitary napkins under their Mooncatcher project. The napkins were given to all 1000 girls and women during the programs free of cost.

It provided a platform to them to meet each other and share their experiences.



Joziya Gulshan Village Volunteer in her experience sharing said "initially when we started there was a lot of hesitancy in talking about the women issues, the social myths and taboos were holding women and girls away from the programs, I went door to door to convince 30 ladies in my area, who then became part of the program and today we have a vibrant group of 50 women who have initiated the discussions within the community, I on behalf of the other women of my area urge that the program should continue so as to make more women aware and have a gender sensitive and safe community for women in place"

7-outcome: - As a result of increased community engagement and understanding of best practices for menstrual hygiene, this program will spur a cultural shift rooted in supporting

school-aged girls throughout their menstrual cycles. They are now enough confident and ready to seek further education and the management practices best suited to them as individuals. Awareness provided regarding the safe menstrual hygiene practices and facts to ensure that myths, taboos and stigma around the menstruation is addressed.