

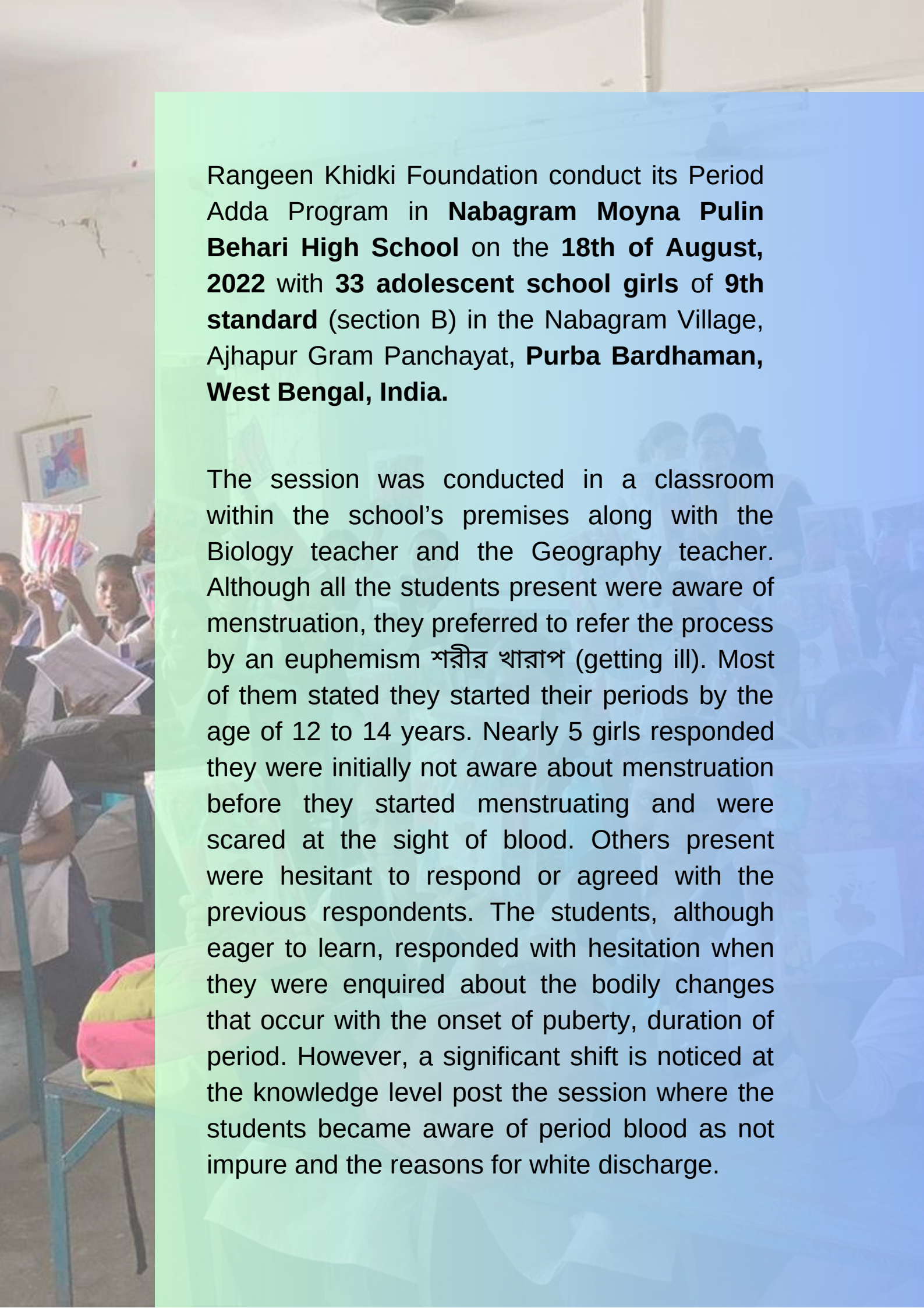
# Project Period Adda

18th August, 2022

Nabagram Village



**RANGEEN  
KHIDKI**



Rangeen Khidki Foundation conduct its Period Adda Program in **Nabagram Moyna Pulin Behari High School** on the **18th of August, 2022** with **33 adolescent school girls of 9th standard** (section B) in the Nabagram Village, Ajhapur Gram Panchayat, **Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal, India.**

The session was conducted in a classroom within the school's premises along with the Biology teacher and the Geography teacher. Although all the students present were aware of menstruation, they preferred to refer the process by an euphemism শরীর খারাপ (getting ill). Most of them stated they started their periods by the age of 12 to 14 years. Nearly 5 girls responded they were initially not aware about menstruation before they started menstruating and were scared at the sight of blood. Others present were hesitant to respond or agreed with the previous respondents. The students, although eager to learn, responded with hesitation when they were enquired about the bodily changes that occur with the onset of puberty, duration of period. However, a significant shift is noticed at the knowledge level post the session where the students became aware of period blood as not impure and the reasons for white discharge.



As the session progressed, some of the students shared the practices or restrictions that they follow during menstruation. Most of the girls shared that they refrained from entering the temple premises or even touching anything sacred at their home, which generally stemmed from perceiving menstruation as profane or impure. Through the session, the facilitators debunked several myths surrounding menstruation and urged the students to challenge the harmful practices that limit their choices and double their discomfort.

Through a thorough discussion on healthy practices to follow during periods, the other students were ensured that some amount of physical activity during menstruation is recommended to ease discomfort.

However, none of the girls prior to the session were aware about alternative menstrual products apart from disposable sanitary napkins and cloth. As discussions were held on the different menstrual products and its aftercare, the biology teacher posed a question on the hygiene factor of cloth pads as after washing as cloth pads are required to hang dry under sun to avoid infections. The facilitator effectively initiated a discussion as to how the undergarments are also hung out under sun to dry and it has so far caused no harm as long as one uses the appropriate cleaning product and procedures to rinse and disinfect intimate wears including cloth pads. The discussion enlightened the participants too as they became aware that plastic packaging of disposable pads does not necessarily mean they are hygienically better than cloth pads and disposable pads contain chemicals and bleach substances that irritates the skin around genitals and prolonged usage of the same pad might lead to infection. Further, the geography teacher enquired about leakage and stains caused by cloth based menstrual products to which a thorough discussions were held on the protective layers included in the cloth pads that ensured no leakage and easy stain removal by washing them with soap and cold water.

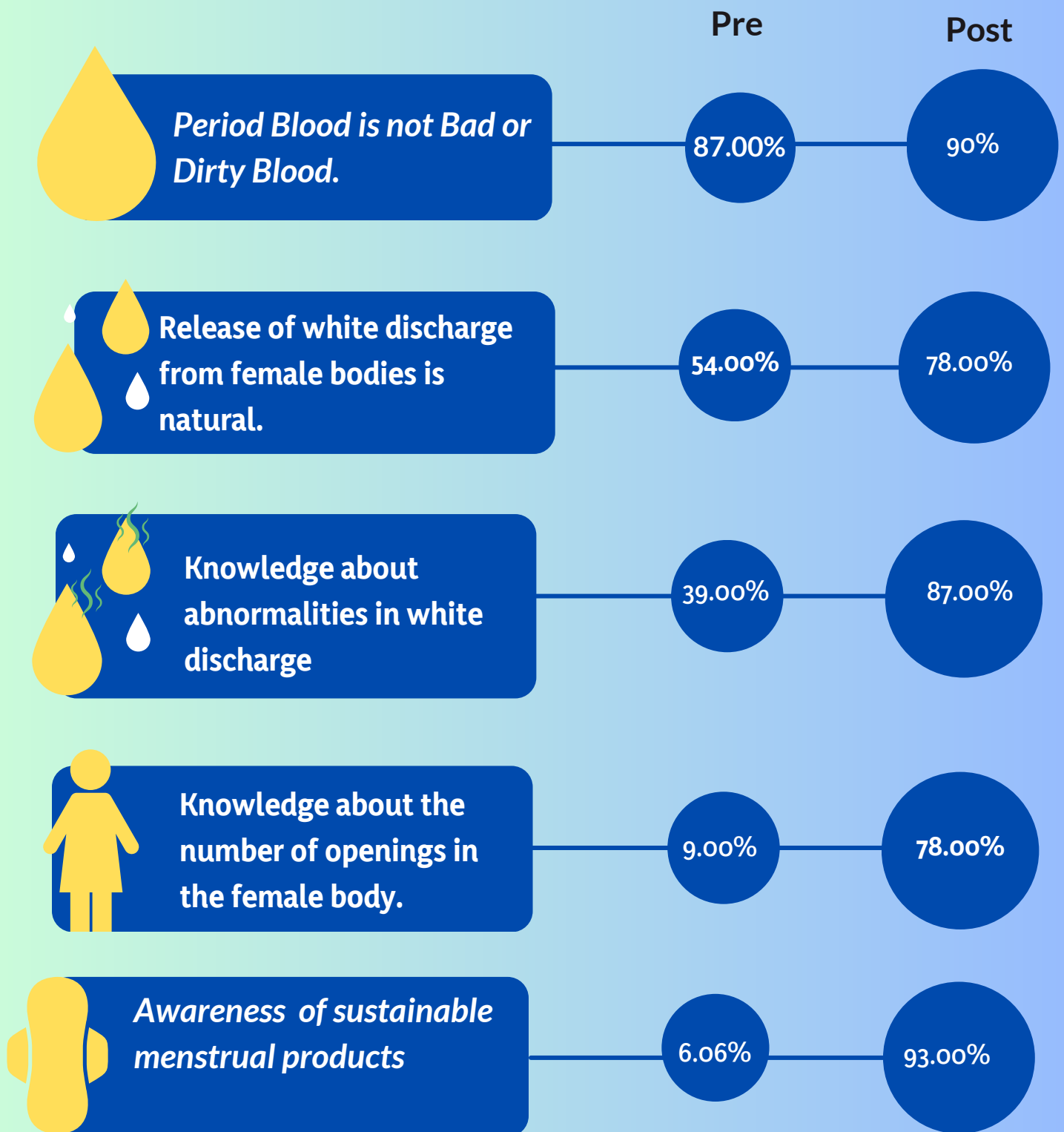
After the session concluded, most of the participants wanted to share the information and knowledge that they earned with their family members, especially mothers, sisters and friends. Some even stated that they would disseminate the knowledge from the session to those who had failed to attend the session. After concluding the session, Eco Femme pad kits consisting of 4 cloth pads were distributed among the students. All 33 students who were present opted for the Eco Femme cloth pads.

A group of students in a classroom are holding up colorful posters. The posters feature illustrations of a woman's body and diagrams related to menstruation. The students are looking towards the camera with various expressions. The background shows a classroom setting with wooden doors and a white wall.

# CHALLENGES

- The session was conducted with 33 students from Class 9 Section B, participation of students from the other sections would have further enriched the session.
- Menstruation is still a tabooed issue hence, discussion being held in the presence of two school teachers in the classroom might have added to the reluctance of the students to respond in a more free-spirited manner.
- Some students felt hesitant to voice their experiences and opinions which might be attributed to the shame and stigma attached to menstruation and its practices.
- Lastly, since the session was held during the second half post lunch break, the weather conditions and ill ventilation system of the classroom added discomfort among the students as well as the facilitators.

# OVERALL OUTPUT OF THE TRAINING



# REFLECTIONS

এখন তো মনে হচ্ছে কাপড় কিংবা কাপড়ের প্যাড ব্যবহার করাই ভালো এবং খরচাও অনেক কম পরবে।

Now it feels like using cloth or cloth pads will be better and affordable choices

আমার এই আলোচনা ভালো লেগেছে তাই কাপড়ের প্যাড ব্যবহার করতে চাই”।

I liked today's discussion and would love to use cloth pads from now on

আজকের আলোচনার মধ্যে থেকে আমার ভালো লেগেছে যে আমরা কাপড় ছাড়াও অন্য কিছু যেমন কাপড়ের প্যাড, পিরিয়ড কাপের মতন অন্য কিছু ব্যবহার করতে পারি”।

In today's discussion I liked that apart from cloth we can also use a variety of other menstrual products like cloth pads and menstrual cups

কাপড়ের প্যাড এর ব্যাপারে জানতে পেরেছি সব থেকে ভালো লেগেছে”।

Came to know about cloth pads is what I liked the most