EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH MENSTRUAL HYGIENE SOLUTIONS
ABOUT AAKAR

Vision

To create awareness and access to affordable, high quality, environmental friendly menstrual hygiene products thereby empowering women and girls to make informed choices and enabling them to take charge of their own socio-economic development.

AAKAR INNOVATIONS

• Innovative Technology
• Customized Machinery & Raw Materials
• Employment Creation
• Anandi Pad - An affordable, high quality, 100% compostable sanitary napkin
• Sales of Anandipads

AAKAR SOCIAL VENTURES

• Awareness raising curriculum
• Normalizes menstruation by creating an open dialogue with women, girls, men, and boys
• Expands the market for sanitary napkins through the spreading of knowledge
• Capacity building and training
**THE PROBLEM**

**9 OUT OF 10 WOMEN/GIRLS IN INDIA DO NOT USE SANITARY PADS**

**ACCESS & DISPOSAL**
Inadequate access to MHM products, sanitary facilities, clean water, along with disposal challenges

**LIMITED AWARENESS**
Lack of education and information on reproductive health, at home and in schools

**70%+ OF INDIAN WOMEN RELY ON OLD RAGS, PLASTICS, SAND AND ASH TO MANAGE THEIR MENSTRUAL CYCLE**

**SOCIETAL TABOO**
Menstruation is highly stigmatized. In many parts of India menstruating women are treated as “pollution”
WHY ANANDI

Anandi is produced in small units, that meet local demand affordably through economics that generate viability and financial incentives across the value chain.

AFFORDABLE PRODUCT

An affordable alternative to existing brands and traditional substitutes.

Compostable (Pack of 8)
Rs. 40 ($0.60)

LOCAL PRODUCTION

The pads are produced locally at the village level, using our patented technology.

A typical unit produces over 50,000 pads per month and employs over 35 women.

COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTION

Our distribution network of local women spread awareness & break taboos related to menstruation.

These women act as village level entrepreneurs and enable menstrual hygiene management at their doorstep.
Customized Machinery
Each mini factory consists of four machines and two specialized tools which have each been created and customized by Aakar Innovations.

SHG/VLE run Mini-Factory
One factory provides employment to 15 women directly in production and another 15-20 women indirectly through Anandi sales commission.

Anandipads
India’s 1st 100% Compostable, sanitary pad. The material used for the Anandi pads is derived from locally available agricultural and plant waste.

Environmental sustainability through the distribution and promotion of compostable sanitary napkins & Green Disposal System

Financial sustainability through Aakar Innovation’s business model

Behavioral Change Communication Program & Sales through Aakar Social’s awareness curriculum, trust building, women to women network

SOLUTION MODEL
AAKAR SOCIAL VENTURES

Behavioral Change Program

The Model

- Creating and Enabling Environment
  - Gender and Gender-based Violence
- Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health
- Life Skills
- Education
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
- Livelihood

Empowerment of Girls and Women

Health Workers - Boys and Men

Transforming Lives through Innovations
• Direct Employment: 13-14 women per unit
• Women Workers earn wages for 4-5 hrs/day + profit share
• Indirect employment as sales executives (Anandiben) earns commission per packet sale
• Expected unit profit Rs. 25-35,000 (400-500$) per month
• Break even: 12 months operationally; 3-4 years for initial investments with bank loans
• Production per month: 40-50,000 pads/5000-6250 packs of 8 pads
• Packet Sales Price (8 pack): Rs. 40 (0.6 $) (100% Compostable - with wings)
BENEFITS OF ANANDI

- India’s 1st Govt. of India Certified 100% Compostable pads (2 patents) - Environment friendly affordable product
- Use of Indigenous Raw Materials (Agricultural & Plant waste e.g. Jute, Water Hyacinth, Banana pulp, Bamboo etc.)
- Prevents infections, illnesses, spread of diseases such as cervical cancer, labour complications, all of which claim thousands of lives each year
- Incineration of sanitary napkins causes the release of harmful dioxins and methane gas which contribute to environmental damage and unfit living conditions
- No harmful SAP used
- No use of harmful chemical pulp
- Follows BIS (Govt. of INDIA) norms
- Quality/Design at per International norms
COMPARISON WITH OTHER PADS

Based on medical studies, a journal called ‘Applied Materials Today’ says: “There are some harmful chemicals present in the many commercially available sanitary napkins. For example, dioxins are used to bleach the cotton/material used for making absorbent core, and it is responsible for side effects in the body such as pelvic inflammatory disease, ovarian cancer, immune system damage, impaired fertility and diabetes. As mentioned above, Super Absorbent Polymers (SAPs) are added in the absorbent core of sanitary napkins to increase the absorption capacity. In 1980s, use of SAPs was restricted in tampons due to its possible link with toxic shock syndrome, a potentially fatal illness caused by a bacterial toxin. Further, as SAPs are petroleum-based products and therefore do-not degrade readily in landfills, their use is not eco-friendly as well."
COMPOSTABILITY TESTING IN ARDC

Pad Cover:

Month 0
After 01 month
After 03 months
After 06 months

Pads:

After 01 month
After 03 months
After 06 months
30+ UNITS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

12 STATES ACROSS INDIA

3 STATES HAVE EXPERIENCED INTENSE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAM

6 INTERNATIONAL UNITS – KENYA, TANZANIA, UGANDA, SOUTH AFRICA, NEPAL, ZIMBABWE*
**IMPACT**

1 Million+

- GIRLS & WOMEN REACHED AS CONSUMERS

~100000

- GIRLS & WOMEN REACHED THROUGH AWARENESS PROGRAM

600+

- WOMEN EMPLOYED IN PRODUCTION UNITS

300+

- WOMEN ENGAGED IN SALES

600+

- WORKSHOPS WITH WOMEN, GIRLS & BOYS ON OUR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAM

20 Million

INR revenue generated by women entrepreneurs

70%

Repeat customers

4000

Women & girls are covered in baseline survey
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED

 Goals Achieved
BOARD MEMBERS/ADVISORS/MENTORS

Prof. Anil K. Gupta, Inspiration behind Aakar
Professor, IIM Ahmedabad; Founder-HoneyBee Network; EVC-NIF; Member, NIC

Arjun Malhotra, Board Member-Aakar Innovations & Investor
Co-founder-HCL, Founder-Headstrong

Vijay Sharma, Advisor & Investor
Head-Global Emerging Markets- GSK Consumer Healthcare, Ex-Brand manager-HUL, the man behind Project Shakti

Dr. Nomita Chandhiok, Board Member- Aakar Social
Scientist-G, Maternal & Child Health, ICMR, Govt. of India & Gyne

Sohini Bhattacharya, Board Member- Aakar Social
20+ years PR Exp., President & CEO-Breakthrough, Ex-Director-South Asia-Ashoka, Sr. Consultant-AVPN

Geeta Goel, Advisor & Investor
Director, Mission Investing-Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Bahram Vakil, Board Member & Investor
Partner-AZB & Partners

Audrey Selian, Board Member & Investor
Director-Artha Initiative- Rianta Capital

Munish Gupta, Global Advisor, Aakar Innovations & Aakar Social
30+yrs Exp. in strategy, cross-border PPP dev, Advisor- FICCI, IRIGP, Govt. of India
RECOGNITIONS AND ACCOLADES

• One of the 30 Start-ups worldwide for BASES-Stanford University for E-BootCamp 2012-Silicon Valley, USA.

  Selected as Top 10 & Top 30 Innovations (indigenous raw materials for napkins & bio-degradable napkins) by FICCI, DST, Lockheed Martin, Stanford University, IUS&TF and IC2 Institute, TIE-SV 2013 among 1500+ innovations.

• Featured in Economic Times as Top-15 Hottest Start-up for 2015 & New York Times Sep 1,15

• Selected for “Honorable mention at the United Nations” in 2015 GSC-3S Awards at the United Nations HQ, New York, USA Sep 2015

• Selected as part of Indian PM Narendra Modi’s delegation 2015 to Silicon Valley, USA, 2016 to Kenya & 2018 to Rwanda

• Invited for sharing Aakar model by Innovation Lab, World Bank, HQ in DC, USA Nov, 2015

• Millennium Alliance Award 2015-16 for piloting in Africa & expansion in India by UKAID, USAID, World Bank Govt. of India, FICCI etc.

• Selected to be part of PM’s Champions of Change team by Niti Aayog, 2017

• Miss World Organisation Partnered with Aakar to promote menstrual hygiene cause in India & Globally involving Manushi Chhillar- Miss World 2017 Miss World 2016 & all other continent winners of Miss World 2017

• Selected to be part of BIS Panel for Sanitary Pads by Govt. of India

• Became 1st Sanitary Pad producer Company in India to get 100% Compostable Certification by Govt. of India

• Global Bioplastics Award 2018, Berlin Germany-Dec, 2018 in 13th European Bioplastics Conference

• National Entrepreneurship Award-2018 by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India