Struggles of Girls and Women during Menstruation in Nepal

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March 21, 2018, Brussels
Menstrual Restrictions in Nepal

- Girls and women are isolated during menstruation:
  - adjoining in same house,
  - separate house or hut,
  - separate room
  - separate corner of the room or tents during disasters
- During isolation, they follow three sets of restrictions:
  I. **Restriction in terms of food** e.g. no diary products
  II. **Restrictions in terms of touch** e.g. no touch of household member
  III. **Restriction in terms of mobility** e.g. no entry in to the house or community program
Consequences of Menstrual Restriction on Nepalese Women: Ecological Perspectives

**Public:** Deep silence everywhere against rape, murder, menstrual restriction no research including religion, poor enforcement of constitution, NO

**Community:** Deprived from participation in any social, cultural, economic activities, beaten by wild animals, rape, sexual abuse

**Relational:** Failing in school, stigma and discrimination from friends, religious people, child/early marriage,

**Individual:** Traumatic feeling, suicidal attempt, isolation, no proper food, water, clothing, cleansing, hygiene, absentism in school and work, reproductive and urinary infections, rape, sexual abuse,
Consequences of Menstrual Restriction for Nepalese Women

Peace ↔ Human Right ↔ Empowerment

- Power, Gender Inequality, violence, Injustice, Patriarchy, Masculinity
- Peace
- Stigma, Ostracise, Discrimination
- High Absentism in work
- Low Economic opportunities, less income, poverty
- Uterus prolapse
- Infertility
- Spontaneous Abortions
- Reproductive and Urinary Tract Infections
- Limited Participation, Mobility
- Malnutrition
- Restrictions on food, touch, entering/mobility
- Anaemia
- School dropped out 60 days/year
- Poor physical, social health
- Increased vulnerability, exclusion, marginalization
- Trauma, shock and suicide
- Murder, abuse, rape, sexual abuses
- Death: bites from snakes, wild animals, collection of carbon monoxide
- Menstrual Blood is impure, dirty, bad luck, sin from god

Sustainable Development

Consequences include:

- Infertility
- Spontaneous Abortions
- Uterus prolapse
- Cancer
- Poor physical and social health
- Limited Participation and Mobility
- Malnutrition
- Restrictions on food, touch, entering/mobility
- Anaemia
- School dropped out 60 days/year
- Low Economic opportunities, less income, poverty
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General Membership Meeting of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition 20-22 March 2018
Why do Menstrual Restrictions Continue in Nepal?

Supplies of Menstrual Hygiene Products:

- Ignorance about the menstrual hygiene products including physiology of menstruation
- No practice of use of sanitary products: use a saree or wrapper for 3-4 days, no use of panty in rural areas
- No availability of all products, imposed sanitary pads
- Not affordable, even if available (expensive products, Poverty)
- Stigma and rumours associated with it such as infection, infertility
- Waste management of used products e.g. dogs carrying here and there
- Not priority of family, girls used the money from notebooks or snacks
- No priority for government & funders/funding - struggling for last five years
- No mechanism for promotion of sanitary products e.g. subsidies
Religion and Poor Mindset: Missing links among front liners including donors, activists, teachers, health care workers, male, priests etc.

Gender Discrimination: Considered a sole business of women, considered as bad luck, impure, polluted

Unavailability of toilets with water supply: Only 37% toilet coverage (NPC, 2015)

Research and Policy Attention: Merely absence, no priority, deep culture of silence

Affordable, quality sanitary products could mitigate these issues.
Do I make mistake with menstruation? If NOT when will be the priority of menstrual hygiene products?