

Aaina

Registered as: Society | **Founded:** 1998

Head Office Location: Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Region of Impact: Odisha

Annual Budget (2012-13): INR 99 lakhs (\$ 165,000)

Adolescent Girls Budget (2012-13): INR 23 lakhs (\$ 38,300)

Staff Strength: 52 full-time



Overview

Aaina is an organization that was conceived with the objective of working with vulnerable sections of society in order to ensure that issues which give rise to such vulnerabilities are adequately addressed. People with disabilities, women and children are a core focus of the organization as it seeks to empower them to achieve their full potential to be productive members of society. Aaina achieves this through programs focusing on (1) Menstrual Hygiene, (2) Livelihoods for persons with disabilities, (3) Inclusive education for children with disabilities, (4) Anti-Trafficking, and (5) Domestic Violence.

Adolescent Girls Program

Aaina works with adolescent girls through its menstrual hygiene program. The organization observed that once a girl attains puberty, several restrictions are imposed on her and she is forced to face many societal stigmas which limit her growth. Therefore, Aaina launched a menstrual hygiene program in May 2013, which is currently focused on spreading awareness about the issue in the Ganjam district of Odisha, covering 70 villages across 3 blocks. Through the program, Aaina aims to build the capacity of adolescent girls on menstrual hygiene management, create awareness among key stakeholders and influencers on the issue, ensure availability of sanitary napkins and disposal infrastructure and reduce socio-cultural taboos associated with menstruation.



Milestones

- 1999: Inauguration of AMO Vidhyalay School for the disabled
- 2004: Chosen as the nodal agency in Odisha for “We Can” campaign, to end violence against women
- 2013: Commencement of menstrual hygiene management program

Impact to Date

- 6 block level community meetings organized with various stakeholders on the issues of Menstrual Hygiene
- 130 Kishori Mandals formed with over 4,000 members
- 150 in-school sessions and 3 intensive trainings conducted on Menstrual Hygiene Management

Model

- Aaina collectivizes adolescent girls into groups called Kishori Mandals at the village level which comprise ~25-30 girls. Groups meet weekly for a two hour training session, facilitated by Aaina’s block coordinator. The modules developed by Aaina are delivered through the medium of lectures, IEC materials, demonstrations and videos.
- Government schools are leveraged to conduct in-school information sessions for girls on a monthly basis.
- Aaina organizes block level community meetings on a quarterly basis with adolescent girls, their family members, relevant government departments, school authorities, parent-teacher associations and, ANM/ASHA/Aanganwadi workers, in order to provide a common platform to collectively address the issue whilst building and strengthening partnerships amongst the stakeholders.
- An intensive 2 day training is conducted on a quarterly basis by experts for various Kishori Mandals.

Theory of Change

If marginalized sections of society are involved in the process of change and provided with adequate knowledge, skills and support, then they can exercise control over their lives and fight the injustice and discrimination imposed on them.

Growth Plans

- Over the next three years, Aaina seeks to form 120 new Kishori Mandals, reaching out to 3,000 adolescent girls across the Kandhamal and Dhenkanal districts of Odisha.
- Having formed Kishori Mandals, Aaina seeks to partner with the Integrated Child Development Scheme to institutionalize the delivery of its sessions and handover ownership of the same to the state.
- Aaina wants to work on the issues of Access and Disposal around Menstrual Hygiene Management. It seeks to achieve this by establishing three Low Cost Sanitary Napkin production units by the end of 2014, setting up sanitary napkin banks as girls are hesitant to buy them at village shops and installing safe disposal units in ten schools in the Ganjam district by the end of the year.

	2012-13 (a)	2013-14 (e)	2014-15 (e)	2015-16 (e)
Total Org Budget (INR Lakhs)	96	99	100	105
Total Adolescent Girls Budget	0	23	30	32
No. of Adolescent Girls	0	9900	12,000	15,000

Leadership & Management

Secretary, Sneha Mishra has over 25 years of experience working on issues related to gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities. She serves on the board of the National Trust, an autonomous government organization focusing on disabilities, in addition to serving as a resource group member of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme in Odisha. In May 2013, she was felicitated by ETV for her contribution to social development.

Partnerships

ASHA, ANM and Anganwadi health service providers are encouraged to regularly attend training sessions held with the adolescent girls in order to facilitate direct access to services and resources under government health schemes. Aaina partnered with the Women and Child Department of the Government of Odisha in order to develop a state policy for adolescents with a special focus on health.

Funders

Since its inception, Aaina has been supported by a strong set of Indian and foreign bilateral agencies and foundations such as Oxfam, Action Aid, UK-Aid, Rajv Gandhi Foundation, Save the Children India and UNICEF amongst others. The organization has recently received dedicated funding for its menstrual hygiene program from WaterAid.