**Press release**

****

**Simavi, Women on Wings and Rutgers start program on menstruation**

**Give girls in India every month 1 week extra**

**From May 26 till June 8th the campaign 1weekextra takes place. With this campaign Rutgers, Simavi and Women on Wings ask attention for their program in India that wants to improve the situation of menstruating girls and women in Bihar in the next three years. Knowledge about menstrual hygiene and availability of sanitary pads will make a substantial difference to their daily lives and future.**

Girls and women in rural areas in India are often not able to take part in daily life during their monthly period. Instead of 4 weeks per month, they can only participate 3 weeks. 1WeekExtra enables girls and women in Bihar to have this fourth week. So they can go to school, go to work and develop themselves.

The campaign 1WeekExtra targets the group of girls and women in the Netherlands between 18 and 49 years to raise awareness about the issues in India about menstrual hygiene. 1WeekExtra activates girls and women in the Netherlands to give their own interpretation on the question ‘what would you do with 1 week extra?' On the web platform 1weekextra.nl all information can be found about the campaign and the program, including campaign edits, Facts & Figures, photo stills and video testimonials of girls and women from India.

The program in India takes place in the districts of Munger and Bhagalpur in the state of Bihar in northern India. In total 13,20,000 girls and women between the ages of 12 and 49 years live here. There is a real need for change. 10% of the women in India believe that menstruation is a disease, 87% of the girls are completely unprepared when they have their first period, 28% of the girls do not attend school during their period due to lack of facilities and materials and 300 million girls and women use unsanitary materials during their period.

The program in India educates girls and women about menstrual hygiene in schools, village communities and health centres of the government through information and training sessions with the help of local female role models. In addition, a knowledge centre and a sustainable sales and distribution network of sanitary pads will be established, the latter generating income for women. Bihar is one of the poorest and most unhealthy states and in Munger and Bhagalpur there are still no projects around menstruation. However there are some strong local partners present who can pick up the project together.

The ultimate goal of the program in India is to inform 6,60,000 girls and women in Bihar to realize a better menstrual hygiene, give access to 1,65.000 girls and women to affordable sanitary pads via a local distribution network with female entrepreneurs, give 815 women work in that network and raise awareness among 2,00,000 boys and men about the importance of menstruation and menstrual hygiene.

**Perstoolkit : www.1weekextra.nl**