

PROJECT IMPACT EVALUATION

RATO BALTIN 2025



Presented by: be artsy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rato Baltin project (Red Bucket), implemented in the Achham district (western Nepal), aims to promote the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls by addressing the practice of *chhaupadi* and its consequences in terms of health, safety, and access to education.

In 2025, the project reached **7,430 direct participants**, expanding its activities to new schools while consolidating its presence in existing communities. The approach combines education, access to resources, and community-based work, involving girls, boys, women, men, and key local stakeholders.

The results show **significant progress in reducing the most extreme forms of menstrual exclusion**. Comparative data indicate a decrease in the number of girls sleeping outside the home or in sheds (*chhaugoth*), as well as a notable reduction in menstrual restrictions (from 81.2% to 18.8%).

At the same time, there is a **high level of acceptance of the menstrual cup**, with 78.7% of participants using it and very positive feedback on the training received. This has contributed to improving girls' autonomy, comfort, and continuity in education.

The analysis of participants who have not adopted the cup shows that resistance is not due to a lack of information, but rather to deeply rooted cultural and social factors, highlighting the need for sustained, community-based interventions.

The project is implemented in partnership with the local counterpart Unnati, ensuring context-adapted implementation and strong community engagement. Its funding model combines institutional support with a strong social base, with a significant contribution from volunteers.

Overall, Rato Baltin stands out as an effective intervention in reducing menstrual-related discrimination, with relevant results and strong potential for continuity, although further efforts are needed to strengthen its economic and institutional sustainability.

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DESCRIPTION

RATO BALTIN

The Rato Baltin project (Red Bucket) is an international cooperation initiative aimed at promoting human rights, with a specific focus on the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls in western Nepal, particularly in the Achham district.

The project addresses the practice of *chhaupadi*, a form of discrimination rooted in cultural beliefs that leads to the exclusion of women and girls during menstruation, with serious consequences for their health, safety, and access to education.

In 2025, the project reached **7,430 direct participants** across different communities in Achham, expanding its presence to 8 new schools while consolidating its work in existing educational centres.

Rato Baltin combines educational, community-based, and menstrual health actions with a social norms change approach. Its main lines of intervention include:

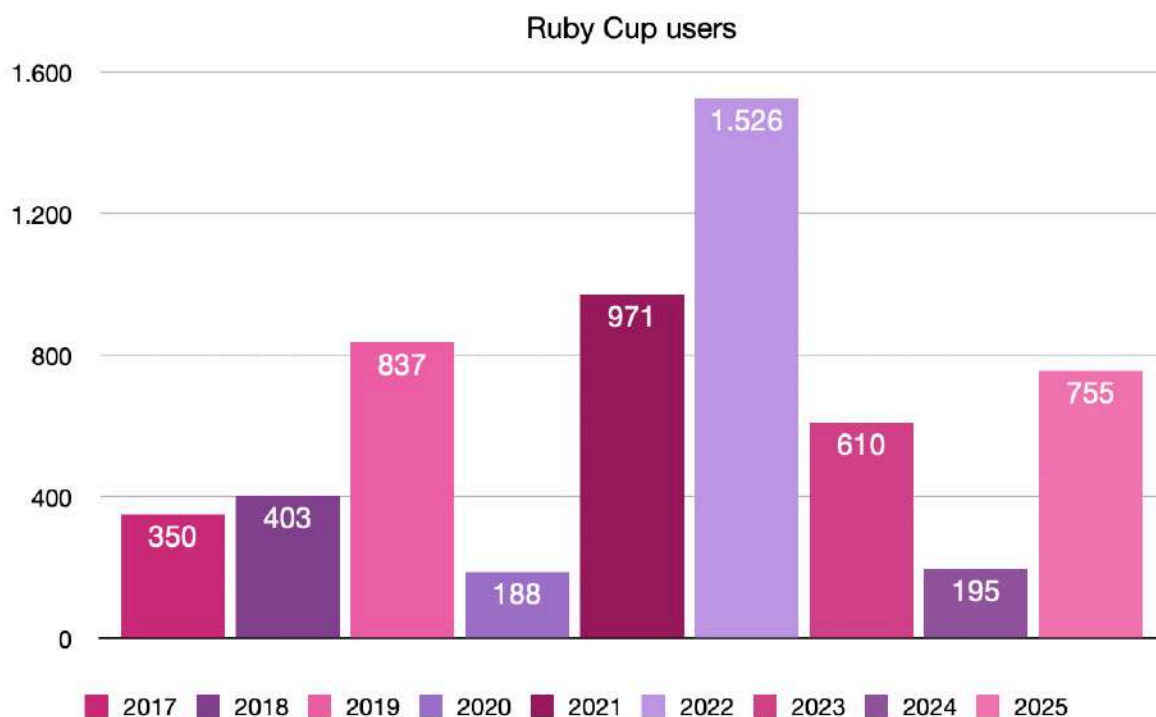
- Sexual and reproductive health education in schools (for boys and girls)
- Specific training for girls and women on menstruation and the life cycle
- Implementation of the Rato Baltin Pathshala programme, targeting students in grades 3 and 4, aimed at introducing basic concepts about the body, gender equality, and shared responsibility in household tasks from an early age
- Distribution and follow-up of menstrual cups as a sustainable alternative
- Engagement with men, community leaders, and religious figures to promote changes in perceptions
- Involvement of teachers and strengthening of their educational role in the long term

In collaboration with Ruby Cup and other local partners, approximately **755 new menstrual cups** were distributed in 2025, reaching a cumulative total of **5,835 users** in the district. In parallel, reusable cloth pads, towels, and soap were also provided, along with educational materials in Nepali and adapted comics for schools.

This comprehensive strategy has reinforced the message that menstruation is a natural bodily function and not an impurity, contributing to the reduction of discriminatory practices and to improvements in participants' health and autonomy.

The project is implemented in partnership with the local counterpart Unnati, which leads activities on the ground, while the association be artsy is responsible for technical oversight, coordination, and fundraising.

Through a participatory and non-paternalistic approach, the project seeks to reduce menstrual-related discrimination, improve menstrual health, and ensure that girls can continue their education in conditions of dignity and safety.



HAPPY WOMEN TRAINING CENTER

The Happy Women Training Centre is a community-based space located in Mangalsen (Achham district), aimed at promoting the economic and personal autonomy of women in vulnerable situations, particularly widows, abandoned women, and survivors of violence.

The centre complements the Rato Baltin project by addressing a key dimension for the sustainability of change: income generation and women’s vocational training, providing real alternatives to situations of dependency and exclusion.

During 2025, the centre gradually reactivated its activities, focusing mainly on:

- Production of reusable cloth pads, with approximately 200 units produced for distribution within the Rato Baltin project
- Occasional activities involving the production of incense using local materials
- Initial small-scale training activities linked to income generation

Some participants have begun to collaborate occasionally in the production of materials, generating their own income and gaining work experience.

The centre also serves as a safe and supportive space, strengthening participants' self-esteem, community networks, and decision-making capacity.

The Happy Women Training Centre operates in coordination with the local counterpart Unnati, which leads activities on the ground, while the association be artsy provides support in strategic planning, monitoring, and resource mobilisation.

This component of the project contributes to strengthening long-term sustainability by linking menstrual health and rights with real economic opportunities for women.

EDUFEM

The Edufem programme is an intervention line aimed at ensuring the educational continuity of girls and young women in vulnerable situations in the Achham district, with the objective of preventing early marriage and expanding their future opportunities.

Edufem emerged from the identification of cases within the Rato Baltin project itself, particularly young women who, despite being motivated to continue their education, face economic, social, and family barriers that limit access to secondary education (grades 11 and 12) and, in some cases, to higher education.

During 2025, the programme continued to support several young women in remaining within the education system by covering education-related costs, including:

- Tuition fees
- Accommodation in urban areas (mainly Mangalsen)
- Basic living expenses

The programme is based on an individual sponsorship model, which enables a direct relationship between donors and students, supporting continuity in education in the medium and long term.

Edufem not only contributes to delaying the age of marriage, but also strengthens participants' personal autonomy, decision-making capacity, and future aspirations, generating positive role models within their communities.

The programme is implemented in coordination with the local counterpart Unnati, which provides direct follow-up with the students, while the association be artsy is responsible for fundraising, overall monitoring, and maintaining relationships with sponsors.

This line of action reinforces the impact of the Rato Baltin project, ensuring that advances in menstrual health and rights translate into sustainable educational and life pathways.

BENEFICIARIES

The Rato Baltin project primarily targets girls, adolescents, and women in the Achham district, as well as other key community actors involved in driving social norms change.

In 2025, the project reached a total of **7,430 direct participants**, distributed across the following groups:

- School-aged girls and adolescents (grades 5 to 10), participating in sexual and reproductive health education sessions
- Adolescent boys (grades 5 to 10), participating in specific sessions focused on shared responsibility, gender equality, and stigma reduction
- Children (girls and boys) in grades 3 and 4, participating in the Rato Baltin Pathshala programme, with a preventive approach to gender equality and body awareness
- Adult women, participating in sessions on menstrual health, sexuality, and the life cycle
- Adult men, including community leaders and religious figures, participating in dialogue spaces to promote changes in social perceptions
- Teachers and educational staff, as key agents for the sustainability of the project

Indirectly, the project also benefits families and the wider communities where it operates.

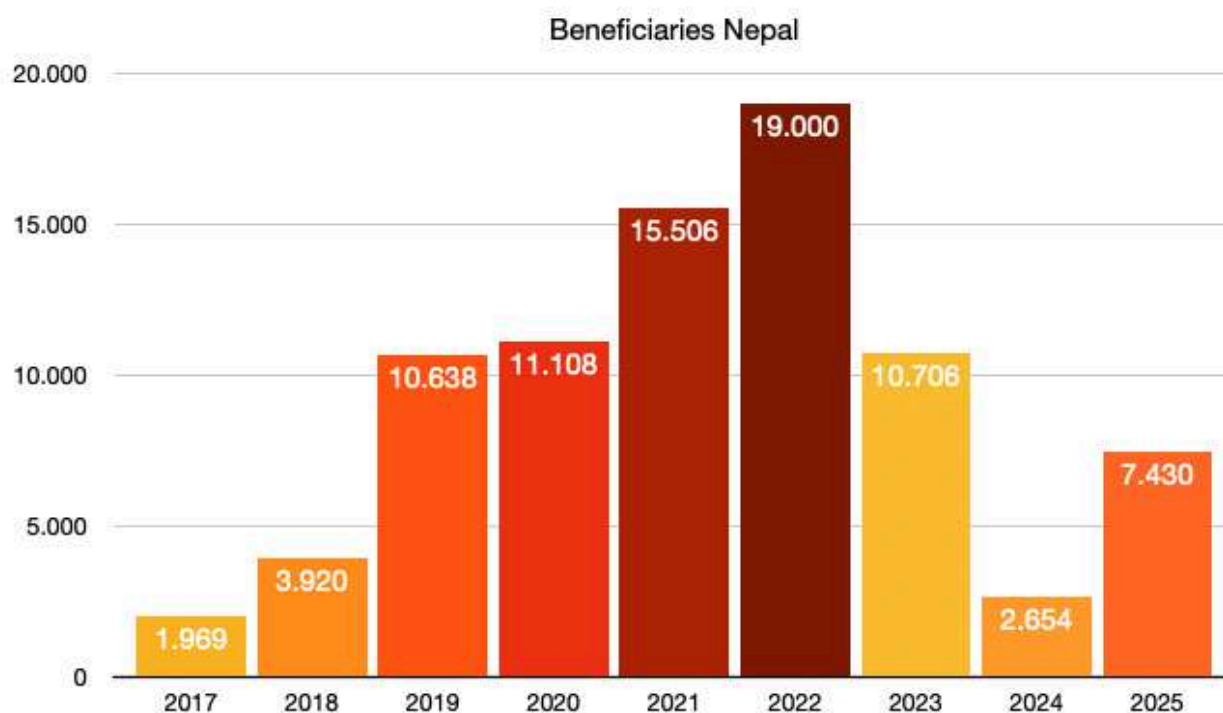
ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN NEPAL (2025)

During 2025, the following key activities were carried out:

- Gender-segregated sexual and reproductive health education sessions in schools
- Specific sessions for girls and adolescents on menstruation and menstrual health
- Specific sessions for adolescent boys on gender equality, menstruation, and shared responsibility
- Implementation of the Rato Baltin Pathshala programme in primary schools (grades 3 and 4)
- Distribution of **755 menstrual cups** and related training sessions, in collaboration with Ruby Cup
- Periodic follow-ups with menstrual cup users (at 1, 3, 6, and 9 months) to ensure correct use and continuity

- Distribution of complementary materials: cloth pads, towels, soap, and educational materials in Nepali
- Sessions with adult women on menstrual health, sexuality, and rights
- Engagement spaces with men and community leaders to address the practice of *chhaupadi*
- Training and engagement activities with teachers
- Monitoring and follow-up activities conducted on the ground

This set of activities reflects a comprehensive approach that combines gender-sensitive education, access to resources, and community-based work to generate sustainable changes in practices and perceptions around menstruation.



The variation in the number of beneficiaries is due to strategic and funding-related changes. In 2024, priority was given to the qualitative follow-up of existing users, resulting in a reduction in the number of new participants.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Rato Baltin project aims to assess the extent to which the objectives set for 2025 have been achieved, as well as to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, and coherence of the activities implemented in relation to the intervention context.

More specifically, this evaluation allows for:

- Measuring the project’s reach in terms of participation and coverage
- Analysing the results achieved in improving knowledge of menstrual health and sexual and reproductive rights
- Assessing observed changes in attitudes and practices related to menstruation and the practice of *chhaupadi*
- Identifying strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement in project implementation
- Supporting strategic decision-making and future planning
- Ensuring transparency and accountability towards donors, institutions, and other stakeholders

This evaluation is part of a continuous improvement process aimed at strengthening the quality, sustainability, and long-term impact of the project.

EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation of the Rato Baltin project is based on a participatory, qualitative, and results-oriented approach, adapted to the intervention context in the Achham district.

This approach combines the collection of basic quantitative data (number of participants, activities carried out, distribution of materials) with a qualitative analysis focused on the changes observed in knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to menstrual health and gender equality.

The evaluation incorporates the active participation of the local counterpart Unnati and the field team, who play a key role in data collection, participant follow-up, and the identification of changes at the community level.

A central element of this approach is the continuous follow-up of menstrual cup users, conducted at different intervals (1, 3, 6, and 9 months), allowing for the analysis of acceptance, correct use, and continuity of this tool, as well as the identification of challenges and support needs.

In addition, qualitative evidence is collected through:

- Direct observation during activities
- Interaction with participants and community groups
- Participatory dynamics, including photography as a tool for expression and analysis
- Feedback from teachers, community leaders, and local staff

This approach makes it possible not only to measure immediate results but also to understand the processes of social change related to menstruation and the practice of *chhaupadi*, ensuring a contextualised evaluation that supports continuous project improvement.

DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The main sources used are:

- Activity records prepared by the local team (number of sessions, participants, and materials distributed)
- Follow-up data on menstrual cup users, collected at different intervals (1, 3, 6, and 9 months)
- Internal reports from the local counterpart Unnati, providing information on the implementation of activities
- Direct observation during sessions and community activities
- Qualitative feedback from participants (girls, women, boys, and men), teachers, and community leaders
- Materials produced within the project framework, including participatory photography and other tools for expression

Methodology:

The evaluation methodology combines quantitative and qualitative tools:

- Systematic collection of basic data on participation and activity coverage
- Longitudinal follow-up of menstrual cup users, allowing analysis of acceptance and continuity of use
- Qualitative analysis of changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to menstrual health
- Triangulation of information, cross-checking data from different sources (local team, participants,

and direct observation)

- Ongoing evaluation, integrated into project implementation and not limited to a single point in time

This methodology provides a comprehensive and contextualised understanding of the project’s results, taking into account the inherent limitations of the context, such as the challenges of systematising data in rural settings with limited resources.

RESULTS

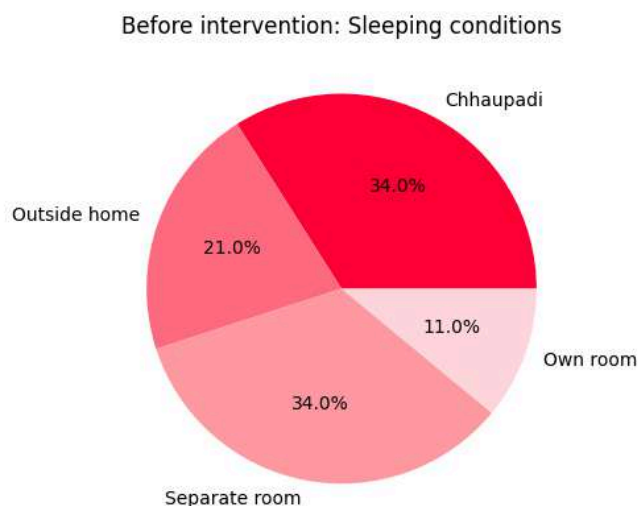
CHHAUPADI

The comparative analysis of data before the intervention and after 9 months of follow-up shows significant changes in practices and conditions related to menstruation.

Changes in living conditions during menstruation

Before the intervention, a significant proportion of participants were in situations of exclusion:

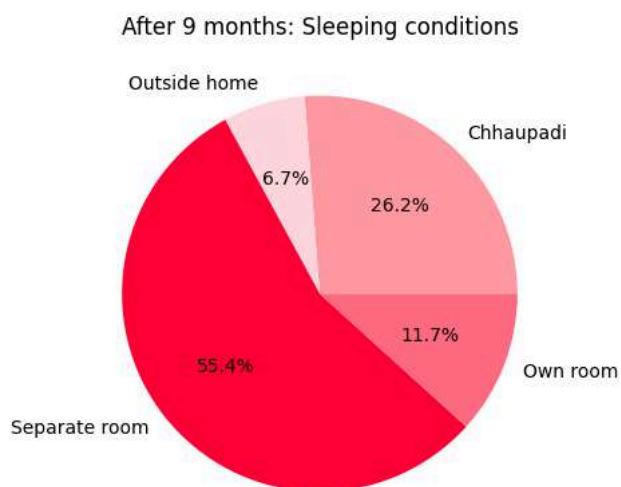
- 34% slept in sheds or spaces used for livestock (*chhaugoth*)
- 21% slept outside the home
- Only 11% were able to remain in their usual room.



Source: Kobo data, 2025

After 9 months of follow-up, a clear improvement can be observed:

- The percentage of girls sleeping in sheds (*chhaugoth*) decreases to 26.2%
- Those sleeping outside the home drop significantly to 6.7%
- The percentage of girls staying inside the home increases, particularly in their own rooms or other indoor spaces.



Source: Kobo data, 2025

This indicates a clear reduction in the most extreme forms of exclusion and a shift towards less restrictive practices.

Reduction in menstrual restrictions

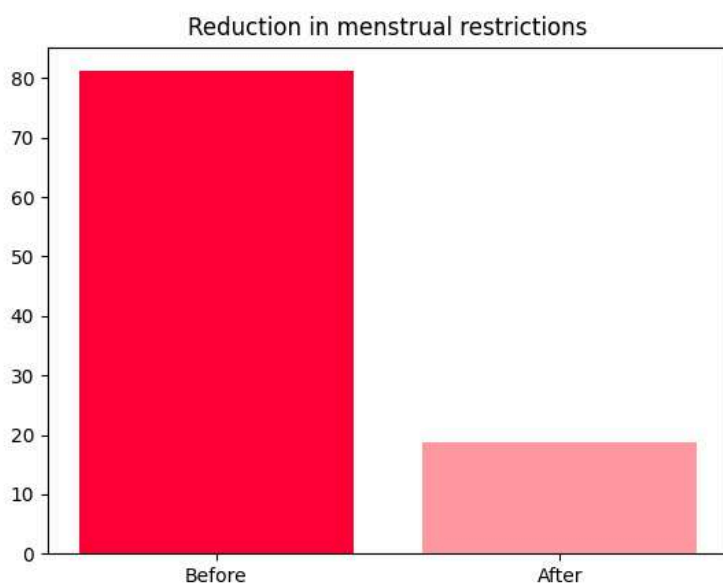
Before the intervention:

- 81.2% followed some form of menstrual restriction

After 9 months:

- This figure decreases to approximately 18.8%

This represents a very significant reduction in cultural restrictions associated with menstruation.



Source: Kobo data, 2025

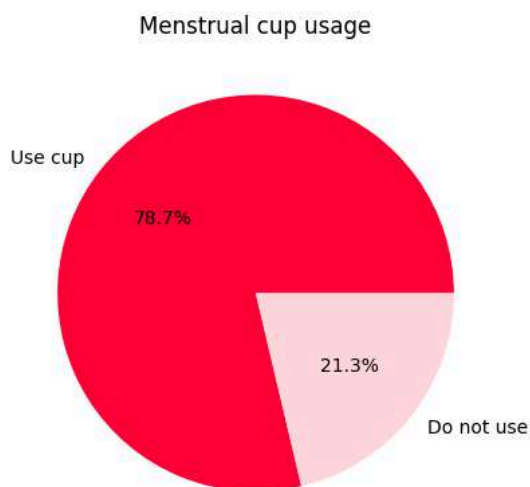
MENSTRUAL EDUCATION

Use and acceptance of the menstrual cup

The results show a high level of acceptance of the menstrual cup:

- **78.7%** of participants use the menstrual cup
- **86.9%** report that they can use it easily
- **100%** consider the training received to be useful
- **100%** state that they have experienced positive changes in their lives
- **100%** would recommend its use to others

These data demonstrate not only acceptance of the product, but also its transformative impact on the daily lives of participants.



Source: Kobo data, 2025

Global interpretation

The results indicate that the project has contributed to:

- Reducing extreme exclusion practices linked to *chhaupadi*
- Improving safety and dignity conditions during menstruation
- Increasing participants' autonomy
- Promoting changes in deeply rooted social norms

Despite these advances, the partial persistence of certain practices highlights the need to continue with sustained interventions adapted to the community context.

RESULTS – BARRIERS TO MENSTRUAL CUP ADOPTION

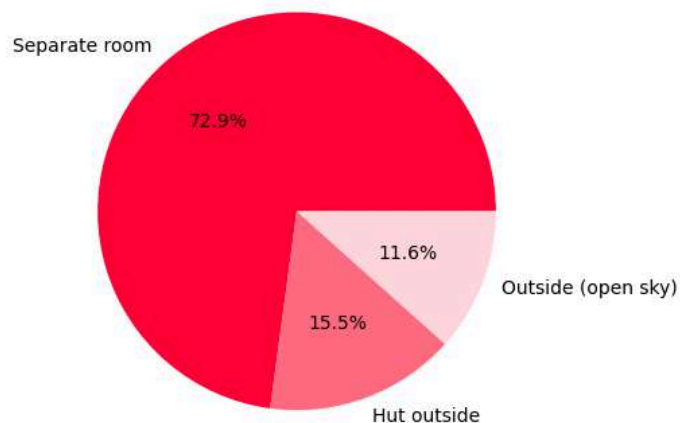
The analysis of participants who have not adopted the menstrual cup during the follow-up period allows for the identification of key factors influencing resistance to change.

Regarding menstrual conditions within this group, most participants continue to follow restrictive practices:

- A significant proportion stays in separate rooms within the house
- Others continue to use sheds or outdoor spaces
- Cases of sleeping outdoors in precarious conditions persist

These findings indicate that the persistence of *chhaupadi* is directly linked to lower adoption of new menstrual health practices.

Where do you stay during menstruation (non-users)

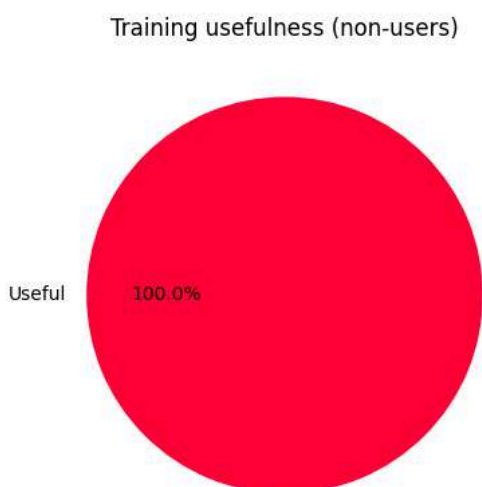


Source: Kobo data, 2025

On the other hand, **100% of participants consider the training received to be useful in reducing menstrual restrictions**, demonstrating that resistance is not due to a lack of information, but rather to deeper cultural, social, and structural factors.

These findings highlight the need to continue working with community-based and long-term strategies to address the social barriers that hinder the adoption of the menstrual cup.

These results are based on longitudinal follow-up data and qualitative evidence collected throughout the project.



Source: Kobo data, 2025

TEAM AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Rato Baltin project in the Achham district is based on a local team led by the counterpart Unnati, with an organisational structure that combines coordination, field implementation, and administrative support.

During 2025, the project included the following team:

- 1 project coordinator, responsible for overall supervision and coordination of activities
- 1 team manager, in charge of operational management and fieldwork follow-up
- 2 male trainers and 4 female trainers, responsible for delivering educational sessions in schools and communities
- 2 mentors per community, providing ongoing support to participants and facilitating local follow-up
- 1 administrative staff member in Kathmandu (KTM) and 1 support staff member, responsible for administrative and logistical management

In addition, the project benefits from the occasional collaboration of local experts, ensuring that activities are implemented in accordance with Nepal’s legal framework, current regulations, and administrative requirements.

This implementation model combines strong territorial presence with a solid technical structure, enabling effective project delivery and appropriate adaptation to the sociocultural context.

The involvement of local teams and community actors is key to ensuring the sustainability of the actions and fostering long-term processes of change.

REAL CASES AND QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE

The following case studies illustrate the changes generated by the project at both individual and community levels:

Improvement in menstrual living conditions

In several communities where the project has been implemented, girls who initially slept in sheds (*chhaugoth*) or outdoors during menstruation have begun to remain inside the family home, either in their own rooms or shared spaces.

This change has occurred progressively, combining educational work with girls, their families, and community leaders, and represents a significant improvement in terms of safety, health, and dignity.

Adoption and continued use of the menstrual cup

A significant proportion of participants have adopted the menstrual cup as a menstrual management tool, showing high levels of acceptance and continued use following the follow-up process.

Participants highlight increased comfort, reduced costs, and greater autonomy, as well as improved ability to attend school and participate in daily activities without interruption.

Transformation of community perceptions

In some cases, the involvement of men and community leaders in project activities has helped create spaces for dialogue, fostering a reconsideration of beliefs associated with menstruation.

This has led to greater social acceptance of girls and women during menstruation and a gradual reduction in discriminatory practices.

REAL CASES

Persistence of *chhaupadi* under risky conditions

Haitanath Tiruwa (real testimony)

“During my menstruation, I stay outside because I am not allowed to remain inside the house. It is not my choice, but I have to follow this practice. There is no door for protection, and I feel unsafe. During the rainy season, there are insects and even snakes. I feel very afraid.”

This testimony reflects the reality of many girls and women who continue to live in conditions of exclusion during menstruation, exposed to physical and emotional risks.

Successful adoption of the menstrual cup

Sita (name changed), Grade 9 student

“At first I felt nervous, but now I can easily use the menstrual cup. It is very comfortable. I am happy that my friends are also using it.”

This case illustrates the strong capacity of participants to adapt and the transformative potential of the menstrual cup in terms of autonomy and continuity in education.

Process of change and initial resistance

Priya (name changed), Grade 10 student

“I tried using the cup but felt pain, so I stopped. However, I will try again during my next period. I have always stayed inside the house, and nothing bad has ever happened.”

This testimony shows that change is not immediate, but also highlights the emergence of critical thinking towards traditional beliefs associated with menstruation.

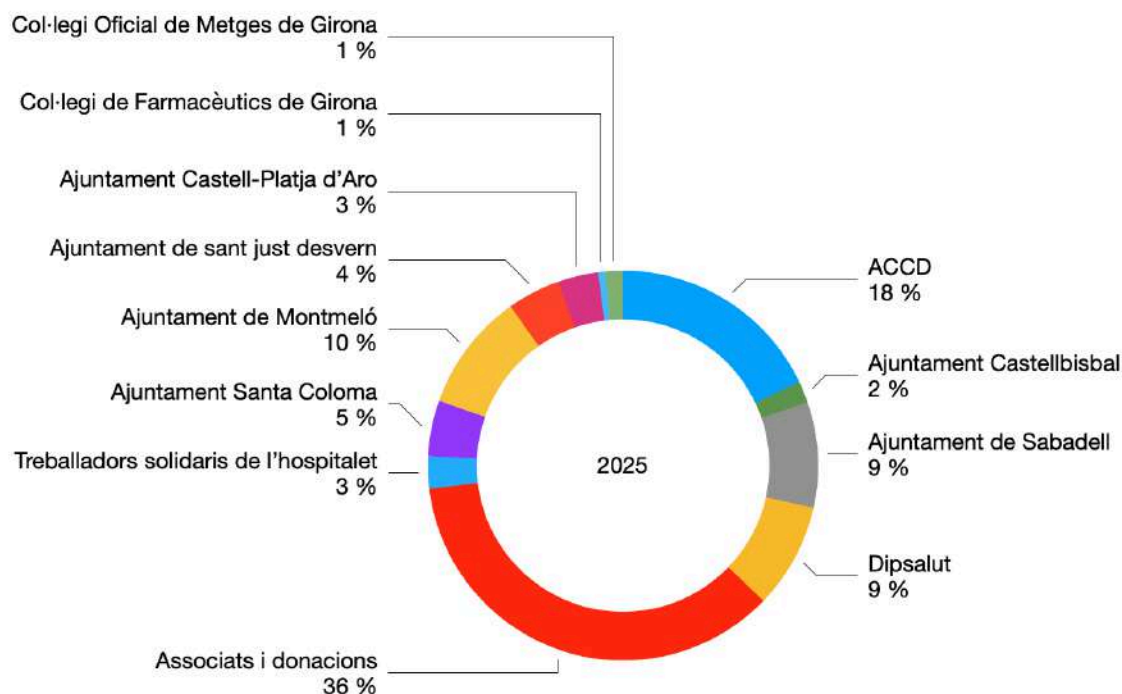
Improved health and transition to sustainable alternatives

Sarita (name changed), Grade 8 student

“Before, I used sanitary pads and had itching problems. Then I started using cloth pads. Now I use the menstrual cup and feel comfortable. I think it is better than pads.”

This case shows the transition towards more sustainable and healthier alternatives, as well as improvements in the physical well-being of participants.

TRANSPARENCY IN DONATIONS



Distribution of funding sources for the Rato Baltin project, 2025

The funding of the Rato Baltin project in 2025 has been diversified, combining public funds, private contributions, and support from the organisation's social base.

As shown in the chart, a significant share of income comes from membership fees and individual donations, which represent the main source of funding and reflect the sustained commitment of the organisation's community.

The project has also received support from various public administrations, including the ACCD, as well as different municipalities and local entities.

In this context, the support from the ACCD Territorial Fund has been key to strengthening the organisation's structure, enabling the partial funding of human resources and communication actions,

such as the campaign “La regla mata”, aimed at raising awareness about the consequences of *chhaupadi*.

It is also important to highlight the fundamental role of volunteers, who have actively contributed to the sustainability of the project through their participation in markets and fundraising events, collecting donations and raising awareness about the organisation’s work.

This mixed funding model helps ensure greater autonomy and resilience for the project, despite partial dependence on public funding calls and the ongoing need to strengthen its support base.

BUDGET EVALUATION

The distribution of project expenditures in 2025 shows a clear focus on the direct implementation of activities and impact on the ground.

Most of the budget is concentrated in:

- **Training and capacity building, as the core of the project**
- **Personnel (local and expatriate), necessary to ensure implementation and follow-up**
- **Awareness-raising actions, both in Nepal and in Catalonia**

Operational and logistical costs remain at moderate levels, ensuring efficient management of available resources.

It is important to note that indirect costs represent a very small proportion of the total budget, reinforcing the project’s focus on direct impact.

The funding model reflects a combination of strong community support and institutional backing.

FUTURE PLANS

Looking ahead, the Rato Baltin project is in a phase of consolidation and strategic redefinition, with the aim of ensuring its sustainability and maximising long-term impact.

The main lines of work planned are:

- **Consolidation of the intervention model**, prioritising participant follow-up and the quality of activities over expansion to new areas
- **Strengthening local leadership**, promoting greater autonomy for the local counterpart Unnati in project management and implementation
- **Continuation of educational activities**, with particular focus on schools and early prevention (Rato Baltin Pathshala)
- **Expansion of awareness-raising and communication efforts**, both in Catalonia and internationally, to strengthen the social base and fundraising capacity
- **Diversification of funding sources**, with the aim of reducing dependence on one-off grants
- **Improvement of data collection and evaluation systems** to enhance the quality and traceability of results

At the same time, **the organisation is considering different future scenarios depending on resource availability**, always prioritising the continuity of essential actions and respect for ongoing community processes.

This approach seeks to ensure that the project can continue generating meaningful and sustainable change in the communities where it operates.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the Rato Baltin project in 2025 highlights significant progress in improving the living conditions of girls and women in relation to menstruation, as well as in reducing exclusionary practices associated with *chhaupadi*.

The results show a positive evolution both in the adoption of safer and more dignified practices and in the acceptance of the menstrual cup, with high levels of use and satisfaction among participants. At

the same time, changes in knowledge and attitudes can be observed, along with a gradual opening at the community level.

Despite these advances, the persistence of certain practices and forms of resistance demonstrates that social change requires sustained efforts over time, particularly in contexts where cultural norms are deeply rooted.

The project stands out for its ability to combine education, access to resources, and community-based work, as well as for the involvement of a local team that ensures implementation adapted to the context.

In this regard, Rato Baltin is consolidating as a relevant intervention with strong potential for continuity, although further efforts are needed to strengthen its financial sustainability and institutional support to secure its future.