

## CHHOTI SI ASHA ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE



### **SYNOPSIS: Training guide to Menstrual Hygiene**

The training manual is a comprehensive guide to conduct workshops on menstrual hygiene management. The sessions for the workshop were particularly designed for the Women at 'Chhoti si Asha'. However, the workshop layout can be used as reference to conduct workshops for any target group. Through this training manual, we aim at empowering women at CSA and beyond to become future trainers of menstrual hygiene management.

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# **TRAINING MANUAL**

## **Introduction**

On an average, a woman menstruates for 40 years of her life. In India, the majority of women especially in rural areas are facing challenges to manage their menstruation hygienically. Over 20 crore women don't have knowledge about menstrual hygiene practices and therefore only

18% of the Indian women have access to clean sanitary materials. Menstruation is not an illness or a problem but a natural process in the female body, but it is unfortunate that no one talks about it owing to the cultural myths and taboos. However, it has become extremely important to discuss this topic as it is not just a 'female issue' but may also affect her health, disrupts reproduction, and impacts the Environment hazardously. Menstrual Hygiene means to manage menstruation with dignity and safety along with clean access to washrooms, sanitary material, water and soap. It must be noted that menstrual hygiene is not just about women but the society as a whole as it also plays an important role in protecting our environment, therefore, it is crucial to be able to have access to safe disposal of the used sanitary material. Why this manual?

- Lack of knowledge about Health issues relating to menstrual health
- Lack of motivation at the grassroot level to work on this issue
- Improve the general quality of life in both rural areas and urban slums
- Encourage cost effective, comfortable and environment friendly sanitation practices.
- Empower the women of CSA by educating them about menstrual hygiene
- Give livelihood through sanitary pad production
- Sensitize men around this issue
- Ensure safe disposal and consciousness towards the environment

## SESSION 1- Introduction and Icebreaker

### Activity

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To give an overview to agenda of the workshop</li><li>● To introduce the topic to women or break the silence on this topic.</li><li>● To create a safe space for further discussion</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 30 minutes</li></ul>
Material Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Sticky notes</li><li>● Pen</li><li>● White board/ Soft board/ large Chart</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Johari Window Activity</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Welcome</b>(5 minutes- introduce ourselves, thank them for joining)</li><li>● <b>Introduction</b>(10 minutes- Their names and background)</li><li>● <b>Icebreaker Activity</b>- Johari Window(15 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Divide the large chart into four headings (open, private, open secret, secret)</li><li>-Explain to the group what each of the headings mean ( Open: Something you would easily talk about in public, with anyone. Private: Something you would talk about confidentially with specific people. Open secret: Something people know about but do not talk about. Secret: Something people do not share or talk about with anyone.) Give them examples of each issues for example open- movies, weather; open secret- Black money, corruption; Private- some personal issues; Secret- Drug abuse</li><li>-Give them 4 sticky notes and 5 minutes to write what issues come in each category and then stick on the board/ chart paper</li></ul></li></ul>

	<p>-Divide them into groups of 4 each, tell them to reflect upon it for 5 minutes in association with menstruation.</p> <p><b>Key takeaways-</b> People may be in different boxes depending on where they are or who they are talking to. For example, girls may talk to other girls privately, but if they are talking to a man, it would be a secret. There are often different opinions about how open we need to be when talking about menstruation and menstrual hygiene. There are challenges because it is secret – this leads to misinformation, stigma, fear and exclusion. We need to de-link menstruation from sex. This is one of the reasons it is secret/open secret. Menstruation should be regarded as a vital sign of health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Set the agenda of the workshop-</b> (2 minutes)</li> </ul> <p>Tell the group that many people find menstruation and menstrual hygiene a difficult topic to talk about initially but most people find that in the right environment there is no need to feel shy or embarrassed.</p>
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opening up on the topic</li> <li>● To encourage women by creating a safe space for discussing menstruation and menstrual hygiene</li> </ul>

## SESSION 2- Menstruation- The basics

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To ensure that all participants have the required and basic understanding of Menstruation</li><li>● Challenges faced by girls and women</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 40 minutes</li></ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Handout on Physiology of menstruation</li><li>● <b>PPT</b>on Menstruation- The Basics</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Activity- Rapid Fire</li><li>● Powerpoint Presentation</li><li>● Q/A session</li><li>● Suggestion- Film for Adolescents ( Badetey Badetey Kutch kutch Hota hai)</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Rapid fire round</b>(10 minutes)  Divide the women into 4 groups and ask one question to each group, giving 5 minutes to discuss  Group 1: Why do women menstruate?  Group 2: What do women use to manage menstruation; and what different kinds of materials have seen used for managing menstruation?  Group 3: At what age does a girl begins menstruation; how many times does a woman menstruate per month; how many times will she menstruate in a year; how many times will she menstruate in her lifetime?  Group 4: What is the relationship between menstruation and motherhood?</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Fact Sharing by Powerpoint presentation</b>(20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Overview of PPT</li> <li>- What is Puberty</li> <li>- Anatomy of Vagina</li> <li>-What are periods</li> <li>- What is reproduction</li> <li>-Why do periods occur (menstrual cycle)</li> <li>- PMS (Premenstrual Syndrome)</li> <li>- Menstruation as vital sign of health</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Conclusion through Q/A</b> (10 minutes)</li> </ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarity on the concept of menstruation while targeting the taboos.</li> </ul>

### SESSION 3- Menopause

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create proper understanding of menopause</li><li>• Ensure proper hygiene practices for menopausal women</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 45- 60 minutes</li></ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lets talk Menopause (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8wmT04fSWk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8wmT04fSWk</a>)</li><li>• PPT and Handout on 'Menopause and Menstrual Hygiene'</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youtube Video</li><li>• Quiz</li><li>• PPT on Menopause and hygiene</li><li>• Session with Doctor - Tentative as it can be clubbed within session 6</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Screening of Video</b>(5 minutes)</li><li>• <b>Quiz</b>(5 minutes)</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. At about what age does menopause typically begin? A. 40 B. 45 C. 51 D. 55 (Answer- C)</li><li>2. A woman is considered to be in menopause after she has missed How many menstrual cycles? A. 3 B. 6 C. 9 D. 12 (Answer- D)</li><li>3. What factors can cause premature menopause? A. Smoking B. Autoimmune disorders C. A woman's mother had early menopause D. All of the above (Answer- D)</li><li>4. Midlife weight gain is caused by menopause? True/False? (False, after age 35, women begin to lose muscle mass and if physical activity is reduced, women are likely to gain weight)</li></ol>

	<p>5. How long does menopausal hot flash last?</p> <p>A. 3-4 months B. 6- 12 months C. 2-3 years D. 7- 10 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>PPT</b>and Handout ‘Menopause and hygiene’ (15 minutes)</li> <li>● Q/A and conclusion by doctor (15-30 minutes)</li> </ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create awareness and induce confidence about menopause kin women</li> <li>● Ensure that menstrual hygiene matters even during menopause</li> <li>● Understand the problems and challenges they face through discussion</li> </ul>

## SESSION 4- Health and Menstruation

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To aware the participants about the health risks pertaining to poor menstrual hygiene</li><li>● To guide them, how to identify such issues.</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 60 minutes</li></ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● PPT</li><li>● Handouts on Health and menstruation</li><li>● Availability of Doctor</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Powerpoint presentation</li><li>● Doctor session</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>PPT</b>for Basic outline (10 minutes)</li><li>● <b>Session with doctor</b>on menopause, Health and Menstruation (35 minutes)</li><li>● <b>Q/A</b>with the doctor (15 minutes)</li></ul> <p>Ask the participants to silently take 2 minutes and ask their queries</p>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● By the end of this session, the participants would acquire requisite knowledge about health risks associated with poor menstrual hygiene</li><li>● Participants would be more sensitive and less ignorant towards their health as they would know ‘When to see a doctor?’</li></ul>

## SESSION 5- Menstrual Hygiene

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To create an understanding of the key components of Menstrual Hygiene Management, and challenges that girls and women face.</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 30 minutes</li></ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● PPT and Handout on Necessity and concept of Menstrual Hygiene management</li><li>● Printouts of Menstrual Tracker</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Powerpoint Presentation</li><li>● Assessment through GD</li><li>● Handout on Menstrual tracker</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>PPT</b> and Handouts (15 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-What is Menstrual Hygiene?</li><li>-How to promote MHM?</li><li>-How to manage your first period?</li><li>- How to capture blood</li><li>-How to dispose the soiled material</li><li>-How to keep yourself clean during periods</li><li>-How to manage stomach ache for your periods</li><li>- Potential risks on Poor Menstrual hygiene</li></ul></li><li>● <b>Menstrual Tracker</b>- what is it? How to use it? (10 minutes)</li><li>● <b>Group discussion</b> (5 minutes)<p>Divide the women in teams of 2 and ask them the following questions to discuss</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-How will you take care of yourself during your menstrual period?</li><li>-Why will you wash your hands with soap?</li></ul></li></ul>

	<p>-How will you dispose of the sanitary napkin?</p> <p>-What will you do in case you do not have a sanitary napkin?</p> <p>-Can you tell me what precautions you need to take when you are using a cloth napkin?</p>
Outcomes	<p>At the end of the session, participants would be able to answer the following questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How to maintain hygiene during menstruation?</li> <li>● Safe disposal</li> <li>● How to track periods?</li> </ul>

## SESSION 6-Best practices during menstruation

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For the group to be familiar about the range of materials available for menstrual Hygiene</li></ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 minutes</li></ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mattresses</li><li>• Range of materials (cotton, tissue paper, cotton cloth, disposable pad, Reusable pad (CSA), tampon, menstrual cup, underwear)</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Yoga/ Aerobic session</li><li>• Display of materials</li><li>• Discussion using Handout</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Warm up with <b>Yoga session</b>(10 minutes)</li><li>• Before the session, prepare <b>The Display</b>.(10 minutes)  This needs to be laid out on the table, ideally with labels.e.g. Cotton wool, tissue paper, cloth, disposable sanitary pads, reusable pads, tampons, menstrual cup and underwear. Allow them to touch it and discuss amongst themselves. Ask the participants whether the different materials are likely to be comfortable, effective for managing menstrual blood, appropriate, affordable, available, sustainable, environmentally-friendly etc. What sort of facilities or resources would be needed for them to be used and disposed of hygienically?</li><li>• Followed by <b>discussion</b> using handoutand Q/A (10 minutes)  Explain the pros and cons of each material, constituents of sanitary pad along with safe disposal</li></ul>

	(Suggestion- Activity for adolescent girls- give them different materials and let me experiment with it.)
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about a range of menstrual hygiene materials available and what is required to use and dispose them hygienically</li> <li>• Ability to decide for oneself ‘what material to use?’</li> </ul>

## SESSION 7- Environmental hazards pertaining to menstruation

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Sensitize the participants on Environment hazards pertaining to menstruation</li><li>● Ensure safe disposal of menstrual products</li></ul>
Time Allowed	15 minutes
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Handout on Environment and disposal</li><li>● Sanitary napkin</li></ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lecture</li><li>● Activity</li></ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Create awareness on Environment degradation due to unsafe disposal<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Number of Pads used</li><li>- Where does it all do?</li><li>- Are sanitary napkins that bad to environment?</li><li>- How to reuse menstrual cloth</li></ul></li><li>● How to dispose of sanitary napkin safely- Activity on how to safely wrap a sanitary napkin and dispose</li></ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Promote the use of environment-friendly methods for menstrual hygiene</li><li>● Sensitization of participants towards environment</li></ul>

**SESSION 8- Need to sensitize the community and communicating  
confidently**

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To discuss the stigma surrounding menstrual hygiene management (MHM) in order to break the silence and build confidence to talk about sensitive and embarrassing issues</li> <li>● The importance of communicating with men and boys on Menstrual hygiene management</li> <li>● How to build confidence and capacity to speak about menstruation</li> </ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 40 minutes</li> </ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Film- “Making the Invisible Visible” produced by Vatsalya India</li> <li>● Handouts on ‘Need to sensitize Community’</li> </ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Film Screening</li> <li>● Lecture/ Discussion</li> <li>● Activity (Connecting the dots)</li> </ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction- <b>Film Screening</b> (10 minutes)</li> <li>● <b>Group Discussion</b> to be carried out by Dominic and Zakir by asking questions based on the role of the following Menstrual Hygiene Management (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Household (Men and Boys)</li> <li>- Household (Women and Girls)</li> <li>- Community</li> <li>- District</li> <li>- Nation</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Connecting the dots</b>- storytelling (10 minutes)</li> </ul>

	<p>Begin by building a context of a social story on Menstruation, “Once upon a time, there was a...” each participant will add 2-3 lines to the story one by one to build a story around the issue.</p>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussing embarrassing topics gets easier the more you do it. We should create spaces where it is easier to talk.</li> <li>● Understand the need to build capacity and confidence to about MHM.</li> </ul>

## Feedback and Assessment

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback and assessment of women, core activity for adolescents</li> </ul>
Time Allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45-60 minutes</li> </ul>
Materials Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Study</li> </ul>
Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Study</li> <li>Informal Group Discussion</li> <li>Music Session with Dominic</li> </ul>
Session Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Case study:</b> (30 minutes)</li> </ul> <p>Divide the participants into groups of 3</p> <p>Sarangpur is a slum built at the side of a road with some buildings constructed on reclaimed land at the edges of Chandigarh City's lake. It is informal but has been in existence for 20 years. Around one third of the families have lived there for ten to 15 years. Others come and go more frequently. In the past four years the community has grown by 50%. It is now home to 800 households, 4,800 people, of which 1,200 are women and 400 are girls between eight and 18 years old.</p> <p>Families live in one or two room houses that are very close together. There are ten hanging latrines that are makeshift structures emptying directly into the lake.</p> <p>Women and girls often wait until night to use the latrines or go together. Water is taken either from the lake or bought from water sellers. Women use the lake water to wash their menstrual cloths and because of local taboos have to hide them in the house roof.</p> <p>Most of the men are day labourers and a few others run small shops</p>

	<p>within the slum, selling household goods. The women are mainly involved in informal businesses, making and selling baskets and running small-scale business such as vegetable selling. Others, including some girls between 12 and 16 years old, work as domestic maids in the nearby middle class houses.</p> <p>Sarangpur Development Organisation (SDO) is a community-based organisation within the community. It has programmes for micro-credit and child health (mainly vaccines and neonatal care) with support from a voluntary health worker. There is a committee that runs SDO, headed by one of the male shop owners with eight men and four women.</p> <p>Group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a community-based menstrual hygiene intervention for Sarangpur slum.</li> <li>• What are the key issues/challenges that will be addressed?</li> <li>• Identify the key components and the stakeholders that need to be involved for the different components. If other stakeholders need to be included in the project, consider who needs to be engaged.</li> <li>• Prepare an outline of your project to present to the rest of the group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Informal group discussion</b> (10 minutes)</li> <li>● <b>Music session</b> (20 minutes)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess the understanding of the participants through case study as the medium of feedback.</li> <li>● The inferences from the feedback would be utilised to improve the manual for the workshop.</li> </ul>