

EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

RATO BALTIN 2023



Submitted by: be artsy
For:

DESCRIPTION.....	2
RATO BALTIM.....	2
HAPPY WOMEN TRAINING CENTER.....	4
EDUFEM.....	5
BENEFICIARIES.....	5
PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION.....	7
EVALUATION APPROACH.....	8
DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY.....	8
RESULTS.....	9
CHHAUPADI.....	9
MENSTRUAL EDUCATION.....	12
MENSTRUAL CUPS.....	13
DIRECT IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY.....	15
DIRECT IMPACTS ON WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY.....	16
Examples of success.....	16
BUDGET EVALUATION.....	17
TRANSPARENCY IN DONATIONS.....	18
WHERE WE GET THE FUNDS:.....	18
FUTURE PLANS.....	18
CONCLUSION.....	19

DESCRIPTION

RATO BALTIN

In western Nepal, the lack of safe sanitation options often results in health issues, school absenteeism, and even death. Menstruation is a taboo topic that evokes shame and insecurity. It also leads to degrading traditions for women, such as "Chhaupadi".

Chhaupadi is a practice that restricts women and girls during menstruation to segregated and precarious spaces, exposing them to many risks, including sexual assault, hypothermia, and fires. It is a deeply rooted practice in Nepalese culture and is difficult to eliminate as it has been passed down from generation to generation.

The Rato Baltin Project is an example of how NGOs can work with local communities to achieve significant social change. Through education and the distribution of menstrual health kits, the project helps women and girls understand menstruation as a natural function of the body and not as shame or impurity.

Participatory photography is a powerful tool for reflection and social change as it allows community members to express their own ideas and feelings about their situation. This helps create a space for dialogue and mutual understanding, which is crucial for achieving significant change in the practice of Chhaupadi.

The distribution of menstrual health kits is also crucial for the success of the project as it helps women and girls experience menstruation safely and dignified, without being segregated. This also helps alleviate the fear and anxiety associated with menstruation and improve menstrual health overall.

The Rato Baltin Project is an example of how education and cooperation with local communities can be effective in combating harmful cultural practices for women and girls. Participatory photography and the distribution of menstrual health kits are powerful tools for achieving significant and lasting change.

During the implementation of the Rato Baltin project, **we have learned a lot about the situation of widowed or single women in rural areas of Nepal.** We have realized that these women suffer severe discrimination and often find themselves in very precarious economic situations. Many times, they are forced to struggle to survive and care for their families without any assistance.

Therefore, we have decided to also focus our efforts on supporting these women through microcredits and business training. Over time, we will be able to see how these women manage to establish prosperous businesses and significantly improve their lives and those of their families.

We are deeply committed to the fight against gender discrimination and believe that all women deserve equal opportunities for economic and personal development. With our project, we hope to continue supporting widowed or single women in Nepal to help them lead a more dignified and prosperous life as well.

The project operates on multiple levels:

1. – A workshop on reproductive health education, sexual education, and guidance on sexual health for adolescents, girls, and boys, in local schools within selected communities.
2. – Menstrual health education provided through workshops for all women in the selected communities.
3. – Distribution of menstrual cups and training for volunteer school-going girls and young women in selected communities.
4. – Participatory photography workshops used to depict how girls and women feel about the Chhaupadi tradition and their menstruation, and what changes they would like to see in their experience.
5. – Training for widowed or socially excluded women so that they can establish their own businesses.

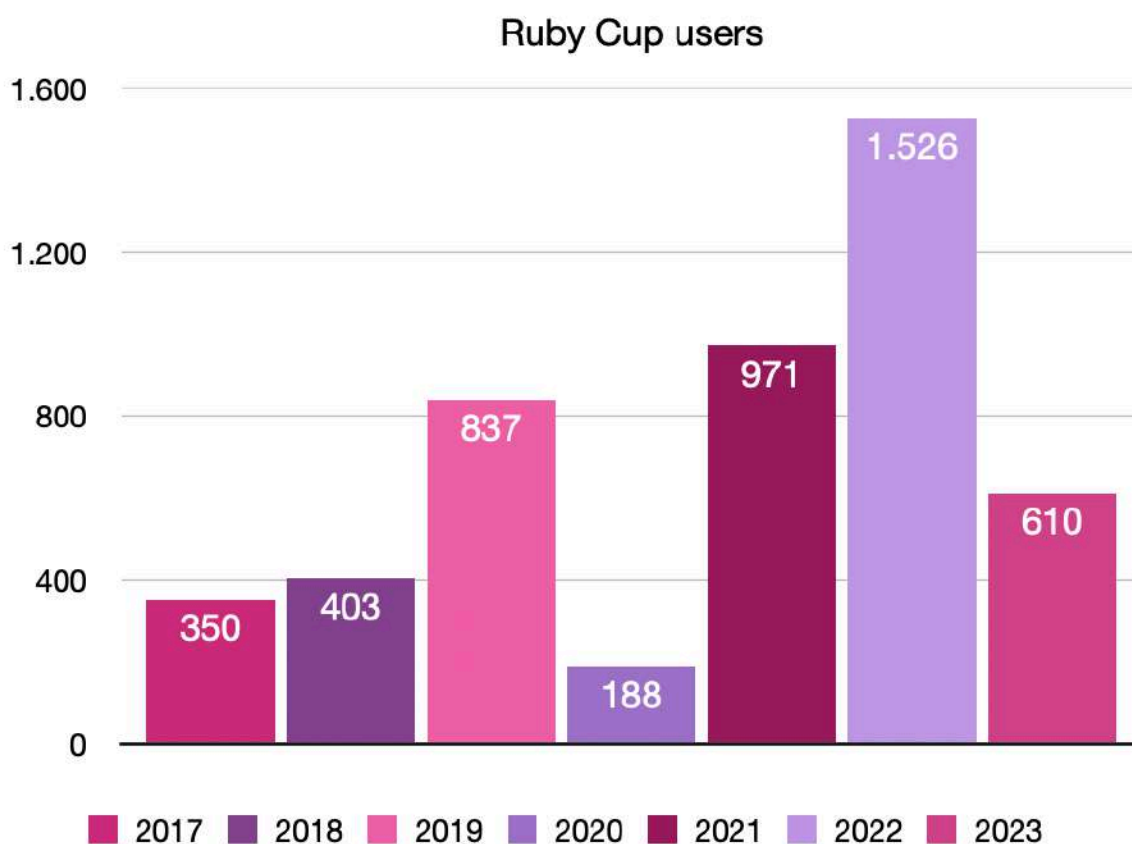
The distribution of menstrual cups is an important initiative for the Rato Baltin project, as it offers a safe and sustainable solution for menstrual health management to women in the Achham district. Menstrual cups are reusable and can last for up to ten years, making them an economical and environmentally friendly option. Additionally, menstrual cups are easy to clean and sterilize, and they do not cause any environmental impact like pads or tampons might.

The collaboration with **Ruby Cup**, a company with a socially responsible vision, which through its “**buy one, give one**” program is helping women in Africa and Nepal, makes this initiative even more relevant and impactful for women's health and well-being. Through the distribution of menstrual cups, the **women of Achham now have a safe and effective solution for managing their menstrual health, while contributing to the sustainability of the planet.**

We must congratulate the Achham team for successfully distributing 610 menstrual cups and providing training and support to users in 9 new communities in Achham, Nepal, as well as conducting follow-up visits 16 times to villages that previously received support. This is a significant milestone that helps improve menstrual health and the well-being of women in this remote region of Nepal.

In addition to menstrual cups, users have also received an aluminium bucket, a hand towel and soap, as well as an instruction booklet in Nepali and a pen for writing. This demonstrates a commitment to providing a comprehensive and effective solution for menstrual health management and personal hygiene.

Through the Rato Baltin project, many women in Nepal have gained access to a safe, sustainable, and economical option for managing their menstrual health. Workshops and training are also important for educating and raising awareness about menstrual health and personal hygiene. It is a great example of how technology and innovation can be used to address health and well-being issues in remote communities.



HAPPY WOMEN TRAINING CENTER

The Happy Women Training Center is a highly relevant initiative in achieving gender equality and empowering women in Achham. Through training, women can acquire new skills and knowledge that

enable them to access decent work or even start their own business, thus increasing their chances of escaping poverty.

Furthermore, this initiative helps reduce gender inequality, as many women in Achham do not have access to adequate education and therefore do not have the same opportunities as men. Training at the Happy Women Training Center can help alleviate this inequality and empower women to make important decisions about their lives.

The Rato Baltin project and the Happy Women Training Center are clear examples of how sustainable development initiatives can help improve people's lives and contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

EDUFEM

The Edufem project is a significant part of the work done by be artsy to empower girls and young women in Nepal. Through the program, individuals can "sponsor" a girl for higher education.

This sponsorship covers the cost of their studies, uniform, notebooks, and the tools they need to learn. Additional support is also provided, such as school materials, tutoring, housing, meals, and assistance for health and well-being.

Through the Edufem program, be artsy aims to address gender discrimination that prevents girls from rural areas of Nepal from accessing quality education. Education is key to empowering women and girls and can help break the cycle of poverty and gender inequality. The Edufem program aims to create opportunities for girls and improve their lives through education.

With the help of sponsors, Edufem has been able to provide higher education to 3 girls from rural areas of Nepal in 2023. This investment in girls' education is an investment in the future of Nepal's rural communities. Educated girls have more opportunities to secure better-paying jobs and lead healthier and more fulfilling lives.

The Edufem project by be artsy is an example of an effort to address gender inequality and poverty through education. The support of sponsors is vital for the continuity of the program and the success of the girls who participate in it.

BENEFICIARIES

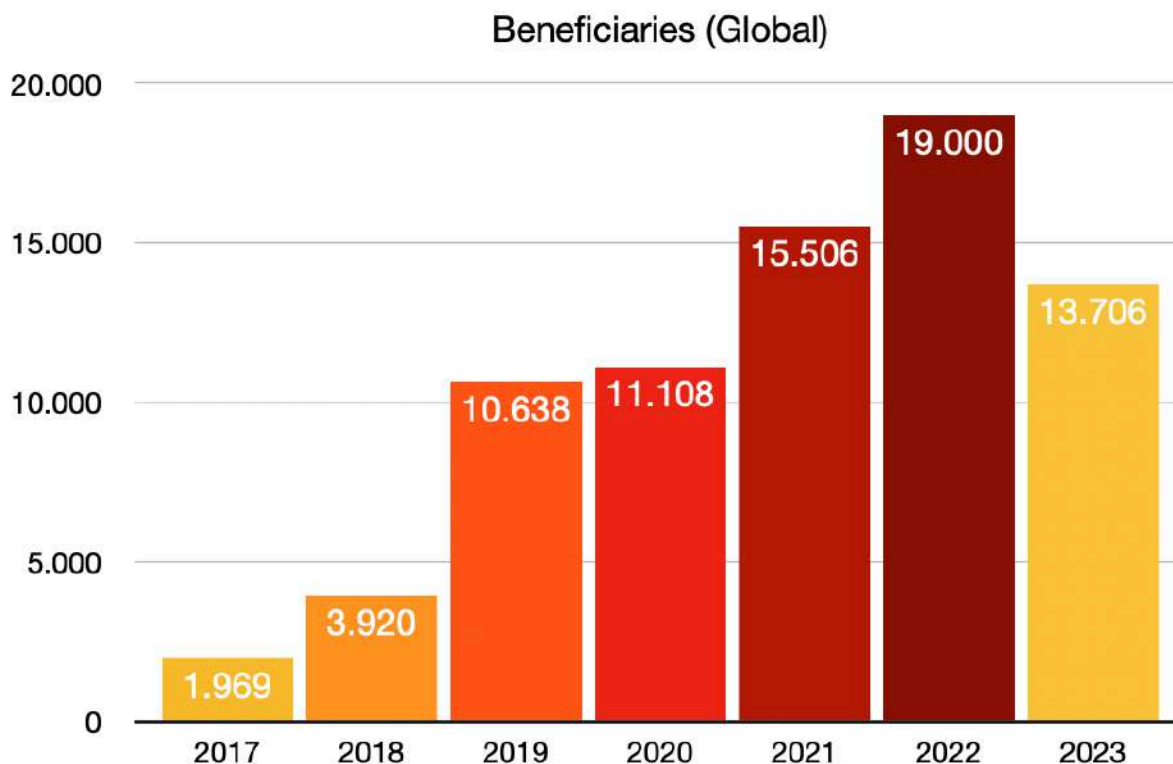
In 2023, **a total of 10,706 direct beneficiaries** from Nepal attended our workshops. This figure does not include the people who have visited the be artsy stand, which different volunteers have carried out in various places in the territory, nor the talks or exhibitions that have been held as education for development.

Indirect beneficiaries can generally be found by multiplying this number by 5, which corresponds to the average family in Nepal. Thus, there are around 10,706 x 5. **More than 53,000 indirect beneficiaries of our work in Nepal!**

List of activities carried out:

Description of the activities carried out during the year of presentation of the information, including the duration and frequency of the activities:

1. Carrying out training in menstrual health management and sex education for boys and girls in schools from class 5 to class 10, at many times following safety protocols against Covid-19.
2. Conducting sex education training classes for boys from class 5 to class 10, following all safety protocols against Covid-19.
3. Training in the use of menstrual cups for girls in village schools and distribution of menstrual cups and menstrual kits.
4. Training in menstrual health management and sexual and reproductive education, as well as climacteric for groups of village women.
5. Carrying out training in the use of menstrual cups for women under forty years of age and distribution of menstrual cups and menstrual kits.
6. Menstrual cup training for staff of the NGO Health Supervisor of Community Action Nepal (CAN) in Kathmandu, in collaboration with the project: Project28.
7. Monitoring programs and data collection of menstrual cup users.
8. Celebrating Menstrual Health Day on May 28, 2023, distributing menstrual bracelets to the community and conducting a training program on menstrual cups.
9. Carrying out monitoring in the cultivation of sunflowers and bananas in the villages,
10. Give snacks or breakfast to the people who come to our workshops.
11. Realization of training in the manufacture of natural soap at the Happy Women Training Center.
12. Training in making different types of bags at the Karuna social program workshop in the Kathmandu Valley
13. Realization of training on how to make confits (pickles in preserves) with local products.
14. Formation and production of other products that had already been made during 2022.



PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The objective of the evaluation of this project is to measure the change that has occurred at the individual level among the participants, as well as in the communities that are the object of the program. In this way, we can reach new donors for projects, who join be artsy and help us achieve our objectives:

- Educate women, girls, boys and communities about reproductive health, menstrual management and sexual education.
- Introduce the use of menstrual cups and their benefits in different social spheres, such as religious and spiritual guides and local political representatives of the communities.
- Reducing school absenteeism among girls in selected remote communities in western Nepal.
- Provide girls and women with the necessary tools to guarantee menstrual dignity.

- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.
- Achieve economic independence and lift widows out of extreme poverty.

EVALUATION APPROACH

The main focus of the project evaluation is to answer the following question: **What changes have occurred in the lives of girls and their communities in terms of the practice of Chhaupadi since the implementation of our programme?**

To ensure that the program is based on best practices and lessons learned, this evaluation also aims to address the following issues:

1. To what extent is the use of menstrual cups culturally accepted and sustainable in the remote communities of western Nepal?
2. What aspects of our program could be improved in design or implementation?
3. How to ensure that we can easily contact menstrual cup users (students and women who spend a lot of time working in the field?)

DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

During 2023, we will resume in-person follow-up visits, returning to pre-pandemic normality. Before, we had been doing the visits by telephone. Local 'be artsy' staff in Achham traveled to targeted communities to provide training on menstrual cup use, following all necessary safety measures. Additionally, we continue conversations with community members, local political representatives and religious leaders.

Using the KOBOTOOL tool, we interviewed the communities, the girls who had used the cups and also those who had not used them before, to obtain as much data as possible on the implementation during the year.

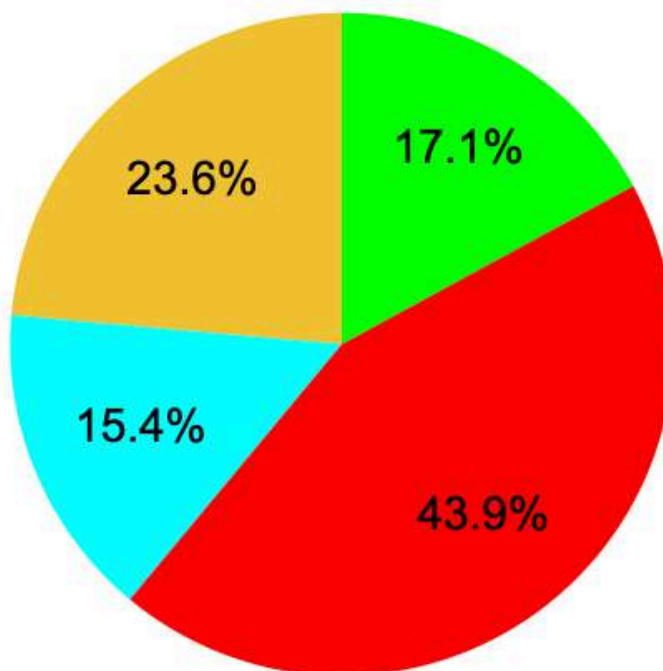
RESULTS

CHHAUPADI

The trend that started last year with girls sleeping inside their homes, in separate rooms, has stopped in 2023. Although many have started sleeping in their usual bed, there is once again a large number of girls who sleep outside even if they do not have a cabin. The effect caused by Covid of keeping the girls close to home has been broken and the cabins that were destroyed in 2019 are being rebuilt. However, the situation has improved compared to seven years ago, when almost all of them slept outside.

Where do you sleep during your menstruation?

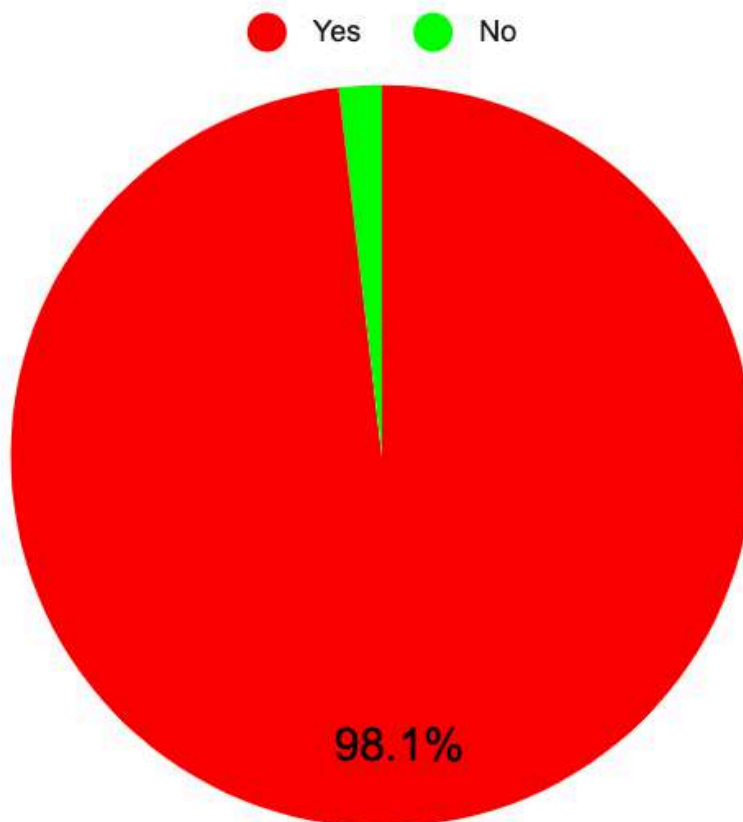
- In my Room
- In separate room of my house
- Outside Home
- Chhaugoth, cowshed



Girls attending school during menstruation has not changed substantially.

Of the group of girls who filled out our questionnaire during 2023, 98.1% responded affirmatively compared to 98.7% in 2022.

Do you go to school during your Menstruation?



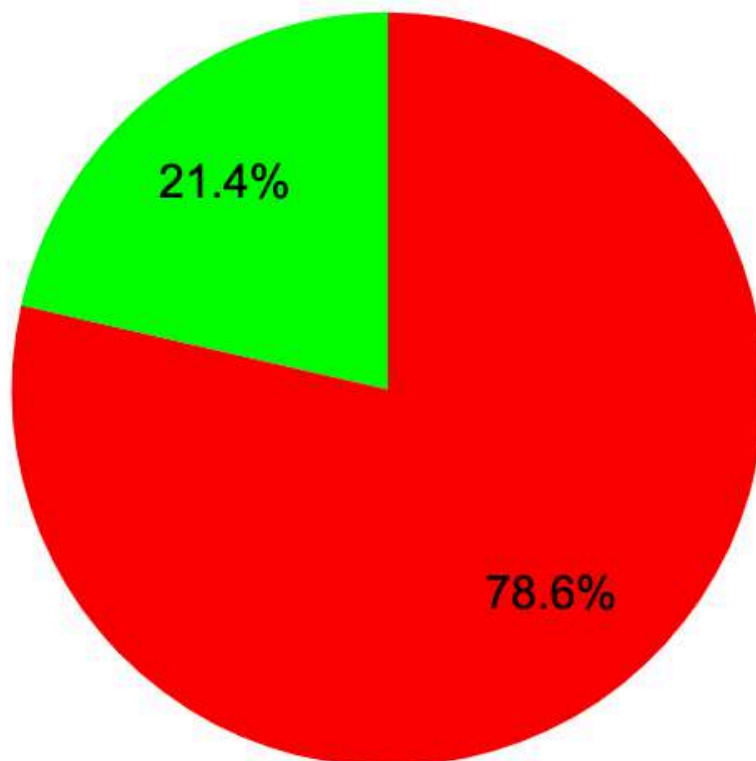
In response to the question about the presence of menstrual restrictions in their respective homes, the numbers have returned to 2021 levels: 78.6% responded affirmatively. We have to think that this year we have basically worked in a new municipality (Chaurpati), and this one is not as far away as last year (Thurmakhand).

2022: 94.2% of girls responded affirmatively.

2021: 70% of girls responded affirmatively.

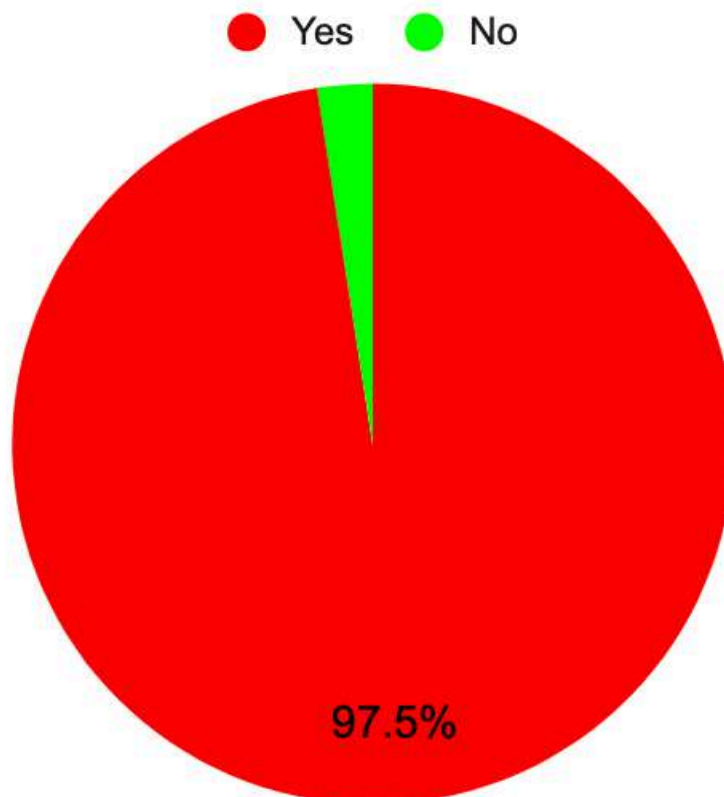
Is there menstrual restriction in your family?

● Yes ● No



Regarding the question “Would you like to change this menstrual restriction?” More and more girls are answering affirmatively.

Would you like to change the menstrual restrictions?

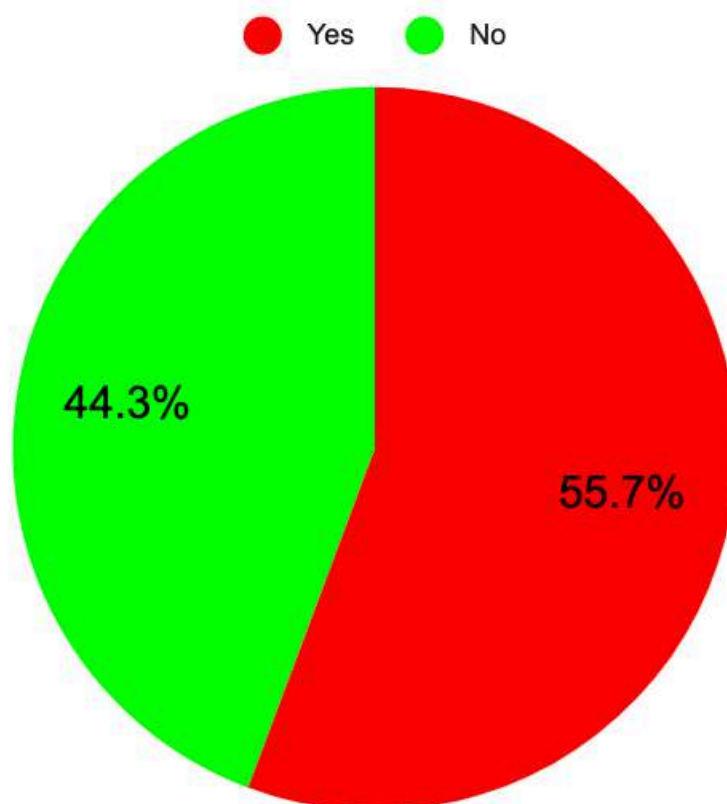


MENSTRUAL EDUCATION

Another problem we tried to address with our project is reflected in the questionnaire we conduct before the menstrual cup training. In particular, we are interested in knowing what girls' understanding of menstruation is, as well as what they knew before menstruating for the first time.

In response to the question “Did you know about menstruation before you had it?”, we have observed a slight increase in the percentage of girls who claim to have knowledge about this topic, going from 55.7% last year to 58.8% at the moment.

Did you know about menstruation before you had?



MENSTRUAL CUPS

Before the training on the menstrual cup, we conduct questionnaires. The results showed a big change in what the girls use to contain menstrual blood.

In 2022, the vast majority of girls (98.7%) used old fabrics during menstruation, in 2023 this number remained at 35.8%.

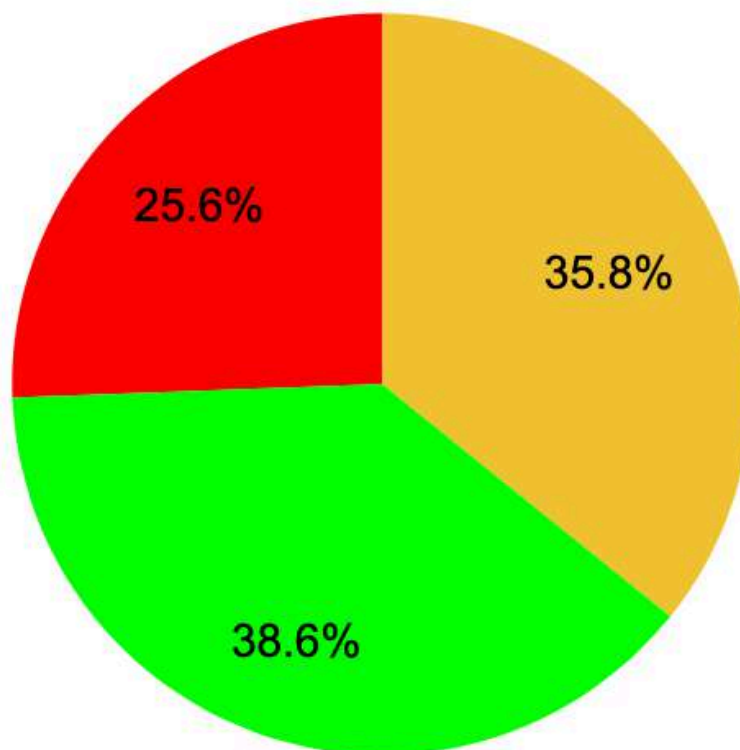
25.6% of the girls use reusable cloth pads like the ones we provide, made by the women at the Happy women training center. **The worst news we have received is that 38.6% use normal pads to use and throw away** (which are single-use products that contain plastic, chemicals and contaminants).

This has resulted in much less interest in the cups, because the pads are distributed free of charge by the government in schools. These regions do not have recycling or disposal

systems, and let's remember, the girls do not use the latrines because of tradition, they normally do their business in the jungle and forest, which is where these dirty pads are left.

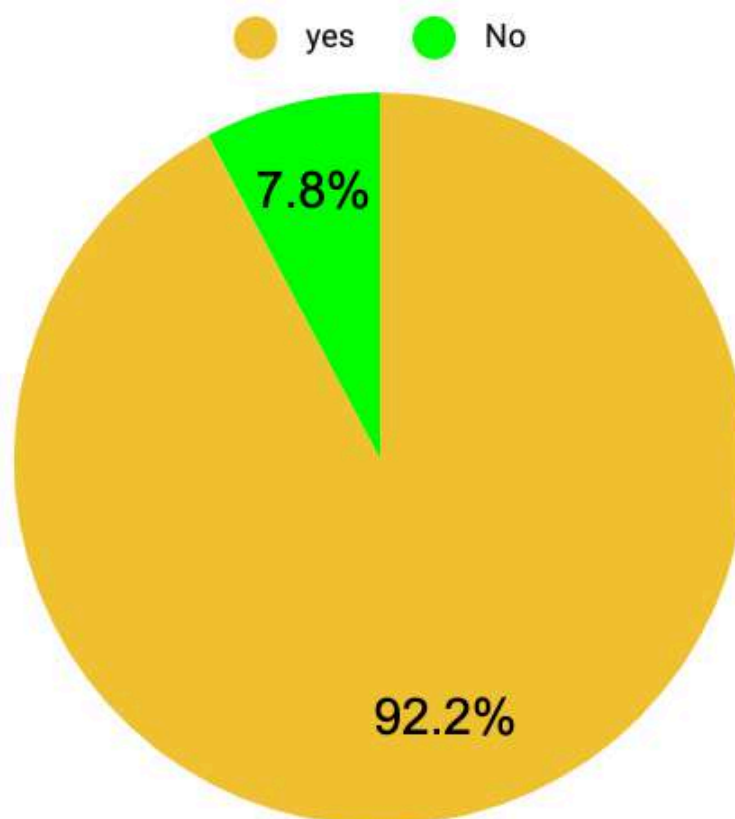
What kind of product do you use during your Menstruation?

● Cloth ● sanitari Pad ● Resusable pad



During this year we have distributed a total of **610 Ruby Cup brand menstrual cups**. **The acceptance rate has been 92.2%**, which means that the vast majority of girls have been willing to try it. Only a small percentage of the girls who did not want to use it verbalize fear of doing it, finding it complicated or painful.

Do you use a menstrual cup?



Our main objective in the 3 and 6 month follow-up was to verify if the menstrual cup is accepted as a hygienic and healthy method for menstrual protection. The questions asked of the girls and women who received the menstrual cups allowed us to evaluate whether the use of the cup had a positive impact on menstrual health and hygiene.

99.5% of the girls said they would recommend the use of the menstrual cup and 99.8% said that the cup had brought a very positive change in their lives.

DIRECT IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY

Employing local girls as coordinators, trainers and assistant trainers (mentors) in Achham, the Rato Baltin project provides employment and economic opportunities to the local community.

In total, in 2023, 2 coordinators, 8 trainers and 2 trainer assistants, as well as 2 administration and management people, have worked at KTM. In addition, 3 external trainers have come as trainers for the different workshops of the *Happy women training center*.

We have also had the unconditional help of the Board of Directors of our counterpart **Unnati**.

Through this occupation, the girls receive a salary, which allows them to be more economically independent. They also gain experience in organization and project management, which helps them develop as leaders in their communities and develop new skills they can use in the future. Additionally, the use of local staff helps ensure that the project is culturally appropriate and that the social and cultural norms of the community are met.

DIRECT IMPACTS ON WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY

In the *Happy Women* workshop there were a total of 211 women beneficiaries.

The total number of products made in the workshops, cloth pads, incense, soap, masks, bags, preserves that were donated to the community and during the menstrual education workshops were **15,020 products.**

The execution of the “Happy Women” project in the municipality of Mangalsen was carried out within the scheduled time according to the planned schedule. The teams conducted training sessions in their respective areas, and the management team provided the necessary assistance throughout the process. The project specifically focused on women's groups, contributing to the global success of initiatives aimed at promoting the well-being and empowerment of women in these regions.

Examples of success

Jhupri Bista, a prominent member of the *Happy Women training center*, has achieved notable success with a video with two children, one of them with special needs.

Recently, she has launched her own business in Marx in Mangalsen, where she makes popular appetizers such as chatpaty, panipuri and tea. During 2024 she plans to apply for a microcredit to buy a sewing machine.

Through her new entrepreneurial venture, Jhupri has not only established herself as a qualified businesswoman, but she has also contributed to her financial independence and the well-being of her family. This success story reflects the positive impact of initiatives such as the *Happy women* project in empowering people to create their own economic opportunities and prosper six communities.

After training in canning, one of her assistants, **Bhajan Bogati**, will start her new business venture in Mangalsen. Specialized in offering hotels with high-quality adobats, with natural ingredients, Bhajan's dedication and passion have not gone unnoticed. Her inspiring journey was recently published in a local newspaper, highlighting her commitment to using healthy ingredients in her dishes. Bhajan expresses an immense gratitude for our initiative and we are delighted to see how its success story unfolds.

News translated with Google:

https://mangalkhabar-com.translate.goog/archives/9451?_x_tr_sl=ne&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=wapp

Original news: <https://mangalkhabar.com/archives/9451>

BUDGET EVALUATION

This year we have received a subsidy from the Barberà Solidària Foundation, from Treballadors solidaris de l'Hospitalet, from the Col·legi de Treballadors Socials de Catalunya and from the Fons Català de Cooperació thanks to the Castellbisbal City Council.

Some subsidies that we received annually have failed and this has destabilized the accounts for 2023. The budget we needed was 136,000 euros and we have only been able to obtain half of that.

Voluntarily, different people have gone to fairs and markets to disseminate the NGO's work in Nepal and collect donations in exchange for products made by the same volunteers.

Our international cooperation technician made a short trip to the area during the spring to monitor the project in person. But the rest of the monitoring has been done by local staff to reduce costs.

We must emphasize that, although we did not have the desired budget, the be artsy team did everything they could to achieve the best possible results. (provisional accounting).

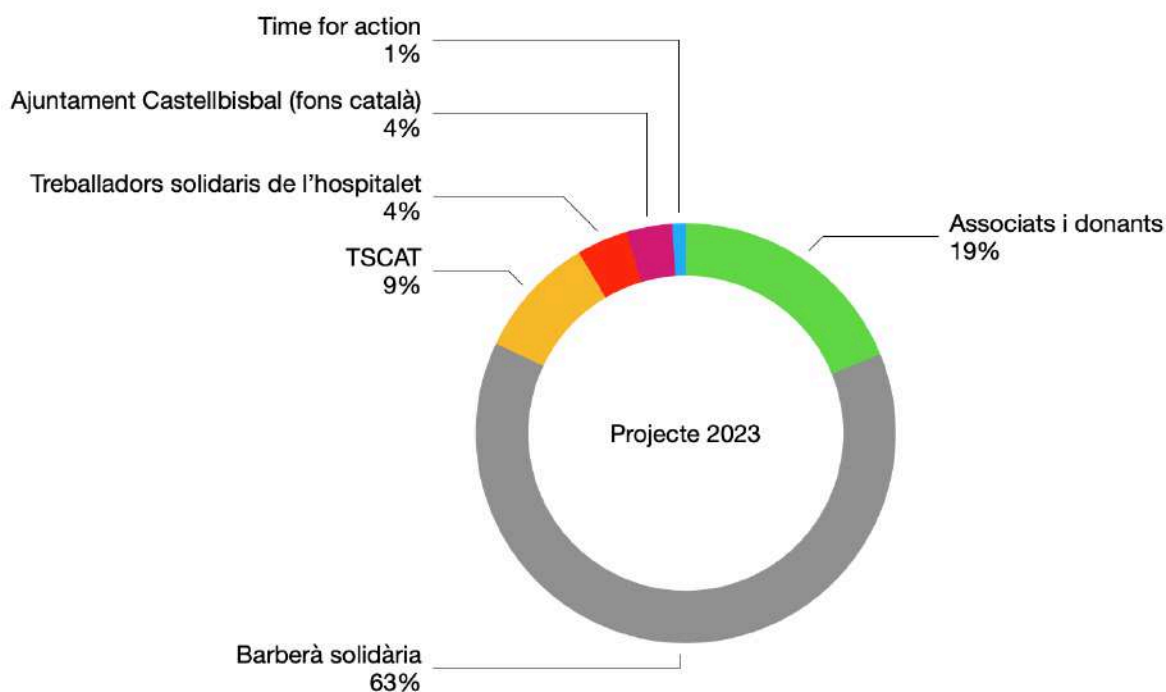
It's urgent to obtain more partners and subsidies to make the project stable and sustainable.

Costos directes	
1.1 Land	0,00
1.2 Constructions and rehabilitations	0,00
1.3 Equipment	1.260,57
1.4 Supplies	564,93
1.5 Local staff (salaries)	23.949,64
1.6 H.Q staff (salaries)	8.777,70
1.7 Trips and Stays	1.410,00
1.8 Operation	1.736,59
1.9 Training	19.514,71
1.10 (Other items)	1.101,35
1.11 External evaluations	1.605,65
1.12 Awareness in Catalonia	2.597,20
Direct costs subtotals	62.518,35

Indirect costs subtotals	528,79
TOTAL	63.047,14

TRANSPARENCY IN DONATIONS

WHERE WE GET THE FUNDS:



FUTURE PLANS

This year 2023, the Achham team has proven to be very involved and has worked very hard. Thanks to the good will of the trainers, the monitoring of the project has been successful, and we have managed to implement almost all the workshops.

In any case, the lack of money necessary to carry out the entire project has made us propose changes for the year 2024.

Instead of doing it in an annual project, as we have done since the pandemic, we will reduce the number of girls working all year round, and we will do a large implementation in the summer. Leaving only a few of the girls, working all year round doing the follow-up meetings, as well as all the local mentors. We continue to build on the efforts of recent years, establishing a strong team of female mentors in Achham. Today, the mentors of other years are the trainers and team leaders.

In Chaurpati municipality, we still need to make 3 new schools, in addition to doing the follow-up meetings for the year 2023, and as soon as we can, we will start in Panchadewal Binayak municipality, where Chhaupadi is actively practised.

The local government is becoming more involved in helping more women, but they are unable to provide financial help. On the other hand, their support with contacts and help in the implementation of projects is essential.

The local women where we implemented **the sunflower plantation project with great success are also demanding a mill to make oil**. We are investigating a solar mill option that works with add-ons such as a large food processor and looking for someone who can help import this equipment to Nepal. Or look for a local one.

CONCLUSION

After the evaluation of the Rato Baltin project, we are more motivated than ever to continue fighting for gender equality and women's rights in Nepal. Thanks to our dedication and the collaboration of our local partners, we have been able to successfully implement the project and improve the lives of rural women.

However, we know that there is much work to be done and that our work cannot stop here. To continue growing and expanding our impact, we need the support of many people, companies, and administrations that believe in our task and want to help us continue forward.