

SLICE

Director's Message



In development work, there are some issues that span various aspects of empowerment—economic, social, cultural and political. One such intersectional issue is period poverty. BREADS' work in alignment with the sustainable development goals for no poverty, good health and well-being, gender equality and climate action among other goals, has led it to address period poverty indirectly for a long time. Yet, in recent times, especially with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, a more direct approach has been taken. This issue of SLICE focuses on this issue that has great impact on the well-being of girls, women and communities at large.

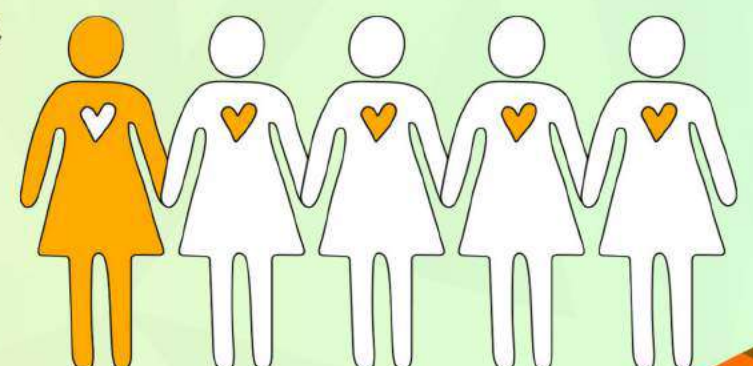
*- Fr. Joy Nedumparambil SDB
Executive Director
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Period Poverty? What's that?

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), period poverty describes the struggle many low-income women and girls face to afford menstrual products, increasing their economic vulnerability due to the financial burden posed by menstrual supplies. This is a global issue affecting women and girls who don't have access to safe, hygienic sanitary products and are unable to manage their periods with dignity due to community stigma. Period Poverty is not only an economic issue but a social and political one as well.

Women make up almost half the population in India; hence education is key in the country's future. However, India struggles to keep girls in school, with as many as 23% girls dropping out of school annually and increased absenteeism on reaching puberty. Lack of separate toilets for girls, access to water or sanitation facilities in schools are also major contributors to the dropout rates. Period poverty is also associated with lack of toilets or disposal facilities, being restricted from locations and activities, and enduring pain.

One in five low-income women report missing work, school or similar events due to lack of access to period supplies



What starts with dropping out of school goes on to affect life choices, work prospects, and eventually socio-economic opportunities. It can also cause other vulnerabilities by pushing women and girls towards unhealthy coping mechanisms.



Therefore, menstrual health impacts women's health, work, and education. Their everyday well-being is compromised due to the stigma and cultural stereotypes surrounding menstruation. Up until now, this biological process has added a whole lot of disadvantages for women and the lack of attention to this issue is

striking! However, some positive strides have also been taken to address the various issues of period poverty.

How is BREADS involved?

Through the WECAN, WELiVE, and CREAM programmes, BREADS has been advocating for girl children's education, children's rights, better health, women empowerment, and therefore indirectly addressing better menstrual hygiene and awareness for women.

With children, Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM) promotes education on child rights and the formation of Child Rights Clubs in Karnataka, and is a vehicle for children to assimilate their rights and demand them when denied. Besides preventing child marriages and school dropouts, children have strongly advocated for proper toilets, sanitation, and infrastructure facilities at school as well as the construction of compound walls for the safety of girl students. Between 2016-2019, 11890 toilets were built in schools across 10 districts of Karnataka through the intervention of the CRCs and CREAM.

As part of BREADS' women empowerment programmes in 2020, the Women Empowerment through Collective Action and Network (WECAN) programme works with 3600+ women who have been traditionally side-lined and oppressed due to social, cultural, and ethnic biases. In addition to this, 5000+ general public, 200 community stakeholders (duty bearers, NGO leaders, law enforcement people, CSO leaders, etc.), and 600 youth and children are the direct target beneficiaries of this project.



Similarly, the Women Empowerment through Livelihood and Entrepreneurship (WELivE) project, focuses on sustainable income generation and social empowerment for rural women through micro enterprises. Through these two interventions- women are made aware of societal issues such as child marriage, gender bias, women’s rights and health, and access to resources through training/workshops/ awareness programmes. They are trained to optimise their knowledge and potential to address these issues as tackling the stigma of menstruation should go hand in hand with education and resources to manage them. As women have access to knowledge through these interventions, they can influence and educate others to bring about change as sisters and mothers are considered major sources of information on menstruation.

During the COVID-19 lockdowns and their aftermath, BREADS was engaged in distributing emergency supplies to various people in need. As part of this relief work, BREADS distributed 2700 toiletry and hygiene kits for women in need. Sensitised to the need of girls and women for hygienic menstrual products and the urgent need to avoid further degradation of the environment with plastic-based products, BREADS is promoting the production of reusable cloth sanitary napkins. Three women’s self-help groups will earn a livelihood creating sustainable products that promote health and well-being for other girls and women, while also protecting the Earth. Indeed, addressing period poverty leads to the well-being and empowerment of all!!

	<p>- 2000 poor women were capacitated to become entrepreneurs.</p>		<p>- 500 of these women (25%) are trained in organic farming and 300 of them initiated organic kitchen garden in their homes.</p>
	<p>- 1500 of these women (75%) are trained in production skills and entrepreneurship.</p>		<p>- At least 1300 of these trained women (65%) will enjoy 15% increased income.</p>
	<p>- 1000 of these women (67%) are engaged in individual or group-based enterprises for income generation and savings.</p>		

BREADS' Calendar

January 2021

- Job fair at DB BEST Academy
- ICICI bank recruitment drives in Kerala & Karnataka by TVS Training & Services Ltd.
- Makkala Gram Sabhas in the CREAM districts
- St. John Bosco feast celebrations in all Don Bosco presences
- Inauguration of Batch 14 at DB BEST Academy
- Monitoring visits to Kerala projects

February 2021

- Silver Jubilee Celebrations of DB Hassan and DB Bhadravathi
- KISMAT quarterly evaluation
- Installation of the New Provincial
- External evaluation of DBPA Hospet project
- Meeting Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) officials

BREADS NEWS



Press Meet in Haveri District

Don Bosco Child Labour Mission (DBCLM) Davangere conducted a press meet at Pathrika Bhavana, Haveri district on 23 January 2021 [more...](#)



Collaboration with the Panchayat Raj Department

BREADS Bangalore held a fruitful discussion with Smt. Uma Mahadevan IAS, Principal Secretary to the Government [more...](#)



Inauguration of WELive Income Generation Programmes in Alappuzha, Kerala

25th January 2021 marked the official inauguration of 6 Income Generation Programmes (IGPs) initiated by [more...](#)