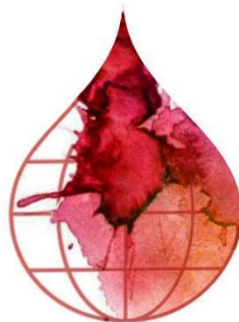


Toolkit

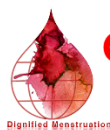
For marking

5th International Dignified Menstruation Day



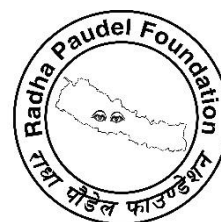
Dignified Menstruation

Prepared by:



Global South Coalition
For Dignified Menstruation

Dignified Menstruation



In collaboration with



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Menstrual Discrimination:

Menstrual Discrimination refers to taboos, shyness, shame, stigma, restrictions, abuses, violence, and **deprivation from services and resources** that are associated with the menstruation throughout the life cycles of menstruators (girls, women, transmen, queer) in all diversities. It is a form of sexual and gender-based violence and violation of human rights [GSCDM 2019](#). Menstrual Discrimination has been practicing all around the globe with different names, forms, and magnitude.



Figure 1 Examples of menstrual practices across the globe

Dignified Menstruation (DM):

Dignified Menstruation is a state of freedom from any forms of menstrual discrimination includes taboos, stigmas, shyness, shame, abuse, restrictions, violence and deprivation from services and resources that associated with menstruation throughout the life cycle of menstruators [GSCDM 2019](#). It is the holistic approach changing the narratives about menstruation from 5 days bleeding to the life cycle. It address all forms of menstrual discrimination. . Menstrual discrimination is not evidenced on any single day or event. It is a concern throughout the 24/7 hours and 365 days of a menstruators’ lifetimes from childhood to death – and in some cultures, even applies after death. Menstrual discrimination is more significant and urgent in humanitarian settings including pandemics and disasters where menstruators need equal access to care, services and hygienic products at public and private institutions -- everywhere. Because Dignified Menstruation is a matter of human rights, founded on international human rights instruments and declarations of constitutional rights, including e.g. in Nepal, its name captures the innovative and comprehensive concept initiated in Nepal by the government of Nepal and the Radha Paudel Foundation (RPF).

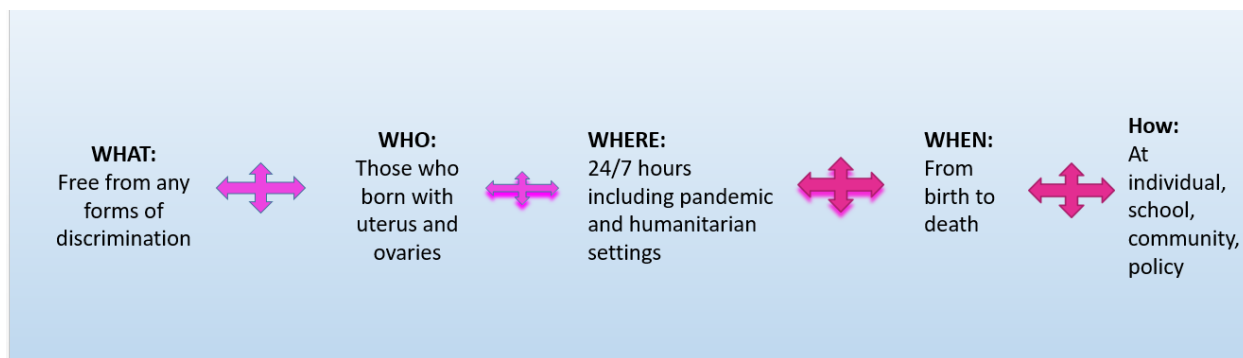


Figure 2: Pictorial Presentation of Dignified Menstruation

International Dignified Menstruation Day:

The 8th of December is International Dignified Menstruation Day, recognizing that DM is a concern of human rights and call to end menstrual discrimination as a form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The 8th of December has particular significance in two ways: 1) it falls in the month of December, which is designated as Human Rights Month; and 2) it falls on the 14th day of the United Nations’ 16 Days of Activism, an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. Since 2019, Dignified Menstruation was launched by [Radha Paudel Foundation](#) (RPF) and [Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation](#) (GSCDM). On the same day, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens endorsed 8th December as a Dignified Menstruation Day (DM Day). More than 75 members of GSCDM from dozens countries are engaging at their level in marking 5th International Dignified Menstruation Day which will set the level of milestone.

Slogan for 5th International Dignified Menstruation Day:

“Dignified Menstruation is an Integral for Ending Sexual Violence and Child Marriage.”

Reasons behind the theme:

The menstrual discrimination itself a form of SGBV in many ways according to UN. Menstrual discrimination affected the lives of menstruators from womb to tomb even after the death in some culture. According to the UN categorization, there is violence directly related with menstrual discrimination. The physical assault (beating, biting, burning, kicking), punishment for defying cultural norms are under physical violence, the verbal abuse, confinement, social exclusion, humiliation, manipulation are under the emotional/psychological violence, the attempted rape, rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation are under sexual violence and the denying girls their right to education, giving boys/men preferential.

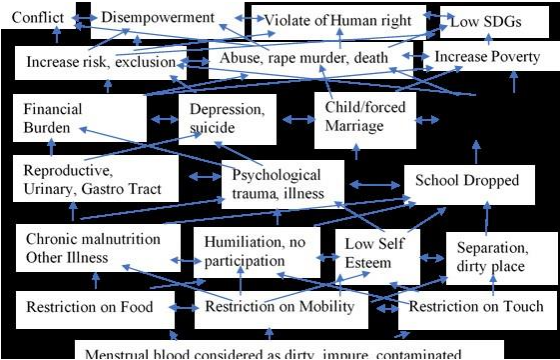


Figure 3: Menstrual Discrimination as form of Sexual Violence

Access to food or services are under the denial or access to resources and services. Therefore, menstrual discrimination is purely a form of SGBV and violation of human right in many ways. It plays role for cause and effect of SGBV too. For instance, the denial the right to education is itself of the violation of human right. It leads for child or early marriage. That leads to early child bearing and might get complications and also impact on economic opportunities in short. Thus, dignified menstruation is an element of 16 days activism.

Therefore, keeping SGBV’s definition in mind, it is evidently clear that girls, women, individuals who menstruate regardless of caste, class, race, education, religion, nationality are subject to various forms of visible violence due to the invisible violence sustained by deep ignorance on menstruation, biases on menstruation as a “women’s issue” or a “private issue”, and global silence due to stigma and shame. Due to the stigma, shame, and taboo around menstruation, there are adverse immediate and long-term impact on one’s mental, physical, emotional, and social health including all forms of gender- based violence, rape, murder, sexual assault, death, and more. Due to the dissentient value imposed on menstruation and menstruating individual, their inter and intra level of peace is destroyed. Their human rights (right to dignity, right to food, right to health, right to education, right to mobility) is significantly compromised at multiple layers throughout their life cycle. These rights are also globally recognized as constitutional rights in many nations like Nepal. More importantly, these rights are directly connected to one’s inalienable human rights which are global.

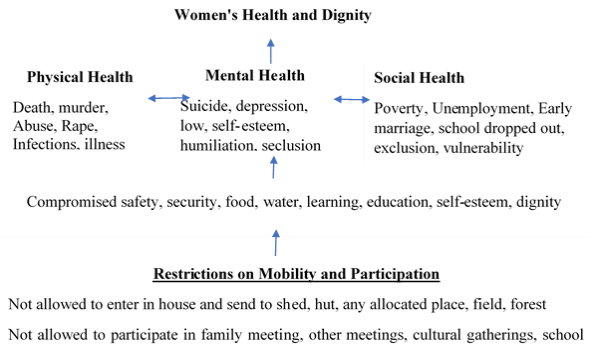


Figure 4: Menstrual Discrimination as form of Sexual Violence

In the course of 93 years of interventions for ending child marriage in various ways and forms, the subject of menstrual discrimination is omitted, even though it is the main driver for child marriage globally. The issue is more pertinent in local/rural settings low and middle income countries like in South Asian Countries. Actors for ending child marriage consider only the following issues: the absence of or low education; poverty; harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM); traditions of family honor; trafficking and displacement; inequitable social and gender norms; and disasters including wars pandemics such as COVID-19.

GSCDM studies the policies on Child Marriage and their link to menstrual practices around the world, and particularly in Bangladesh, India and Niger where the rate of child marriage is significantly high (Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation, 2019). On 14 March 2022, GSCDM shared these findings at the sixty-sixth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW66) and asserted that menstrual discrimination constructs the power and perpetuates the patriarchy in global social, economic and political arenas. When parents pass to men outside their family the care of their daughters before or when they start menstruating out of fear of pregnancy or value of virginity, they treat their girls as worth less than boys, being incapable

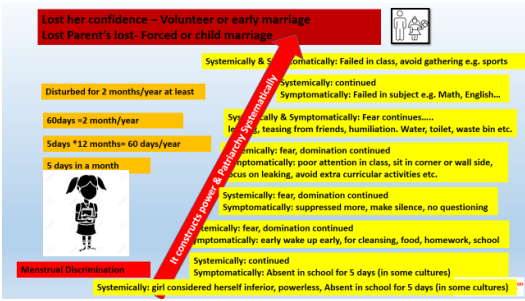


Figure 5: Menstrual Discrimination & its role for Child Marriage

of making decisions affecting their own futures, and truncating their educational and development opportunities. Clearly, menstrual discrimination is playing role of cause and effect of many forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against girls, including child marriage. Systemically, the girls are led to believe by their families and society that they are lower, inferior, and powerless compared to boys.

Symptomatically, girls are faced for a total of at least two months in a year (5 days a month, 60 days a year) due to exclusionary perceptions and practices reinforcing menstrual discrimination at home, school and community.

Last year, GSCDM and more than 50 countries last year marked 4th International Dignified Menstruation Day on December 8 2022, with the slogan “Dialogue on Dignified Menstruation for Ending Child Marriage” INSERT REPORT. Nepal aims to eliminate child marriage by 2030. For supporting the Nepal Government and global initiative, our [Steering Committee Members](#) decide to continue same theme for this year as well.

Proposed activities can be done:

Anything can be done for marking 5th International Dignified Menstruation Day by anyone who are committed to practicing and promoting Dignified Menstruation or human rights or preventing SGBV, ending child marriage or improving SRHR or working for gender equality or SDGs. Nevertheless, it depends on the will to act and availability of resources.

If you an independent individual:

Here, we would like to suggest few simple examples of what can be done at individual level:

- i. Social Campaigning: Sharing or re-sharing the post of GSCDM in various platform such as Facebook Page, Instagram, Twitter, Blog, Tiktok, and LinkedIn.

Note*: Do not forget to do a Hashtags for e.g.

#dignifiedmenstruation, #DignifiedMenstruation2023.

This activities will allow us to track where and what you have been doing around IDDM 2023.

- ii. You write the slogan of 5th International Dignified Menstruation Day in the paper or any message you fill that indicate the theme for this year and upload it in your social media account. Do not forget to mention [GSCDM](#) and use hashtags (#).



Figure 6: Sample of using hashtags #

If you are representing an organization or network:

There are many ways to make IDDM 2023:

- iii. You can produce a posters, videos, banners, pamphlets, or anything depending upon the available resources with the logo of your organization with the logo of DM, GSCDM & RPF. Shares the developed content in your organizational social media.

Resource: <https://www.facebook.com/Dmjnepal>



Figure 8: Sample of poster

- iv. You can also conduct webinars, interaction, rally program, radio program, interaction program or any competition focusing the theme for this year, play the jingles or anything that can be done at organizational level.

Other Opportunities

We all deserve to mark DM throughout the year, 24/7 in a week. It is not compulsory to wait for the day to celebrate, we can celebrate every day, every moment as DM day. GSCDM & RPF marks other days too such as International Girls Child Day on October 11, HIV Day on December 1, International Day of Disabled Person on December 3, World Environment Day, World Press Freedom Day etc. Thus, any days can be consider as an opportunities to stand for Dignified Menstruation.

The Key messages:

Along with the slogan for this year, other messages can be added into any planned activities in order to make it clear about understanding of DM and amplify the voice to oppose DM. Some sample of key messages are:

- Dignified Menstruation is everyone's business.
- Dignified Menstruation is a Human Right Concern.
- Menstrual Discrimination is the violation of Human Rights.
- Menstrual Discrimination is a form of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Menstrual Discrimination construct POWER and PATRIARCHY.
- Dignified Menopause is a human rights not a privilege.
- Dignified Menstruation is a holistic approach to dismantle menstrual discrimination.
- Dignified Menstruation is cross-cutting theme to ensure gender equality and social inclusion for menstruators.
- Dignified Menstruation is an opening for a discussion of sexual and reproductive health.
- Menstrual Discrimination is complex and multifaceted.

Contact Details:

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