



Healing Hands Nepal 2 days Local Level workshop

By Healing Hands Nepal (निको पार्ने हातहरु नेपाल)

Lopre, Jalajala-6,

Parbat District, Nepal

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Since its inception, in 2015, Healing Hands Nepal has been consistently conducting Local Level workshop sessions in various communities focusing on health education, specifically addressing Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM).

In February 2024, a two day Menstrual Hygiene Management Awareness Program was successfully conducted for young girls in their communities in Lopre, Jaljala Municipality-6, Parbat District, Gandaki Province, Nepal.

Healing Hands Nepal

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The government of Nepal provides free sanitary pads at government schools students from and above the 10 years of age. This initiative has equipped girls with hygienic tools but has failed to provide safe disposal practices. Therefore, the primary aim of this session was to address and reduce these unsafe practices.



As a part of "**Women & Girls' Health & Hygiene**", Healing Hands Nepal actively invests in raising awareness on **Menstrual Hygiene Management**. The organization is dedicated to bringing attention to this critical issue and aims to contribute to positive change, ultimately ending the stigma surrounding menstruation.

This year, as well, we have planned for a two-day local-level session focusing on MHM for young girls aged between nine to sixteen in their respective localities. Reflecting on these two days of working experience, I am profoundly grateful to Healing Hands Nepal for providing me with entirely new experiences and opportunities. Indeed, I never anticipated such enriching experiences, and I am immensely thankful for the invaluable learning and growth opportunities provided by this program.

I, Roni Shakya, a trainer specializing in Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), facilitated the two day program on behalf of the organization.



During the session, the participants were initially asked about the meaning of menstruation and their understanding of the topic. This approach helped us gauge the level of awareness among the young girls. However, most of the participants were speechless, hid their blushing faces behind cusped hands and scarves, sighed away from the monitor. This hesitancy stems from the societal norms in Nepal, where discussing about period openly is frowned upon, menstruation literally means *nacchuni*, the untouchable.

I as a SRHR trainer aim to create an open and supportive environment to encourage dialogue and education on MHM. In this session, it took more than regular time to create a trusting environment for the participants. It was essential for me to address the lack of a secure space where they could freely share their feelings and opinions without fear of a judgment. After a while, one by one, the young girls began to open up and express their attitude in the topic, allowing us to commence our session.





During the session, we discussed what menstruation meant, emphasized why is it crucial to have knowledge about it. We also delved into the proper usage and disposal of sanitary pads, addressing the prevalent issue of sanitary pad disposal in Nepal. To tackle this problem, we introduced the concept of homemade (reusable) sanitary pads.

This session was targeted to young girls residing in a remote village located below the Mt. Dhaulagiri (8167 m) where access to health awareness programs was zero.

Over the course of two days, we could reach 50 adolescents, only girls. I had wished to conduct the program in presence of parents. Nonetheless, we believe that this session played a significant role in promoting hygienic practices related to menstruation in the lives of those 50 attendees. And as an SRHR trainer, I would consider a success if I was capable of making a difference in just one girl's life if not all.

