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18TH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES COALITION

Increasing access to quality menstrual products: Let's change the dialogue

Developing shared messages and calls to action in India

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The Menstrual Hygiene Alliance in India created a powerful messaging framework to raise awareness and prompt action

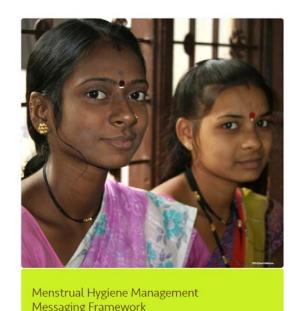
- PATH with WaterAid/India led a dozen partner organizations in Delhi in a day-long messaging workshop on menstrual health
- Participants included technical experts, social enterprises, donors, practitioners, and girls' and women's health/WASH advocates
- Partners identified three key themes:
 - Normalizing menstruation
 - Menstrual hygiene products (access, affordability, and appropriateness)
 - Disposal systems and access to infrastructure in India

Messaging framework identified themes, and calls to action for key influencers

Partners then identified areas of focus:

- Gaps
- Potential solutions
- Requested evidence
- Calls to action for key decisionmakers groups including government, donors, industry, and media

Outcome: A common messaging framework to influence menstrual health policy and drive markets in India to adopt sustainable and scalable solutions



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governments, have new opportunities to coordinate and comprehensively address MHM.

- Government has a number of roles and responsibilities when it comes to MHM, and must address the needs of many stakeholders, including girls and women; household influencers including men, boys and elder women; and community influencers such as sociopolitical and religious leaders, educators, health workers; and house research.
- While it is encouraging that many ministries have policies on MIIM, these policies often do not contain it same technical information, are not well aligned, or as not applied consistently across states. For example,
- Factor in disposal infrastructure and environmenta impact in addition to cost in their procusement processes.
- Make budgetary provisions for subsidizing environmentally friendly products to match costs non-compostable products produced at scale.
- Ministries and state governments can work together to ensure universal availability of safe menstrual care

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Taxing products to manage menstruation is punit

Recommended actions: Use your power to improve MHI

The messaging framework and data modeling resulted in a three- part document series with calls to action







Calls to action (examples):

- Provide girls and women with comprehensive information, tools, and skills to raise awareness and address harmful social norms on menstruation
- Expand reach of products and create universal access through public and private channels
- Refine product performance standards (in process)
- Management of menstrual waste to include the entire value chain including awareness, access, use, and waste management across urban and rural settings

One outcome: a call to end taxation in India on menstrual hygiene products

Messaging framework process provides a roadmap other countries can adapt

Lessons we learned from the menstrual hygiene messaging framework process

Form coalitions across sectors and stakeholders

- Engage WASH, sexual and reproductive health, adolescent health, education
- Include key stakeholders: donors, NGOs, industry, religious, media, males

Identify evidence gaps and barriers preventing dignified, safe, and hygienic management of menstruation

- Invest in research to address unanswered questions
- Landscape product availability, cost, user preferences, and environmental impact to inform product procurement
- Increase positive reporting on MHM in media

Issue calls to action

Tailor to the needs of your country

Contact us

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Messaging Framework and Calls to Action are available:

http://www.path.org/publications/detail.php?i=2
763

https://www.path.org/publications/detail.php?i= 2809

