

अब पता चलने दो

breaking barriers to move
towards better menstrual health



TATA WATER
MISSION
A TATA TRUSTS INITIATIVE

#ChuppiTodo

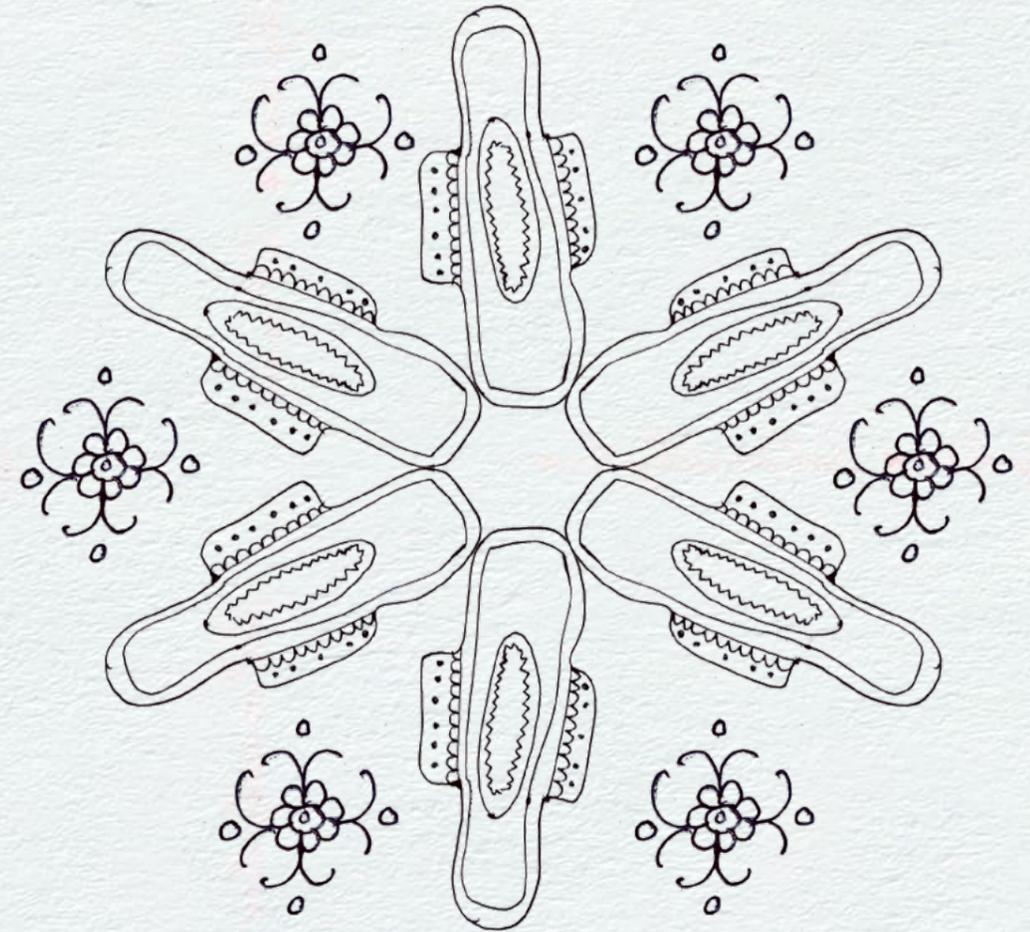




Access to menstrual hygiene products is a

**HUMAN
RIGHT.**

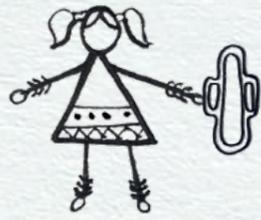
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An introduction to

MHM in Jharkhand

Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CINI), established on May 17, 2007 is a nodal agency of the Tata Trusts, anchoring the Central India Initiative. CINI aims to enhance the livelihood of tribal communities through sustainable management of natural resources- predominantly the land, water and forest triad through its flagship program Lakhpati Kisan: Smart Villages.

The aim of fostering socio-economic change for quality life layers CINI's livelihood initiatives with its programs on **WATSAN (WATER and SANitation)**.

Tata Water Mission (TWM) is an umbrella initiative of Tata Trusts which envisions to create a healthy future for rural communities through provision of safe, assured and adequate drinking water, with improved hygiene and sanitation facilities. It advocates demand-responsive and community-managed approach and aims at promoting innovative technological and economically sustainable solutions.

CINI, Jharkhand in response to the TWM initiative and WATSAN has started its intervention on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) from 28th May 2019. The intervention has covered a total of **282 villages** since 2019, and succeeded in reaching out to over **17,000 beneficiaries including women, adolescent girls and men.**

Healthy menstruation is intimately linked with several important Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The intervention touches upon some important SDGs such as:

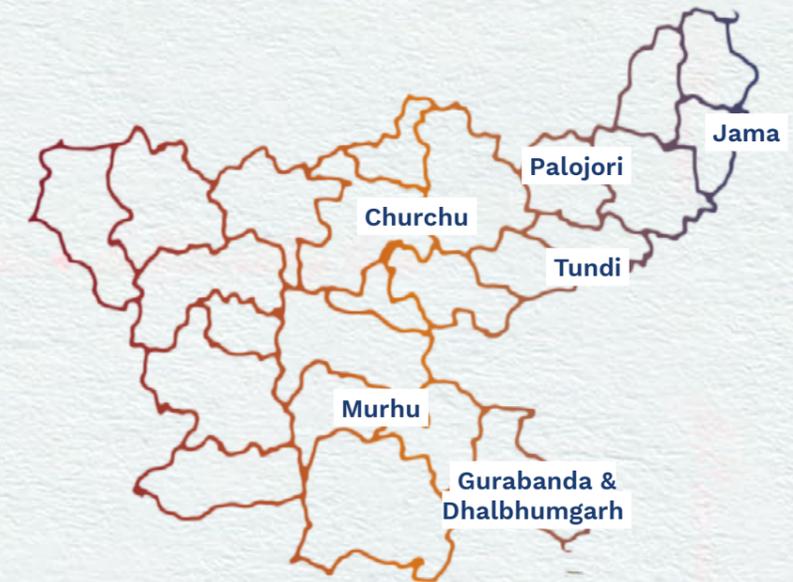
<p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>
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Areas of action

Key activity zones

The aim of the program is to provide solutions across the MHM value chain to promote safe and effective menstrual hygiene management among women and adolescent girls, men and adolescent boys of the **rural tribal communities across identified villages of the 7 tribal blocks in 6 districts of Jharkhand.**



District	Block
Khunti	Murhu
Hazaribagh	Churchu
East Singhbhum	Dhalbhumgarh
East Singhbhum	Gurabanda
Deogarh	Palojori
Dumka	Jama
Dhanbad	Tundi





What are the Menstrual red flags?

Menstruation is a normal biological phenomenon. However, there are various socio-cultural and infrastructural restraints that limit the ability of girls and women to practice safe and effective menstrual hygiene management. This, in turn, makes them susceptible to adverse health conditions including reproductive tract infections [RTIs], psycho-social stress, gender-based violence, and it also contributes to absenteeism from school and the workplace.

The most pervasive barrier is the **culture of shame and silence** that surrounds menstruation.

With an aim to understand the state of awareness related to MHM among our communities in Jharkhand, a baseline survey observed various grave red flags, some of which are cited here.

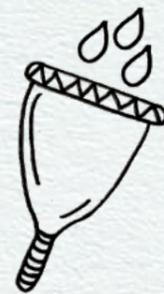
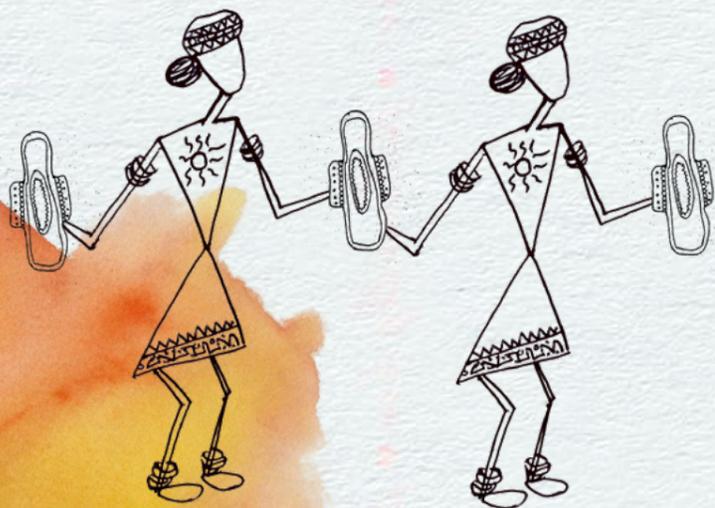
75% of women are unaware of menstruation prior to Menarche

82% of women do not consider menstruation as 'normal'

81% of women & girls consider menstruation blood to be 'impure'

68% of women & girls bury their used sanitary napkins near the water bodies in the ground

Baseline Survey, CInI and Tata Trusts (2019), Sample size- 1550, across 72 villages of Jharkhand



Our guiding pillars Activity pathways

1 Promoting gender equitable norms through behavioral change

Generating awareness about our body, the science behind menstruation and how to manage the physical and emotional changes, while creating a safe space for women and girls to talk about menstruation.

2 Promoting social entrepreneurship

Building social entrepreneurs from the community who supply a range of environment-friendly absorbents in a self-sustainable supply chain and training the women and girls to stitch their own cloth pads through workshops. This helps them to manage menstruation with dignity, have access to affordable absorbents and have informed choices about the use of menstrual products.

3 Inculcating safe and hygienic habits

Generating awareness about cleanliness and maintenance of reusables, frequency of changing the absorbents, personal hygiene and awareness about UTI/RTI symptoms, and when to seek medical support.

3 Creating awareness for responsible disposal of menstrual waste

Promoting reusable absorbents and guiding women on ways to treat the on-biodegradable menstrual waste in the best possible manner, to ensure environmental sustainability.



Modules Key program elements

Participative training of women, adolescent girls and boys, young couples (below 35 years), followed by community engagement and developing sustainable, environment-friendly supply chain mechanisms and innovative waste management solutions.



The flow

Process map

Module 1

This module begins with **creating a safe space** for conversations around menstruation. The instructor shares her own menarche experience, and introduces the **concepts of puberty and adolescence**. The participants are informed about the **science of menstruation**, along with inputs on using a **Period Tracker** to track their cycles.

Module 2

This module moves forth to provide an understanding of **Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) and menopause**, appropriate **nutrition intake** and **hygiene maintenance** during periods. They are informed about the **basket of menstrual products** and their pros and cons. The module also touches upon the importance of appropriate **disposal of sanitary waste**, especially through MHM's unique innovation: **the Matka Incinerators**.

Module 3

This module aims to understand and **demystify the taboos surrounding menstruation** and building critical thinking around the stigmas of menstruation, with the aid of games such as Chinese Whispers, Coin and Wheel games, and the Red Spot activity.

Module 4

In this module conversation about menstruation between family members is normalised by **involving male members**. Mothers and their daughters are encouraged to exchange healthy communication and support. Women and young couples are informed about the **'safe days', pregnancy and X-Y chromosomes-** to address the misconception surrounding the gender of the foetus.

PAD





Activities & innovations

Based on the awareness trainings and the problems shared by the women of the community the MHM team conceptualised two solutions:



The matka incinerator

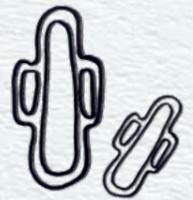
Matka (earthen pot) a local, innovative sanitary waste management solution:

The journey of a matka from an earthen pot to a sustainable sanitary waste management solution started with an idea to find a substitute to the electric incinerators installed in the schools. Its usage was limited due to electricity woes in rural areas and to school going girls only. The women and other girls of the community had no access to it.

The pilot for this innovation was implemented with one matka in one school of our program area and has now reached across all the program locations in Jharkhand.

The current model of matka incinerator went through various stages of modification as per the local environmental requirements and proves to be a popular choice of waste management among the community now. It can be installed in the backyard of the home, at the school etc which provides easy access to women and adolescent girls and reduces their efforts to dispose of sanitary waste.

To know more, watch our video on YouTube: **Matka Incinerator - An Economic Tool to Dispose Sanitary Pads**



Cloth pad production

It was observed during our training that after the knowledge of available menstrual absorbents, women and girls prefer cloth pads as they have been using cloth during menstruation earlier. Through our training we enable women to be social entrepreneurs who supply a range of environment-friendly absorbents in a self-sustainable supply chain through local units. Easy access and affordability makes it a well-accepted option among the community members.

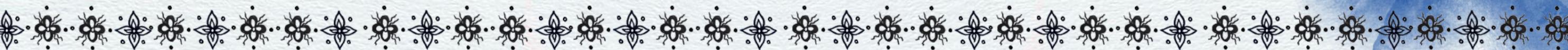


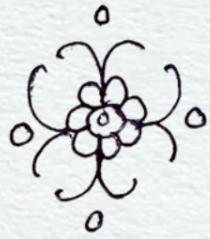
“

My mother gave me the information she recieved during trainings on menstruation about maintaining hygiene, disposal of sanitary waste and we installed a matka incinerator at home to conveniently dispose of the sanitary pad after use.

”

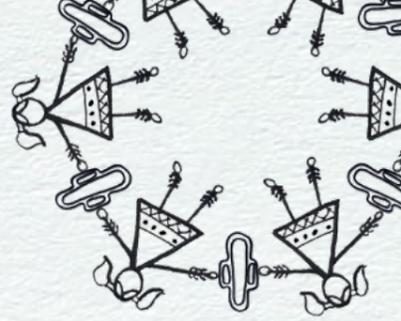
Binita Hansda, daughter of a trainee





The numbers

Where we reached



06
districts

07
blocks

282
villages of Jharkhand

149
men

Total number
of cloth pads
through 5
stitching units

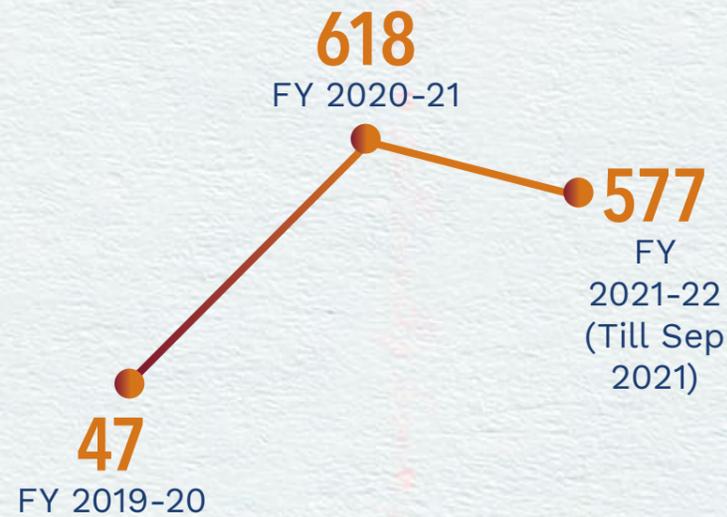
Produced
1314

(FY 2021-22, Till
Sep 2021)

Sold
833

4787
adolescent girls

Matka Incinerators installed



12308
women



“

I always believed that menstrual blood is dirty...
I got to know about the menstrual process and
understood that it is related to the birth of a child
and provides nutrition and protection to the baby.

”

Sohagi Murmu, Jharkhand





Celebrating menstrual health

Community connect

By 2030, it is possible to create a world where no woman or girl is held back because she menstruates. This means a world in which every woman and girl is empowered to manage her menstruation safely, hygienically, with confidence and without shame.

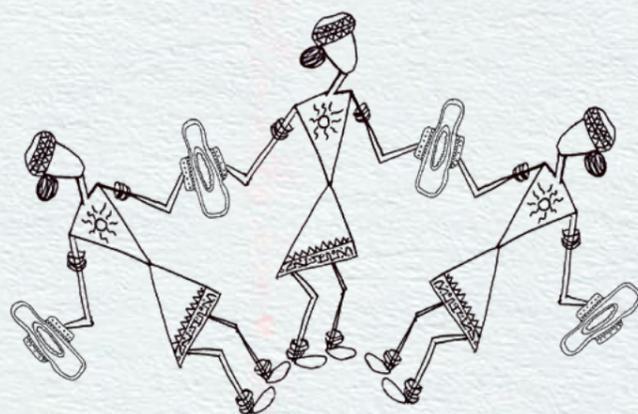
In light of these goals, various community engagement events are conducted annually, such as **Menstrual Hygiene Day, Period Day, and the MHM Mela**. The idea is to create and normalise conversations around menstrual hygiene, while providing a safe space to both women and men to discuss and understand this subject in a better way, without the stigma attached with it.

Menstrual Hygiene Day is globally observed on May 28 every year, because menstrual cycles average at 28 days and women menstruate an average of 5 days in a month.

Period Day is observed locally in our country on February 5 every year. MHM program conducts various interactive and informative activities with the beneficiaries to celebrate this day.

The **MHM Mela**, a special event organised in collaboration with the State Health Department, has been organised at 3 locations so far: Khunti, Hazaribagh, East Singhbhum. Various block level gynecologists and local health workers are invited to speak on the subject, and also conduct free menstrual health check-ups. In addition to this, Swasthya Sahiya and Asha didis have been oriented to self-sustain the model of regular health checkup and monitoring, whom the local women can approach throughout the year for consultations without any hesitation.

Apart from this, various games and quizzes related to menstrual health are organised at the Mela, and the women also participate in the pad stitching competition, conducted at the event location.



“

When I heard about MHM for the first time, I wondered: what is there to talk about with others? I went through a lot of difficulties at first but now I feel proud about breaking the silence around menstruation, and for helping other women do the same.

”

Kavita Devi, former beneficiary, now an MHM trainer



प्रतिबंध से परे
स्वास्थ्य के लिए
जानो • समझो • समझाओ

Investing in
menstrual health is
investing in gender equality!





अब पता चलने दो

Breaking barriers to move towards better health

Menstrual Hygiene Management in Jharkhand
A collaborative effort by
Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CIni) &
Tata Water Mission

Content curation & book design:
One Small Design Studio / www.onesmall.in

Illustrations:
Pravidhi Jain, One Small Design Studio

Photographs:
CIni

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CIni - Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives, Tata Trust



CIni - Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives

a world beyond myths

WHERE COMMUNICATION LEADS TO SOLUTIONS



प्रतिबन्ध से परे,
स्वास्थ्य के लिए ।

जाना
समाप्त
समाप्त



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