

The background image shows an outdoor schoolyard in a mountainous region. A group of students is sitting on the ground in a circle, facing a whiteboard. There are several buildings with blue roofs and yellow walls in the background. The scene is set against a backdrop of green hills and mountains under a cloudy sky.

# **Girls' Menstruation Project in Khotang**

**Project Update**

**May 7, 2023**

# High Level Meetings with Local Governments

- Planned – 2
- Completed – 1
- Municipal level meeting with Rawabesi Rural Municipality (RM) completed on April 24, 2023
- Municipal level meeting with Diktel Rupakot Majhuwagadhi pending





Meeting with Rawabesi RM



# Meeting with Rawabesi RM

- Presided by Deputy Mayor Kaushila Gurung
- Introduction and coordination
- We will be working with 1 school –Sharada High School –of their area
- RM team was very positive and appreciated the project objectives, given their approval
- RM agreed to extending any support required for the project
- Agreed upon evaluation and reviews of the project, and giving appropriate feedback when needed

- Kaushila Gurung, Deputy Mayor –even at this day and age, we women and girls, cannot tell about our situation openly. And girl students are suffering due to it. We, the municipality, has also done some work to address this issue. Together, we can bring more positive changes in a girl's school environment.
- Kaushal Raj Adhikari, In-charge of the Municipal Health Office –we male often only pretend to listening about women's issues but hardly do anything about it. Maybe only 30% of us actually physically support women. And specially in Hindu household, the practice of discriminating during period is still very prevalent.
- Nirjala Paudel, Accountant – we have to suffer for about a week due to menstrual pain, blood flow so rest spaces are so important for us. This is needed not only in schools, but in every offices.
- Tek Bahadur Thapa, guest and teacher – in Hindu culture, women are restricted from entering kitchen during period but then they are made to do such heavy work outside home which is more discrimination. I think male members should take greater responsibility during periods. Keeping small girls away from family during their periods negatively affects them and also perpetuates gender divide



# Ward level meetings

- Planned -4
- Completed – 4
  - Jalapa – March 19, 2023
  - Kharmi – March 24, 2023
  - Hauchur – April 24, 2023
  - Patheka – April 27, 2023



Meeting at Patheka



Meeting at Hauchur





Meeting at Kharmi



# Meeting with Schools

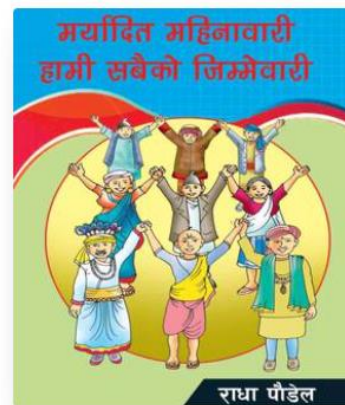
- Planned -5
- Completed -3
  - Kalika High School, Kharmi– March 26, 2023 (teachers), March 27, 2023 (SMC+PTA)
  - Shree Sharada High School, Hauchur - April 24, 2023 (joint)
  - Saraswoti High School, Patheka - April 27, 2023 (joint)
- Shree Jyoti School, Planned for May 10, 2023
- Jalapa High School, Planned for May 12, 2023

- All have felt the need of this kind of project
- Have expected behavior change from male students as they become aware about it
- A ward member in Hauchur- we send our daughters' to others home during their first period, we don't eat from their hands while they are on period. We haven't been able to let go of this ritual at all, which I think is unfair to our daughters.
- Yagya Narayan Shrestha, SMC chairperson of Sharada School – why talk about society? Let's look at my own home. We are 4 generations living together. My grand father, if he goes to houses of Rai or other caste, he will first take a bath at a river, purify himself and then will only enter our house. So it's very hard to change people's thinking although we try our best from our side. But girls getting a break for 4-5 days from household chores is also a good thing, so we cannot say that everything about our culture is bad.
- Nirmala Karki, Teacher at Sharada School- I don't have to go to the kitchen for 4 days during my period. I feel like maybe they should make it 5 days because I get to rest. But, people also call us untouchable during that time so I feel a little bad about that.
- Sauraj Rai, teacher at Saraswati School – I think rest spaces for girls will be a very important development. It will help the girls so much in having a good school environment.



# Training/Handbook

- Search for facilitator ongoing – with 2 potential organizations
- Have talked to local health staff for support



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Will be acquiring this book for all schools and mother's group

# Reflections from Babita Rai, Field coordinator

- So far positive response in all the meetings from schools, teachers, local officials and community
- Meetings are easier to do if board members of Janasewa accompany her to meetings as this is her first time handling a project of this scale
- Travelling is a bit hard because includes a lot of walking, and so sometimes have not reached on time
- Invited participants arrive very late for meetings, but the meetings themselves have been very fruitful

