

# COMMUNITY SPEAKS

HCL-F Supported SOCHARA's CWASH Project



## Foreword

SOCHARA Team has geared up the activities with immense support from the communities and an unbending vision of 'Health for all'. In Bangalore, 880 dry ration kits were distributed for community members and sanitation workers from Anandapuram and Mayabazaar. Taking forward with blackspots cleaning, our team has identified and cleaned 53 blackspots and has conducted awareness programmes on waste management. In a true sense of working together with the communities, our field coordinators have taken initiatives in identifying needs of the community, collaborating with different stakeholders, and conducting volunteer meets to come up with holistic solutions. We installed 13 new street lights with two other new connections for street lights in Mayabazaar community in Bangalore.

Working on our observations from previous engagement with the communities, we decided to take forward the subjects of Puberty and Menstruation for the month of July. Both Bangalore and Chennai CWASH Teams have come together to conduct awareness sessions on Menstrual Health and Management in the communities and police clubs. Amidst the pandemic, we have shifted to the online medium of communication and awareness. We are thrilled to be receiving a wide response and queries from our communities regarding our online awareness sessions on important topics such as Covid 19 vaccination, Menstrual Hygiene and Management.

- Srilakshmi  
Technical and Research Assistant,  
SOCHARA, Chennai.

## ACTIVITIES

- 53 black spots were cleaned in Mayabazar and Anandapuram community.
- 880 dry ration kits distributed for Anandapuram and Maya bazar community and sanitation workers.
- Conducted four awareness programmes on waste management and COVID-19 vaccination in Mayabazaar and Anandapuram community
- Conducted three community volunteers meeting in Mayabazaar and Anandapuram community.
- 13 non functioning street lights were identified and replaced and two new street lights were installed in Mayabazaar community.
- Sanitation workers sprayed disinfectant in Mayabazaar community as a part of disinfecting public places in the community.
- Follow-up visits related to infrastructure development in ASB and Indalwadi Schools, Bangalore.
- Monitored waste collection in Mayabazaar community.
- Online awareness sessions on "Menstruation and menstrual hygiene management" at Mayabazaar and Anandapuram community, Bangalore.
- Online awareness sessions on "Menstruation and menstrual hygiene management" at Kodambakkam, MKB nagar, Chintadripet and Perumbakkam Police Boys and Girls club, Chennai.
- Online awareness session on "Puberty and Adolescent changes" at Saidapet Police club, Chennai.
- Follow-up visits related to Infrastructure development at Chintadripet Police Boys and Girls club, Chennai.
- Field visits to enquire on the needs for WASH facilities and wall paintings in the Police clubs, Chennai.

# Breaking the silence: Let's talk about Menstruation! Menstrual hygiene matters!!

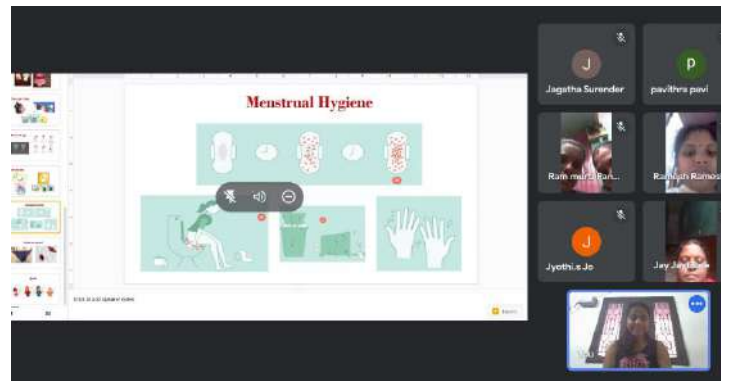
- Judyangel

Bringing menstruation related topics out into the open and breaking the taboos is one of the ways to ensure that it's absolutely okay to discuss such topics. This month, team CWASH SOCHARA Chennai and Bangalore facilitated an online session on Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene management to discuss on the normally tabooed topic. A total of 44 women from the Mayabazaar and Anandapuram community, Bangalore and 34 girl children from the Police clubs, Chennai attended the sessions.



The team Chennai opened up the discussion with the girl children by asking them to identify the physical and emotional changes they observed as a part of growing up. After discussing the changes, we also enquired the different words used to denote the term 'Menstruation'. Further, the team demonstrated the educational video called 'Hello Periods' which clearly explained the changes in the human body while growing up; the female reproductive system which helped the children understand their body parts; the menstruation process and the hygiene measures during the time of menstruation. After the video demonstration, as the discussion progressed, the children were asked to speak about what they know about menstruation and why it happens at a certain time in a female's life.

Students also opened up about the products they use during periods and the hygiene practices at that time. The team also discussed the proper disposal and usage of the menstrual product reminding the children that personal hygiene is important. For the women participants in the Maya bazaar and Anandapuram community, the team Bangalore began the session by enquiring the word they associate with menstruation and also asked a few questions to assess their understanding of menstruation from the previous session. Few of the community members who had attended the previous session answered for the same. Further, the team elaborated the discussion on the "what, why and how" aspects of menstruation and hygiene practices to be followed in general and during menstruation using the visual aids through the powerpoint presentations.



The team observed the participants to be very interactive in raising their concerns and queries on the aspects of menstruation and its process. Finally, the team also discussed the customs and practices at their houses during the time of periods and tackled them with scientific facts for better understanding.

***Overall, the session concluded with the reinstatement that menstruation is a 'normal biological process' and there is no impurity in it.***

## Creating safer spaces

- Mallesh

In Maya bazaar, There were few challenges in the day-to-day life of the community members, especially for the women and children who felt unsafe due to non-functional street lights which was pointed out during the weekly community volunteers meeting. Hence, the team took up the issue of replacing non-functional street lights. Furthering the act field coordinators and community members approached Bangalore Electric Supply company (BESCOM) with the same.





this led to the replacement of 13 non functional street lights and installation of two new street lights ensuring the safety of the community. the residence appreciated this creation of safer spaces in the community

## IEC material for Menstrual hygiene management




 **SOCHARA**


 No 359,1st Main,1st Block,Koramangala, Bengaluru -560034,Karnataka


 [cwash@sochara.org](mailto:cwash@sochara.org)

 [www.sochara.org](http://www.sochara.org)

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