

# Transformation Towards Inclusive and Resilient Menstrual Health and Hygiene Services



## Summary:

- Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) is a basic right to maintain dignity.
- Women with disabilities (WwD) have become an advocate for MHH through this project.
- This project ensures increased availability and access to hygiene facilities, sanitary products and information for stigma-free, safe and dignified menstruation.
- The WASH sector has a central role to play in supporting safe and dignified menstruation management to positively impact women and girls.

## Need for the project/work:

People living in rural areas of Bangladesh have limited knowledge of MHH and thus have unhealthy personal hygiene. Lack of awareness of safe hygiene practices, unavailability and inaccessibility of menstrual hygiene resources are some of the primary reasons of poor hygiene practices.

Women and girls usually use rags that they repurpose due to a lack of knowledge of safe menstrual hygiene. This has a profound impact on the personal health, privacy and dignity of girls and women and their overall empowerment, gender equality and poverty.



## Lessons Learned:

Key learnings indicated that WwD act as prominent change agents to make WASH materials and services easily available to promote inclusive WASH.

The evidence for transformative change is promising given that there is increasing demand for improved services with the availability of MHH products.

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## Project process:

- Identifying and selecting the Women with Disabilities (WwD) through discussion with Self Help Group, Women Groups and Union Parishad (UP)
- Organise training on sanitation marketing approach
- Influence UP to provide trade license to WwD
- Ensure MoU signing between WwD and UP
- Provide input support
- Tag WwD with a wholesaler so that they are able to get sanitary products easily
- Support WwD with raising community awareness, sensitising and promoting personal hygiene at both community-level and at educational institutions.



## Outcomes:

- WwD who previously could not come out for public activities are now selling hygiene products such as sanitary napkins, buckets with water taps, and soap at an affordable price by visiting door to door .
- The WwDs are involved in disseminating hygiene messages. Results show that 17,355 women and girls have benefited from 3,821 households and 73 schools.
- As MHH champions, they are now helping women and girls maintain proper menstrual care with dignity.
- The project has created scope for WwDs to engage in income generating activities.
- A local WASH value-chain system has been established in the rural communities where the project is being implemented.

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