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# From Her First Period to Everyday Power: Celebrating Milestones in Menstrual Health Equity

June 14, 2025 · 2 Mins Read · 29 Views

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*How grassroots partnerships and quiet leadership are rewriting the menstrual health narrative: from shame to strength*

The first period of a girl marks the beginning of her reproductive capabilities; it’s a moment she remembers her entire life. Ideally, it should be embraced with love, dignity, empowerment and knowledge. However, it’s been labelled as a silence, guilt, stigma, taboo, shame and something that should not be talked about and is often pushed into the shadows. However, the time has started to change, and how people see menstruation is changing through grassroots partnership and focused leadership in urban centres as well as rural communities.

Real change doesn’t come from campaigns alone; it comes when a woman in a village and her daughters can talk about periods openly, or when a woman in an office feels supported to manage her work during her period without judgment.

Menstrual health is no longer about providing sanitary pads; it’s about celebrating resilience and strength and redefining the way the world views menstruation and making it a human rights issue, which is celebrated at every stage of women’s and girls’ lives. Whether it’s a young girl in a city learning to manage her period among a busy, stressful life or one in a rural setting beginning to break from long-held taboos, the landscape has begun to change. Across regions and backgrounds, the focus is shifting from silence, discomfort and shame to dignity, strength, awareness and knowledge for every girl.

Change is being made from the ground up by local and government organisations, volunteers, and advocates across urban and rural landscapes, and they are breaking taboos and delivering culturally sensitive education and support. By fostering open conversation and empowering communities with tools, they are turning silence into dialogues and shame into strength.

Some of the powerful progress has come not from headlines but from quiet leadership of people who distribute pads in silence, teach dignity on how to handle it and transform communities without standing on the stage.

The impact of these transformations has begun to be seen everywhere, from schools in urban neighbourhoods where girls attend school confidently to rural villages where menstruation is discussed openly for the first time. These milestones are not individual achievements but the collective step towards social equity, transformation and inclusion for a healthier society.

This journey from vulnerability and unawareness of a first period has been transformed into an everyday power of informed decision and reflects a growing movement for justice. It’s a gear shift from negligence to inclusivity, from invisibility to recognition.

By continuing to invest in grassroots leadership and collaborative strategic partnerships that span across rural areas, society can ensure menstrual health awareness is embedded in broader efforts for education, health, gender equality, security and empowerment. When menstrual health is treated with respect and dignity, it ignites a strength that reciprocates far beyond the cycle itself.


Access to pads is one thing; true menstrual awareness begins when no girl misses school, a woman doesn’t have to apologise when she touches a jar of pickle when she is on her period, and a village woman can openly talk about managing her post-pregnancy bleeding with her mother-in-law.



**Shared by:** Dr Malini Saba,  
  
philanthropist, businesswoman and founder of the Saba Family Foundation.

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