



**POUR ELLE**

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**18<sup>TH</sup> 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 decision-makers 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



Menstrual Hygiene Management  
Messaging Framework



## GOVERNMENT

Government entities, from ministries to state 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 older women; and community influencers such as socio-political and religious leaders, educators, health workers, and businesses.
- While it is encouraging that many ministries have policies on MHM, these policies often do not contain the same technical information, are not well aligned, or are not applied consistently across states. For example:

- Factor in disposal infrastructure and environmental impact in addition to cost in their procurement processes.
- Make budgetary provisions for subsidizing environmentally friendly products to match costs of non-compostable products produced at scale.
- Ministries and state governments can work together to ensure universal availability of safe menstrual care products across a range of public and private settings.
- Taxing products to manage menstruation is punitive and taxes should be removed.

**Recommended actions:** Use your power to improve MHM and work toward a healthier, more productive India.

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

1

Awareness

Normalising  
**MENSTRUATION**

2

Access and Use

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE  
**PRODUCTS** IN INDIA  
The Evolving Landscape

3

Disposal and Treatment

MANAGEMENT OF  
**MENSTRUAL WASTE**

## 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=2763>

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



A close-up photograph of two young Indian women. The woman on the left is in the foreground, looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression. She has a dark bindi on her forehead and is wearing gold jewelry, including a nose ring and earrings. The woman on the right is slightly behind her, also looking to the right. She has a red bindi and is wearing a yellow and red garment. The background is a dark, wooden lattice structure.

We're ready to change the  
dialogue on menstruation – are  
you?