



India



Jayaashree Industries

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Jayaashree helps women entrepreneurs produce and sell disposable menstrual pads using their innovative machinery and entrepreneurship support.

Launched in 2006, Hybrid (For-profit / Not-for-profit) , Menstrual Hygiene Management , Women's Empowerment , South Asia: India

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Problem Addressed

Millions of women around the world cannot afford sanitary napkins, mainly because they're manufactured using expensive machinery and thus priced at a premium. Such women resort to an older and cheaper alternative, a piece of cloth or rag. This is an unhygienic alternative and can cause vaginal infections, skin irritations and embarrassing stains in public.

Innovative Approach

Jayaashree Industries has an innovative solution to menstrual health management in India. They address personal issues of hygiene and menstruation, broaching a subject that in India is very difficult to talk about. Wives do not talk to husbands, nor mothers to daughters, about MHM. There is a cultural barrier to proper menstrual health because menstruation is considered dirty and unclean. Jayaashree Industries strives to make something comfortable that women want to wear and promote pride in their brands.

To do this, Jayaashree Industries created low-cost, simple manufacturing machines. After women receive the machines, sometimes through barter or trade, Jayaashree Industries assists the women entrepreneurs with social programs. Jayaashree Industries then gets paid back for the cost of the machine once the women are able to make a profit from their business. Part of the difficulty working in the menstrual health management realm is that no one is willing to give funding to 'untouchables', those of lower castes, so Jayaashree's mission encourages them to succeed. By promoting local brands, women entrepreneurs can involve more than 9 million women in the model.

Program Solution

Self-Help Groups (SHG) can make napkins using Jayaashree Industries' machinery and will then have a consistent market in their own areas which will enable them to expand their business and make a sustainable income. This concept of self-development can spread to all the 800 districts in the country where women's SGHs can be formed for making and selling these sanitary napkins, enabling a mass scale improvement of quality of life for women in the country. Quality sanitary napkins at affordable prices will find a market among rural and lower middle class women who can benefit from discarding their traditional method of using unhygienic cloth and switch to these disposable and affordable sanitary

napkins.