



Facilitating girls' attendance at schools

Chhaupadi, the practice of banishing girls and women to a hut or shed when they have their periods, is common in Nepal, particularly in the remote areas. In some parts of Nepal people believe they will be punished by God if women enter the home during menstruation. Although chhaupadi was banned by the Supreme Court in 2005 and criminalised by the Nepali Government last year, the custom is deeply entrenched in Nepalese society.

The government is trying hard to change the attitude towards women's monthly menstruation period by advocating women and girls rights and educating them about their bodily changes and functions, particularly in schools. At the same time they are promoting a girl friendly learning environment in schools. Separate girls' toilets is government policy but not all schools are able to provide for this. In addition, sanitary products are often too expensive for girls in the rural areas or they are too shameful to buy them. Most of the girls use socks or old dirty clothes or rags resulting in unwanted communicable diseases. All this leads to prolonged absence of girls at school as they are too embarrassed to go during their period.

Together with our partner NGO, on the ground, we have identified the schools that are in need of a girls' toilet and better facilities to dispose of sanitary towels. Inner Wheel District 10 are considering being our sponsor for a project to construct a girls' toilet at Lelep School, the only school in our project area with a girls' hostel, and to provide education to girls and mothers' groups to explain their period and how to manage it in the most hygienic way, privately and with dignity. The training will involve school management and teachers, so they can monitor and follow-up.

There are four secondary schools within our project area:

Saraswati School, Lelep with a hostel for 30 girls

Sundevi School

Yamphudin School

Mamankhe School

The above schools cater for approximately 250 girls in early teenage years.

We are excited to implement this project, together with Inner Wheel District 10, subject to ratification, ensuring an increased daily attendance of girls and improving their personal health.

There are more schools in our working area that are in need of better facilities for girls' and hygiene training programmes. Please get in touch if you or your organisation are interested to support this work.



The existing girls' toilet at Lelep Hostel



Examples of new toilet facilities built by HTUK

